

## Notes from Geospatial/GIS Meetup

December 15, 2020

via Zoom

**Attendees:** Janet Reyes, facilitator;  
**Via Zoom:** Azalea Corral, Canserina Kurnia, Jay Farago-Spencer, Jonathan Young, Lynn Sweet, Maxine Wu, Mike Cohen, Okikiola Michael Alegbeleye, Ravi Nigudkar, Rey Castillo, Robert Johnson, Salvador Olguin, Sandeep Karmacharya, Shanon Langlie, Steve Ries, Valerie Hernandez (co-host)

### Announcements

This meeting was recorded; video is available [here](#). The access passcode to view is z^zi6cE9

Our **meetups** in Winter 2021 will take place on the third Wednesdays of the month. The next meetup will be on January 20.

Janet shared three **sites** that may be of interest for casual viewing: [map.openseamap.org](http://map.openseamap.org), [randomstreetview.com](http://randomstreetview.com), and [citywalks.live](http://citywalks.live).

**UC GIS Week**, held November 17-19, was a success; plans are to offer it again next year. The programming included posters, lightning talks, presentations, career panels, and workshops. Visit the conference [website](#) to view session recordings. UCR had five presenters and was fourth among the ten UC campuses in number of attendees. Consult the [UC GIS Hub](#) for GIS contacts at the UC campuses and related information.

### First-time Attendees

First-time attendees were invited to introduce themselves in the chat.

**Okikiola Michael Alegbeleye** is a student from Nigeria who is a researcher and GIS enthusiast. Michael is looking for opportunities.

**Ravi Nigudkar** is an independent geospatial consultant.

For the other first-time attendees: welcome, and we hope you'll return in the future!

### Presentation

**Shanon Langlie** is the Director of Marketing and Communications for International Affairs at UCR. Her presentation was titled "Using StoryMaps and StoryMap Collections to recruit for Faculty Led Education Abroad Programs."

International Affairs serves as a central hub for UCR's international activity. After giving an overview of the core functional areas within International Affairs, Shanon focused on the Education Abroad program.

Research shows that experiential learning, such as education abroad, is associated with improved academic performance and gives students the kinds of skills that employers are seeking - plus, it's often a transformative experience. Despite all the benefits, the percentage of UCR students participating in education abroad is well below the national average. Barriers include finances, time away (from jobs, e.g.), family concerns, and lack of awareness of the options. However, the Faculty Led Education Abroad Program (FLEAP) does lower several of these barriers - for instance, by only lasting 4-6 weeks in the summer, and by allowing several forms of financial aid to be applied to the expenses.

Before the pandemic, FLEAP recruiting depended heavily on in-person, campus-based activities and promotion. Campus closure forced a shift to a digital-first recruitment strategy. Adding to the challenge of promoting the 16 faculty-led programs for Summer 2021:

- a shortened timeline for students to commit, meaning less time to develop promotional materials
- half are new programs, so student testimonials and photographs aren't available
- the Education Abroad website doesn't have the flexibility needed for the types of displays desired

ArcGIS StoryMaps provided a suitable platform for publicizing the Summer 2021 FLEAP opportunities, owing to: availability and ease of use, aesthetically pleasing results, the ability to group story maps into a collection, and the natural fit FLEAP has with place-based storytelling.

Shannon shared these tips on creating story maps:

- Decide what information you need to share
- Consider what bonus features might be helpful to include, beyond the basic format
- Allow time for composing text and gathering media content to include in the story map
- Build a test version, where you can experiment with changes
- Have an outside editor (fresh eyes) look over the story map
- Publish and share widely

Shanon concluded by giving us a look at the story map collection page, as well as some of the individual story maps she created, both for new programs and ones that had been offered in the past.

The Q&A touched on:

- Whether story maps can move horizontally (basic scrolling is vertical, but it's possible to include sections that are navigated horizontally)
- A student who's part of the Highlander Abroad Advisory Committee asked about how the faculty and locations are selected (faculty proposals to run programs are reviewed), and what the opportunities are for students in STEM fields (9 or 10 of the Summer 2021 programs have direct research experience; the EA team can always help students find appropriate programs)

- Evaluating the risks of some/all foreign travel still being suspended next summer due to the pandemic (they are hopeful; also, some of the programs will be in the US)
- How much support was needed when Shanon was first getting started (there are now lots of resources provided by Esri; see some of the links below. Also, reach out to Janet)
- Many ideas to try, including embedding a dashboard in a story map

Here are some of the links shared during the presentation:

- Link to FLEAP StoryMap Collection: <https://arcg.is/1iHmfS>
- Link to FLEAP page on Education Abroad website: <https://international.ucr.edu/abroad/fleap>
- Link to main Education Abroad website: <https://international.ucr.edu/abroad>
- Link to International Affairs 2019 Annual Report:  
<https://international.ucr.edu/sites/g/files/rcwecm2216/files/2020-06/International%20Affairs%202020%20Annual%20Report%20-%20digital.pdf>

Contact Shanon at [shanon.langlie@ucr.edu](mailto:shanon.langlie@ucr.edu)

From the chat:

From Canserina - Self learning free lesson on Storymap:

<https://learn.arcgis.com/en/paths/getting-to-know-the-new-storymaps/>

From Mike - a story map for the UCR Botanic Gardens:

<https://ucr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapTour/index.html?appid=38a8e878642d46cb9c3875c55cabb660>