



## American Association of Geographers Middle States Division NEWSLETTER

Editor: Megan Heckert

### Mark Your Calendar!

Fall 2024 Meeting  
HOST West Chester University  
West Chester, PA

November 1-2, 2024  
Abstracts due by October 11, 2024

### President's Message

Greetings from West Chester University! I am thrilled to announce that WCU will host the 2024 Middle States Division annual meeting. We look forward to connecting, socializing, and meeting new colleagues in West Chester this fall. The meeting will be held from November 1-2, 2024 and will include paper and poster sessions, keynote presentations, a Geography Bowl, and more.

If you have not attended previous Middle States annual meetings, I urge you to consider attending this year. The conference is relatively small and provides a great opportunity to present research in a supportive and collegial environment, especially for students who are looking to present and get feedback on their work. And of course it provides opportunities to win support to attend the 2025 AAG Annual Meeting in Detroit through the geography bowl and poster and paper competitions.

Conference details are still being finalized, so save the date and look for registration and additional details over the summer.

*Megan Heckert, West Chester University*

### 2024 Divisional Officers

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**Patricia Beyer**

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Find more information at our website:

<https://msaag.aag.org/>

**Fall 2023 MSAAG Meeting Report – Temple University**

There were 119 attendees at the in-person Temple fall meeting organized by our past president Hamil Pearsall (Temple University). There were 2 keynote speeches; one from AAG President Rebecca Lave and one from Clinton Johnson, ERSI's Racial Justice and Social Equity lead. 40 papers and 24 posters were presented as well as a Jobs Panel and Graduate School session and we had a group of High Schoolers led by their teacher also in attendance. Josh Galster ran the Student Paper and Poster Competition and oversaw judging of many excellent entries. In the graduate student paper competition, Veronica Gomez (Temple University) won first prize, Elpidio Guzman De La Cruz (West Chester University) placed second and Kendra Kinzi (Cornell University) took third place. The first prize undergraduate paper award went to Jacqueline Ganter (Rowan University). The graduate poster prizes went to Emmanuel Olaminski from Delaware University (first) and second to Steve Baron (Temple) and the undergrad poster first prize to Madison Colyer from Shippensburg University. The high school poster competition was won by Caitlin Berry from General MacArthur High School.

**Geography Bowl Competition**

At the 2023 Temple meeting we were excited to return to a lively in-person competition! Teams from Rutgers, West Point, Hofstra and Penn State competed in a round robin format. In the final round Rutgers bested the West Point team in a thrilling match up. Six participants represented the Middle States Division at the 2024 AAG Annual Meeting in Honolulu, HI, finishing in second place. Special kudos to West Point cadet Siddharth Shah, who won the MVP trophy.

All Division undergraduate and graduate students are invited to compete in this year's competition on Friday, November 1st. You may either form a team (5-6 people) or sign up at the meeting to be placed on a team. The six highest-scoring students will be invited to represent the Division at the World Geography Bowl at the 2025 AAG annual meeting and provided with \$300 towards their expenses in attending the meeting.

**Middle States Geographer**

We are looking for a new editors! Please contact Adam Kalkstein or Paul Marr to explore this exciting opportunity! The *Middle States Geographer* is the official academic journal of the Middle States Division of the American Association of Geographers. The journal is published annually and includes papers from external submissions and the division Annual Meeting. The *Middle States Geographer* contains papers authored by both faculty and students (with peer-review by at least two reviewers) and covers a wide range of topics. All Journal Volumes are freely available from the [website](#). We invite all who present papers at the annual Fall MSDAAG meetings to submit a manuscript for publication in the next issue of the *Middle States Geographer*, although manuscripts from all researchers are welcome year-round.

Paper submission guidelines are available on the region's website at <https://msaag.aag.org/>

You may also contact the editors: Adam Kalkstein at [Adam.Kalkstein@westpoint.edu](mailto:Adam.Kalkstein@westpoint.edu) or Paul Marr at Shippensburg University, [pgmarr@ship.edu](mailto:pgmarr@ship.edu) if you have questions about submitting a manuscript or if you are interested in serving as a reviewer. Students presenting papers should consider submitting their paper for publication in the journal and faculty co-authors may be included after the student award competition has occurred. The *Middle States Geographer* is entirely an online journal. Articles from 1968 (Volume 8) through 2023 (Volume 55) may be viewed at the journal website. The 2023 issue will be available soon.

