The American Geographical Society (AGS) is a small, but focused, organization which has built on its historic foundation to continue to be a leader in geographic and geospatial convening and education. Members, Councilors, and followers are from diverse disciplines and a wide variety of organizational types. They embody the soul of AGS and are at the heart of directing the efforts of AGS to use geography and geospatial science and technology for the benefit of our world...everything you will read in this report reflects this.

The year 2023 began with the announcement and planning of an all-new convening – an expansion of the Geography 2050 experience to St. Louis with the partnership of the University of Missouri-St. Louis, held in June. The post-COVID return of our Fall Symposium to New York City in 2022 captured the attention of the growing geospatial community in St. Louis, and we worked closely with local St. Louis geospatial organizations to focus on the importance of geo in America's Heartland. This forum for examining the latest advances in geospatial technology was a natural fit with AGS.

In November, we hosted the 10th annual Fall Symposium with the Climate School at Columbia University. This year's theme, The Changing Map of Risk, Hazards, and Finance, attracted an impressive array of speakers highlighted by a session featuring the Director of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Both the St. Louis and New York events continued our commitment to convening and education through teacher workshops, bringing together educators and practitioners to make the practice of geography and geospatial science in the professional world real and relevant to students from across the country.

Our robust, year-round support of Advanced Placement Human Geography (APHG) teachers extends far beyond the workshops we provide during our Symposia. Webinars, GeoBOOST, and our fast-growing special social media posts make important resources available to APHG teachers, and many other educators interested in geo, to assist in providing students with opportunities to think geographically and geospatially.

In 2023, beyond our convening and education efforts, AGS continued to give a vital worldwide platform for the latest research in our publications/outreach like Geographical Review, FOCUS on Geography, DailyGeo, and our extensive social media presence. As always, we honored individuals who exemplified excellence in geographic and geospatial research and practice, awarded scholarships to further graduate student research, and continued to provoke discussion on the ethical considerations of the use of geo technology through the expansion of the Locus Charter.

A special project AGS undertook in 2023 was to examine the idea of “Proximity” and what it means in a fast-changing world of communications and travel. Funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur and Tow Foundations, the results of our work will enable scholars and practitioners to have a forum and access to open-source resources to influence public and private sector thinking and practice.

In closing, on behalf of the AGS Staff, it is an honor for us to be part of this revered organization, and we are humbled by the opportunity to continue the work which has been the hallmark of AGS since 1851.

It is my pleasure to report to you the progress of the Society for 2023.

Regards,

John Konarski, PhD
Chief Executive Officer

AGS VISION...

To be the foremost champion of geography for the benefit of society.

Cover: Close-up of the American Geographical Society's timeless logo, used since 1851.
Following the successful return of AGS’s Fall Symposium to Columbia University in November of 2022, a group of geospatial professionals and educators from St. Louis reached out to AGS leadership with an opportunity to bring our unique brand of convening to their robust and expanding geospatial technology community. Taking a cue from the Fall Symposium’s theme, “The Future of Food,” AGS and our partner organization, the University of Missouri—St. Louis (UMSL), continued that discussion with Geography 2050 STL: Feeding Our Future Planet. The event kicked off with a tour and dinner at the Globe Building, a 1930’s railroad depot that over the years housed facilities for the forerunner of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), became the home of the St. Louis Globe-Dispatch, and in its latest reincarnation has been renovated with 21st century technology to host several of St. Louis’ leading geospatial technology firms. On Thursday came the all-day symposium at UMSL’s Touhill Performing Arts Center, with AGS’ usual array of presentations and discussions with industry leaders, cutting-edge researchers, and committed educators. To close the event was a special Teacher’s Workshop on Friday morning, connecting some of the symposium’s presenters with local geography and STEM teachers to bring the best of geography and geospatial science to the region’s classrooms. With this groundbreaking event, AGS and UMSL highlighted the critical advances in geospatial technology happening right in America’s Heartland that continue to make the region a leader in feeding the world.
**GEOGRAPHY 2050: THE CHANGING MAP OF RISK, HAZARDS, & FINANCE**

in partnership with Columbia Climate School

Each year, AGS invites 50 Advanced Placement Human Geography (APHG) teachers to attend the Symposium as Teacher Fellows, with special professional development sessions before and after the Symposium. The pre-Symposium workshop kicked off with a panel on Careers in Geography with (left to right), Mr. Greg Hill, Dr. Meredith Gore, Dr. Wesley Reisser, Mr. Clinton Johnson, and Dr. Dee Jordan.

