



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Thank you all for giving me the opportunity to serve NACIS, both as your Program Chair for our Annual Meeting in Norfolk, Virginia, and now as your President. I've always felt that NACIS was my professional home ever since my first meeting in Jacksonville, Florida in 2003. I've seen the organization, and its members, grow and evolve in so many positive ways over the years and I'm proud to be part of a community that is healthy and thriving.

More than 275 people attended our 2018 Annual Meeting in Norfolk, and I would like to thank all of the presenters, contributors, and volunteers who helped make it a success. Our field is ever-evolving, and the greatest challenge in putting together the schedule each year is to ensure that our content is relevant, fresh, balanced, and—dare I say—entertaining. It's exciting to see the mix of submissions we receive each year, often influenced by the localities we reach. I love that our meeting is held in a different city each year, which gives us the opportunity to explore new places and make new connections.

Practical Cartography Day continues to be a popular and well-attended event. Thank you to organizers Leo Dillon, Elaine Guidero, and Katie Kowalsky. In 2018, we had the highest ratio of PCD attendees to total conference attendees since PCD was first introduced in 2001.

The 2017–2018 Corliss Benefideo awards winners, James Cheshire and Oliver Uberti, opened the main conference with an inspiring [keynote on imagination and collaboration](#). Linking these two concepts, Oliver defined creativity as "... an exercise in surprise. It's about making unexpected connections and unexpected conversions." So many of their themes resonated with what NACIS stands for, and I like to think that our organization provides a venue for creative connections, imagination, and the unexpected.

Thanks to all of you that answered the post-conference survey. I'm pleased to report that no one indicated that they were dissatisfied with the overall conference experience. That said, we're always looking for ways to improve, and we take your comments, feedback, and suggestions very seriously. Please be sure to share your ideas with the Board in these surveys or in person at our Annual Meeting. You are also welcome to email me at prez@nacis.org with your thoughts.

Congratulations to our student award winners, who were announced at the Friday night Banquet. Alexander Fries, of the University of Alabama, won the Student Map and Poster

Competition award for Design Quality. The SMPC award for Research Quality was given to both Jai Ryan, of RMIT University, and Humboldt State University's Brian Murphy. The Individual award from the Student Dynamic Map Competition was won by Kerry Gathers of the University of Kentucky, while Johnathon Pantzloff and Alicea Zelesny of the University of Wisconsin–Madison took home the Group award.

The highlight of the Norfolk 2018 meeting was the release of the *Atlas of Design*, Volume 4. We are so fortunate to have had Alethea Steingisser, Lauren Tierney, and Caroline Rose contribute their talent and expertise to this amazing publication. The *Atlas of Design* project continues to be one of the most influential collections of cartographic design and content in our field, and reflects the innovative work being done by contributors around the world, including many of our members.

Alas, while not unexpected, Volume 4 has sold out. But, we're happy to announce that we have reprinted the first three books! Volume 1 has also been redesigned to match the format of the others in the set, so that's an added incentive to make your collection complete. Many thanks to Daniel Huffman, who is our *Atlas of Design* Ambassador spearheading the reprint efforts. Reprints for Volumes 1, 2, and 3 may be ordered at atlasofdesign.org/reprints. Mark your calendars for the release of the *Atlas of Design* Volume 5, in 2020—the 40th anniversary of NACIS.

The NACIS community welcomes Nick Martinelli as our new Director of Operations. Nick's first NACIS conference was in 2007, and he has served NACIS in various roles since then, including judging and facilitating the Student Dynamic Mapping Competition, chairing the Corlis Benefideo Award Subcommittee, and serving as a Board member for the 2016–2018 term. Nick will be involved with the day to day operations of our organization, as well as certain roles related to the Annual Meeting.

In particular, Nick will also organize our efforts to continue streaming and recording the conference. In 2019, NACIS plans to continue offering video of the entire conference as a benefit to our members and the cartographic community at large. Many of you donated money last year to support this effort, and we thank you very much for helping make it possible. Member donations alone, however, won't be a sustainable funding solution for the long term, so the Board will be looking into an alternative funding stream so that we may continue to provide this valuable resource to you into the future. NACIS is seeking corporate sponsorships and investigating an increase in membership dues and/or conference fees to cover the costs. If you think you or your employer would be interested in sponsorship, please email our Executive Director Tom Patterson at tom@nacis.org. The Board is cognizant of the need to keep conference fees and membership dues low and affordable.

A significant initiative underway this year is an update to our existing nacis.org website. Our website functions not only as our outward face to members, but also handles meeting registration, presentation submissions, and elections, amongst other things. At the time of this writing, we are working on securing a contractor to help with some much needed fixes and improvements to the backend infrastructure that will make our processes work more smoothly in the future.

Our Board committees have a few projects underway. We have merged the Membership Committee and the Analytics Committee into one committee called, unsurprisingly, the

Membership and Analytics Committee. Chaired by Brooke Harding, the committee will be focusing on Annual Meeting attendance retention trends and metrics on how our conference presentation content has evolved.

The Membership and Analytics Committee is working hand in hand with the Communications and Outreach Committee, chaired by Rosemary Wardley. The committee is working to identify areas where our membership doesn't reflect the composition of our field, and making targeted outreach efforts toward underrepresented groups. This will involve studying diversity and inclusion, and identifying changes in the field. The committee is also looking into mentoring programs at the college and high school level in order to bolster participation in local cartographically related events.

Leo Dillon and Mamata Akella will be your Tacoma 2019 meeting hosts and are busy putting together another great conference for you all. The Call for Participation will go out in March, with submissions due May 31st. Please consider sharing your work with your NACIS community in Tacoma, Washington, October 16–18, 2019.

Many many thanks to everyone who has volunteered their valuable time to fulfill NACIS's mission. NACIS-driven initiatives occur year round and we are reliant on an all-volunteer team to bring our projects and Annual Meetings to fruition. If you are interested in dedicating your time, and have a project you'd like to work on that fits with our **objectives**, please contact me (prez@nacis.org) or anyone on the Board. Our organization thrives on new ideas, with the future in sight.

Wishing you all a great year,

Ginny Mason
NACIS President