### Call for Program Excellence Nominations

In 2025 AAG will honor an AA/AS Geography program. Each Regional division can nominate up to two programs for the 2025 award. For a complete description of the award, eligibility, and nomination guidelines, please see award directions on the AAG's website <http://www.aag.org/programexcellence#description>

So, we need to hear from you! Nominate a Geography program that offers no higher than a bachelor's degree (BA/BS) that you feel is deserving of the award. Send your nomination(s) for an outstanding geography program to **Hamil Pearsall** [hamil.pearsall@temple.edu](mailto:hamil.pearsall@temple.edu) by June 15, 2024.

The 2024 Middle States Division AAG Meeting will be held Friday November 1 and Saturday 2 November



**West Chester University** is delighted to host the Middle States Division AAG meeting this year! The 2024 meeting will take place over two days and will include paper and poster sessions, Friday dinner, and Geography Bowl.

**West Chester University** is located in West Chester, Pennsylvania, and there are several different hotel options available across the city. **Transportation and Parking** Our summer newsletter will include more information about the meeting logistics. **Registration** for the meeting will open in September. Registration and abstract submission will be through the AAG Portal and announced on the at <https://msaag.aag.org/> website.

### Call for Nominations for MSD Officers

Please consider joining the leadership of MSAAG. The Executive Board has two meetings a year, one a conference call in the spring and one at the annual fall meeting. We are soliciting nominations for **Secretary/Treasurer** and **Vice President**. The Secretary/Treasurer serves a one-year term beginning January 2024. The Secretary/Treasurer takes minutes at division meetings, organizes and judges the student paper competition at the fall meeting and reports on the Division's finances, which are handled by AAG. The Secretary/Treasurer may run for Vice President the following year. The Vice President position is a three-year commitment. After serving as Vice President, that person becomes President and then Past President, serving a total of three years to maintain organizational continuity. The Vice President organizes the Geography Bowl competition at the fall meeting. Please consider these rewarding opportunities. You may contact or any current board member for additional information. Voting will take place in September 2023.

Please submit nominations to Past President **Hamil Pearsall** at [hamil.pearsall@temple.edu](mailto:hamil.pearsall@temple.edu) by October 6.

**Call for Graduate and Undergraduate Student Papers and Posters****STUDENT PAPER & POSTER COMPETITION**

2024 Annual Meeting  
Middle States Division of the American Association of Geographers  
West Chester University, PA  
November 1-2, 2024

Middle States AAG encourages all graduate and undergraduate students to submit and present research papers to the Student Paper Competition of the MSDAAG annual conference. The graduate and undergraduate paper competitions have a first prize of \$1000, provided by AAG to fund the awardee's registration and travel costs to the AAG Annual Meeting). The graduate paper second prize is \$300 and the third prize \$150. The undergraduate paper competition has a second prize of \$200 and a third prize of \$100.

There is also a Student Poster Competition with both graduate and undergraduate divisions and first prizes of \$200, second prizes of \$100 and third prizes of \$50. There is a Rob Mason Poster award of \$50 for High School students entering the Poster competition. This award is named after our past Regional Councilor Dr. Robert Mason from Temple University who passed away in 2017. He also served as President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Division.

**Submission Guidelines** Student status is as of May 1, 2024. Please note your status (Graduate/Undergraduate) on your abstract and paper submission. Registration fees are refunded after the conference for students both submitting the completed paper by the deadline AND presenting the paper at the conference. Completed papers must follow the *Middle States Geographer* guidelines and can be no longer than 10 pages, single spaced, 10 point Times Roman font, including all figures, tables, endnotes, and references. Further details on the guidelines are specified under the Student Competitions and *Middle States Geographer* tab at <https://msaag.aag.org/>. **Students must have a faculty advisor recommend their entry using the format specified and use the guidelines and rubrics for judging on the website under the tab Student Competitions in preparing their entries.**

Students should register and submit abstracts through the AAG portal once it is announced on the <https://msaag.aag.org/> website in fall 2024. Students entering the Student Competition should send electronic copies of completed papers or pdfs of completed posters to **Kwame Adovor Tsikudo** MSAAG Student Competition Chair at [msaag.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:msaag.secretary@gmail.com) by **October 11**.

**Scholarship for Student Geographer from Puerto Rico**

The Executive Board has established a \$500 scholarship to encourage participation of a student geographer from Puerto Rico. Applicants should send their scholarship application of no more than 250 words to **Hamil Pearsall** at [hamil.pearsall@temple.edu](mailto:hamil.pearsall@temple.edu) by **September 1**. Applicants should outline briefly their academic/research background and career goals and how participation in the MSAAG meeting will assist in meeting these goals. A nomination letter from a faculty mentor should accompany the student application. The chosen awardee will receive \$500 in funding towards their travel, meals and lodging costs in attending the Middle States Division Annual Meeting. The registration fees for the awardee will also be waived.