The Administrator of FEMA, Ms. Deanne Criswell (center), in discussion with VADM Frank Whitworth (right), Director of NGA, moderated by Geographer of the United States, Dr. Lee Schwartz (left).

**Geography 2050: The Changing Map of Risk, Hazards and Finance** was AGS’ tenth annual symposium in partnership with the Columbia Climate School. Experts from the finance world and the insurance industry came together with geographers, innovators in geospatial technology, representatives of humanitarian organizations, and government leaders at the local, national, and international level to explore the questions about the future of public and private finance; (re-) insurance; economic, environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG); natural capital; equity and inequity; and the financial vulnerabilities of populations around the world. Amid all this talent, AGS hosted an unprecedented “fireside chat” with the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Ms. Deanne Criswell, and the Director of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), Vice Admiral Frank Whitworth, moderated by the Geographer of the United States and AGS Councilor, Dr. Lee Schwartz.
Lightning Talks

Lightning Talks are visually compelling 5-minute presentations. They are an opportunity for students, researchers, and entrepreneurs to share the latest advances and discoveries in a high-energy format. In 2023, AGS invited an unprecedented 26 presenters to give live Lightning Talks at the Fall Symposium. For those who couldn't attend in person, AGS provided the opportunity to present pre-recorded virtual Lightning Talks, which are hosted on the Geography 2050 website.

Ms. Isabelle Tingzon, from the World Bank’s Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, presents on advancements in mapping homes in the Caribbean.

Columbia Climate School’s Dr. Sheila Foster (far right) presents on climate impacts in New York City in a panel moderated by Dr. William Solecki (far left), and also featuring (left to right) Mr. Joel Towers, Dr. Deborah Balk, and Dr. Luis Ortiz.

The 2023 Fall Symposium welcomed a sizable contingent of presenters and attendees from, and affiliated with, longtime AGS partner, YouthMappers.

Dr. Kevin Heaney, Chief Executive Officer of Applied Ocean Sciences, presents a map showing underwater noise levels throughout the world ocean during his Lightning Talk, "Climate Change Risks to Ocean Economic Viability."

Recordings of all presentations and discussions from every symposium since 2014 are available through the Geography 2050 website.

GEOGRAPHY 2050: THE CHANGING MAP OF RISK, HAZARDS, & FINANCE, cont...
One of the most important things AGS does is provide support to the global community of Advanced Placement Human Geography (APHG) Teachers through our Geography Educator Initiative (GEI). AGS’ commitment to the teachers, the people on the front lines teaching geography, continues to provide support and resources at no cost to the educators or their school districts. These dedicated and generous secondary-level educators bring our nation’s youth into the rich world of human geography and play a key role in cultivating geographic literacy in our society’s future leaders. AGS is committed to helping teachers in any way possible in building the next generation of geographers.

Teacher Advisory Board

The Geography Educator Initiative's Teacher Advisory Board is made up of APHG experts, including many former or current APHG Teachers who guide AGS in our efforts to provide support for the teachers. The Advisory Board meets regularly to advise AGS on the resources we design and curate for the APHG community, and identify new opportunities to develop supplemental content relevant to the curriculum. The Teacher Advisory Board also plays a pivotal role in the development of the Geography 2050 Teacher Fellows Workshop Program.

2023 GeoBoost

Each year, the GeoBoost project provides grants of $300 to selected APHG educators, giving students an experience they never would have had without the grant. These multifaceted experiences can include field trips, classroom resources, and other activities.

“GeoBoost truly brought students to understand that geography isn’t something that you just sit in a class and learn about.”

-APHG Teacher

“These funds allowed me to expose many of my students to an experience that they wouldn’t normally get.”

-APHG Teacher

In the 2022-2023 school year, the program awarded grants to over 50 APHG teachers, benefiting over 2100 students.
Teacher Fellows

AGS invites 50 APHG Teachers to attend our annual Geography 2050 Symposium at Columbia University in NYC as our “Teacher Fellows.” Fellows have the opportunity to engage hundreds of thought leaders across academia, government, industry, and the social sector - professionals with whom they would not ordinarily have the chance to interact. In 2023, AGS welcomed the sixth class of Teacher Fellows in NYC to the November Symposium. APHG Teachers from across the United States not only attended Symposium sessions, but also joined special teacher-only workshops before and after the Symposium that connected Symposium themes to APHG curriculum units, explored the wide variety of geospatial career options available to students, and assisted teachers in developing proficiency with basic mapping tools.

“\"The AGS teacher fellows program was a positive experience for me. It felt affirming, as a teacher, to be invested in and to have access to cross-industry professional development at the symposium.\"”

-2023 Teacher Fellow

Videos and Webinars

The American Geographical Society (AGS) regularly assembles teams of experienced and accomplished geography educators to share their experiences in how they prepare their students for the APHG exam. Since we’ve begun the prep webinar tradition, teachers have come to rely on AGS for final tips before the big exam.

