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George Mason University Graduates First Students from USGIF Certificate Program

May 13, 2010, Fairfax, VA— George Mason University's Department of Geography and Geoinformation Science graduated its first cohort of students from its Graduate Certificate in Geospatial Intelligence program. USGIF President Keith J. Masback attended the department's 2010 Awards and Convocation Luncheon Celebration where he presented 22 students certificates on behalf of George Mason University's Geospatial Intelligence Certificate Program, accredited through USGIF.

Graduate certificates in geospatial intelligence were given to Matthew Botulinski, Ardalan Faraj, Rafael Ferraro, Rachel Geyster, Joseph Governski, Bobby Harris, Kristi Marvin, Ryan Milligan, David Phillips, Matthew Pophin, James Praskievicz, Evan Quinto, Michael Shaffer, James Speicher and Zachary Tardivo.

Several students achieving academic excellence were given awards ranging from \$250 to \$1,000 by USGIF for the completion of their programs. Students who received these awards were Brittney "Nikki" Hall, undergraduate student; Kalyna Malm Watts, master's student; Rachel Geyster, graduate certificate student; and James Falcone, Ph. D. student.

George Mason University was accredited in 2007 as one of the first universities in USGIF's Accreditation Program. Since then, the Foundation and the university have had a long standing partnership. Recently, Dr. Peggy Agouris, professor and chair of George Mason University's Department of Geography and Geoinformation Science, was nominated and now serves as USGIF's first academia board member. Along with scholarships, USGIF members have also donated learning resources to the department.

The purpose of the USGIF Accreditation Program is to accredit university geospatial intelligence certificate programs as a response to the increasing demand for qualified personnel within the GEOINT community, affirming program standards and supporting development of

professional competencies in students awarded geospatial intelligence certificates. USGIF accreditation guidelines were assiduously crafted and refined by representatives spanning the GEOINT community. Geospatial intelligence certificates from USGIF accredited schools complement a college degree. USGIF accreditation of university geospatial intelligence certificate programs supports our nation's vital national security interests by assuring that students are prepared for careers within the growing GEOINT enterprise. Four certificate programs have been accredited thus far, with additional universities now proceeding through the accreditation process.

USGIF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational foundation dedicated to promoting the geospatial intelligence tradecraft and developing a stronger GEOINT Community with government, industry, academia, professional organizations and individuals whose mission is the development and application of geospatial intelligence to address national security challenges. For more information, please visit *www.USGIF.org*.

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