CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2012 USGIF AWARD WINNERS!

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Geographic Information Systems Program, Washington College

The GIS Program at Washington College, part of the Center for Environment and Society, is exploring radical and disruptive innovations to get youth interested in and excited about the geospatial intelligence tradecraft. They have developed programs such as youth summer camps and after school-programs that are combined with undergraduate experiential learning opportunities. The GIS Program currently employs over 45 undergraduates working on a wide variety of funded GeoInt related projects. While the program is established and operated as an entrepreneurial microenterprise, their number one mission is the experiential learning opportunities for their undergraduate students and the outreach mission they have to engage K-12 youth. And all of this has one purpose; to place these youth on clear paths to become productive members of the future geospatial intelligence workforce.

ACADEMIC RESEARCH AWARD

Center for Geospatial Intelligence, George Mason University

The 2012 Academic Research Award goes to the group from George Mason University for its work on harvesting geospatial intelligence from social media feeds. This pioneering work has led to the new paradigm of Geosocial analysis, the notion of linked spaces, and a new understanding of activities within such spaces. The group has developed a system for the geosocial and thematic analysis of social media feeds, demonstrated its utility for a variety of applications ranging from natural disasters to civil unrest and geopolitical events, and has developed a series of novel algorithms that enable knowledge discovery from social media. This advances the geospatial tradecraft and addresses our national security objectives by extending our ability to understand and monitor sociocultural dynamics, and discover actionable knowledge from social media.

GEOSPATIAL ADMINISTRATIVE/SUPPORT AWARD

Helen "DeeDee" Demes
The SI Organization

Helen Demes is the perfect choice for the Outstanding Industry Administrative Professional award. She is a mission-focused, dedicated leader and mentor who makes a positive impact on a daily basis for her company and the Intelligence Community. DeeDee works for The SI Organization, Inc. (the SI), and she provides exceptional support to the President and CEO, Bill Graham; Chief Operating Officer, Deborah Oliver; and the executive team. She is an organized, innovative, ethical leader who understands the different dynamics within organizations and is a master at team building to drive outcomes. Throughout the past year, she has led numerous efforts, both for the SI and across the GEOINT community to support the mission, connect the dots, overcome challenges, and provide mentoring opportunities. Her integrity, commitment to the national security mission, and outstanding communication skills make her an invaluable member and a thought leader within the GEOINT community.

INTELLIGENCE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD – GOVERNMENT

Humanitarian Information Unit, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, U.S. Department of State

Since the 2010 Haiti earthquake and the response of the OpenStreetMap community, the U.S. Government has been investigating how to harness the power of crowdsourcing for geographic data production. To this end, the Office of the Geographer's Humanitarian Information Unit (HIU) at the U.S. Department of State has successfully built a process for engaging the 'crowd' to produce free and open geographic data. The process involves sharing U.S. Government-purchased commercial satellite imagery (CSI), formatted as web map services (WMS/WTMS), with the volunteer OpenStreetMap (OSM) community, enabling them to contribute to mapping tasks that directly support humanitarian assistance projects. Powering this process is a geographic computing infrastructure, built completely from free and open source software and hosted in a cloud environment. This process, tested in the Horn of Africa, Uganda, and Indonesia, has proven inexpensive, scalable, and repeatable, while reinforcing several national security objectives related to the provision of humanitarian assistance.

INTELLIGENCE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD – MILITARY

U.S. Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command

The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command conducts global search, recovery, and laboratory operations to identify unaccounted-for Americans from past conflicts in order to support the Department of Defense's personnel accounting efforts. Underlying the JPAC mission is the requirement to correlate diverse types of data and conduct analysis that leads to the identification of locations with remains of missing personnel. To meet these challenging demands, JPAC has developed unique geospatial workflows that mesh traditional intelligence processes with the disciplines of anthropology and history. Geospatial context is the common ground that allows these separate disciplines to contribute to successful recovery missions. When remains are recovered through research, investigation, and archaeological excavation, geospatial analysis is further used to help substantiate the circumstances of loss and to reduce the list of possible personnel from a recovery location.

INTELLIGENCE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD – INDUSTRY

DigitalGlobe, Satellite Sentinel Project

Together DigitalGlobe, the Harvard Carr Center for Human Rights, and the Enough Project, have been crucial in implementing the innovative Satellite Sentinel Project. Initiated by George Clooney, the Satellite Sentinel Project uses commercial satellite imagery, expert analysis and other technologies to prevent mass atrocities before they occur. The project is an early warning system to deter full-scale civil war between Northern and Southern Sudan and promote greater accountability for mass atrocities by focusing world attention to human rights violations. The Satellite Sentinel Project uses DigitalGlobe's satellite images and analysis to capture movement of displaced people, identify damage or destruction of villages, and spotlight any indications of potential mass violence. When any human rights violations are detected, the team releases a report in an effort to increase public awareness and stop further violence.