“I sat at tables with academics and journalists who are also trained geographers and our conversations connected the vocabulary in the classroom with what is happening in the real world.”

-2023 Teacher Fellow
The EthicalGEO Initiative seeks to stimulate thinkers, innovators, entrepreneurs, policymakers, practitioners, students, and citizens and involve them in a global dialogue that focuses on ethical challenges and opportunities posed by geospatial technologies and data sources that are reshaping our society. In 2023, the EthicalGEO Initiative shared its work about the ethical issues surrounding the use of geospatial technology through our EthicalGEO Blog, Knowledge Repository, and updates to our social media platforms.

The EthicalGEO Blog posted 12 blog entries to the website and various social media platforms in 2023, exploring the five priority issues, and spurring conversations with the public.

The EthicalGEO Knowledge Repository is our regularly updated database providing easily accessible resources and information regarding the ethical implications of geospatial technologies and data sources. The Repository is ever-growing and we encourage everyone to add to it.

The Locus Charter is a set of internationally-recognized common principles to support ethical and responsible practice when using location data. Consisting of 10 founding principles, the Charter is set up to help organizations and users of geospatial data realize the ethical questions posed by the use of geospatial technology and assist them to make ethically informed decisions. This year, the Charter’s main focus has been to increase the number of supporters, and to encourage them to submit "Use Cases." Use Cases are an effective way to more clearly understand how Locus Charter principles are being applied in everyday scenarios. In 2023, Locus Charter’s supporters gathered for 3 meetings. Also, a book chapter on Locus Charter was published in a 2023 Routledge Handbook.
The Geographical Review (GR) finds its origins going back to 1859 when it was known as the ‘Journal of the American Geographical and Statistical Society.’ Since then, the GR has been publishing cutting-edge geographically-related research. As the oldest geographic journal in North America, it is recognized throughout the world as an important source of geographical knowledge. Our Geographical Review Previews on Ubique expand the readership base by providing non-subscribers access. Over the past several decades, the journal was published four times annually. In 2023 we published five issues.

In 2023, GR developed a mini-vlog series with publishing tips and behind-the-journal insights for early career scholars and student researchers with editor David Kaplan. This eight-episode series provided young researchers an insider's look into the journal publication process.

“The series was meant to provide behind-the-scenes insight into the publishing process, which can be a black box for first-time authors. As a student and researcher at the beginning of my career, I found Dr. Kaplan’s insights invaluable, and I hope it will serve as a resource for other early career scholars looking to publish their first research articles.”

-Katherine Cann, Social Media Coordinator

A special 2023 article from GR was: “YI-FU TUAN’S LEGACY: IMPACTS ON THE GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW, DISCIPLINES, SCHOLARSHIP, AND TEACHING” by M. Beth Schlemper, Karen E. Till, Jennifer D. Adams, Maria Lewicka, Pauliina Raento, Derek H. Alderman & Joshua Inwood Pages 297-317 | Published online: 23 Mar 2023. This article highlights Tuan's work in the GR over the years, and broadly discusses his legacy on geography. The author also participated in the GR-hosted panel discussion at the AAG in Denver in 2023.

FOCUS on Geography provides a digital space for geographers to showcase their work in a multi-media and interactive format. For many decades, FOCUS was a printed subscription-based publication. In 2016, a group of AGS Councilors came up with the idea to change it completely, transforming it into a peer-reviewed, open access, digital publication. The digital FOCUS platform enables a more dynamic and creative interactive approach, and includes featured articles, photo essays, and geo-quizzes. In 2023, FOCUS released Volume 66.
DailyGeo is our daily digital news blast highlighting stories that showcase the ubiquitous role of geography in the world’s headlines. DailyGeo reaches thousands of people everyday, Monday through Friday, year-round.

DailyGeo is comprised of three sections:

**Where in the World** showcases three major headline news stories of the day with a geographical perspective and coordinating maps.

**In Case You Missed It** provides the top performing posts across AGS’ social media platforms for the week, every Friday, including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok.

**GeoQuestions** quiz readers with an infinite bounty of facts about cool geographies around the world.

In addition to our digital communications, our DailyGeo Archive and Map on Ubique has become an essential resource for geography teachers. Viewers can filter thousands of DailyGeo news blasts since its inception in 2017 by country, topic, and by APHG curriculum units.

In 2023, DailyGeo published:

- 251 Digital News Blasts
- 753 Headline Stories
- 251 GeoQuestions

DailyGeo blasts are posted on our Facebook and Twitter/X every weekday, and GeoQuestions are published as an interactive quiz for our Instagram audience. Compelling DailyGeo maps and stories linked to our Symposium’s themes and other AGS initiatives are also published on our LinkedIn to connect directly with our diverse geo-professional community.

In 2023, DailyGeo published:

**251 Digital News Blasts | 753 Headline Stories | 251 GeoQuestions**
Meaning "everywhere" in Latin, Ubique is one of the oldest phrases tied to AGS' history. Ubique is our consistently updated blog that includes AGS' news, Map of the Week, Company Spotlights, Newsletters, Geographical Review Previews, and the DailyGeo archive.

On our blog, we share conversations with leaders of geographical and geospatial organizations, Map of the Week research pieces by interns on geographical themes, and our latest outreach through our DailyGeo and AGS Community Newsletter Archives. Ubique serves as a digital bridge between AGS and our publications such as the Celebrating Black Geographers Anthology and Geographical Review, as well as the educational content on our social media platforms.

In 2023, Ubique published: 52 Maps of the Week | 12 Newsletters | 100+ Total Entries

We went viral! 5.6k impressions on Instagram 85k views on Twitter/X

In 2023, our social media outreach was redesigned to function as an open access teaching and learning resource for educators, students, and geography-lovers everywhere. We revamped and restructured our educational outreach into weekday and monthly themes, following federally designated months such as Black History Month for February and Women's History Month for March. Our weekday themes cover the breadth of geographical knowledge and are aimed to inspire curiosity and energize learning for our wide audience, across generations, backgrounds, and fields. These weekday themes include Mappy Monday, Topography Tuesday and Thursday's Map of the Week. Applying these themes keeps the content up-to-date and engaging for educators and offers more use for these resources in the classroom as curriculum boosters.
The Celebrating Black Geographers Anthology began in 2021 with the release of the first of what would become three cohorts chronicling teachers, lecturers, or professors of African American or Black/African descent who possess advanced degrees in geography and who have a demonstrated track record of teaching and research in the discipline of Geography. In 2023, under the continued guidance of AGS Councilor Dr. Demetrice “Dee” Jordan, AGS released the third cohort, Black Geographers who had completed their graduate degrees in the years from 2011 to 2020, including photos and biographies of cohort members in a timeline format placing their work in historical context. Along with this cohort came a new front page for the anthology along with better navigation to the three cohorts. While the work of collecting these remarkable geography professionals into cohorts has completed, the recognition of the accomplishments and contributions of Black Geographers goes on. Additions for inclusion with any of the published cohorts are encouraged via the online form.

First Cohort, 1900-2000
Second Cohort, 2001-2010
The Third Cohort, 2011-2020

Top row (left to right in order of degree conferral): Biniam Iyob, 2011; Priscilla McCutcheon, 2011; Stefan Ouma, 2013; Mark Barnes, 2014; LaToya Eaves, 2014; Lorena Francisco de Souza, 2014; Jovan Lewis, 2014; Ashanté Reese, 2015; Ellis Adams, 2016
Second row: Candice Landry, 2016; Emmanuel Adu-Ampong, 2017; Vevila Dornelles, 2017; Azeetat Johnson, 2017; Lisa Marshall, 2017; Catherine Nakalembe, 2017; Willie Wright, 2017; Saul Daniel Ddumba, 2018; Camilla Hawthorne, 2018
What is “proximate” now is very different from when the field of Geography was first forged. While there is literature around the compression of space and time that has occurred due to innovations in transportation, communications, and larger trends in globalization, the field of Geography lags in its mainstream appreciation of the more modern manifestations of this phenomena. Under funding from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and The Tow Foundation, AGS launched the Proximity Project, an effort to build an inclusive community of scholars and practitioners, open source knowledge resources, and structured curriculum that would help advance this way of thinking within baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate Geography levels. In June, AGS released the first five videos examining the Conceptual Foundations of modern ideas of Proximity: Time-Space Compression, Network Proximity, Connectography, Cyber-Social Geography, and Digital/Physical Convergence. Since, then, AGS has enlisted expert practitioners to drive these concepts into public and private sector thinking and practice in our ever-growing Fields of Endeavor video library. We are also developing a reference library giving brief definitions and illustrations of crucial ideas in the Conceptual Toolbox.
Since AGS’ founding, the Society has awarded various honors recognizing extraordinary accomplishments in fields related to geographic study and practice. AGS currently has 10 distinguished medals which are awarded on a regular basis. In 2023, AGS conferred medals to three individuals who demonstrated excellence in their fields at Geography 2050 in New York City. Dr. Robert Bullard and Dr. Sallie Marston received their awards, with their medals’ namesakes on stage with them, at the Symposium. As Dr. James Baker was unable to join the Symposium, he will receive the Davidson medal at the AGS Council Meeting in Washington D.C. AGS also awarded three AGS Council Fellowships of $2,000 to support geographic research and fieldwork by graduate students. In addition, AGS recognized excellence in research through the Wrigley-Fairchild Prize for the best article published in the prior year of the Geographical Review.

At the 2023 Fall Symposium, AGS welcomed Mrs. Ilse Melamid and Mr. John Gould to present their namesake medals to this year’s awardees. Pictured here, from left to right: AGS President Dr. Marie Price, Mrs. Ilse Melamid, Mr. John Gould, Dr. Robert Bullard, and AGS Chairman Dr. Christopher Tucker.
We convene a diverse global community of innovators, thinkers, and practitioners; create and curate geographical knowledge, learning, and exploration; and advance geographic science and technologies to address society’s challenges and opportunities.

The AGS Council is the governing board of the Society, leading the organization since 1851. Since its conception, some of the nation’s most prominent geographers, business and not-for-profit executives, public figures, and other geospatial leaders have served on the Council.

The vision, mission, and day-to-day activities of AGS are overseen by the Council. With a limited budget and lean staff, our Council members do far more than just fulfill their fiduciary responsibilities to guide the work of AGS. Our Council is a “working board,” contributing their time and expertise on a regular basis while being actively involved in our many initiatives. Besides the frequent collaboration with staff, the Council held four meetings this year, and were active participants making presentations and leading panels in both our Fall Symposium and our first-ever Symposium in America’s Heartland at the University of Missouri.

The 2023 AGS Council


“Having now delivered on 10 years of Geography 2050 symposia, leading the way in understanding the vital trends that will reshape the geography of our planet over the coming decades, the AGS Council is eager to lay the groundwork for the Society’s 175th anniversary with new and exciting initiatives for advancing its vision and mission.”

Dr. Christopher Tucker
AGS Chairman

Councilors Elected in 2023

Todd Barr
Catherine Nakalembe
Ian Warner

The AGS Council holding its regular November meeting on the campus of Columbia University following the Fall Symposium.
AGS Operations

AGS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and a "Partner Project" of the **Fund for the City of New York (FCNY)**. AGS conducts its program-related financial activities through FCNY, another 501(c)(3) organization that supplies financial management services, monthly expense and revenue reports, an insurance coverage program, and a comprehensive employee benefits program. All contributions made to FCNY for the benefit of AGS are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by law. Under this arrangement, FCNY serves as AGS' fiscal sponsor, providing “back office” support which enables AGS to focus resources on its programmatic work and initiatives. The annual budget for operations is prepared in consultation with FCNY and approved by FCNY and the AGS Council.

### SUMMARY OF CASH OPERATING ACTIVITIES AT FCNY

**FISCAL YEAR 2023**

**OCTOBER 1, 2022 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2023**

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<tr>
<th>CASH AT BEGINNING OF YEAR</th>
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<td>REVENUE</td>
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<td>Contributions</td>
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<td>CASH AT END OF YEAR</td>
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The Endowment

AGS maintains an independent endowment comprised of two investment funds - the **Combined Fund** and the **Medals Fund** - over which AGS retains management responsibilities. The Society's investment policy focuses on growing the principal value of the investment portfolios in both Funds, while also earning a predictable annual income from investments made to the Combined Fund for the Society's operations, and from investments made to the Medal Fund for the Society's annual Honors and Awards ceremony, where outstanding geographers are awarded medals. All values are at Fair Market Value, and all contributions made to the Funds are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by law.

**ENDOWMENT**

**AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023**

- Combined Fund: $1,113,588.34
- Medals Fund: 450,840.50
- **Total Endowment**: $1,564,428.84

In 2023, AGS engaged **Lumi Advisors** to assist us in developing new initiatives to support our Institutional Advancement activities. Most of 2023 was spent on doing an assessment of our current efforts, and AGS looks forward to implementation of new strategies in 2024. As a beginning to this, in December of 2023, AGS kicked off our first “Season of Giving” campaign.
The work of AGS is made possible by our many partners who help us advance our mission with engagement, guidance, and financial support. They help shape the dialogue and focus of our continuing programs as well as other relevant Society endeavors. Our partners play a critical role in ensuring the relevance of Society activities as they address both current and future issues and opportunities. You can go directly to our partners’ websites by clicking their logo.
Make a tax deductible contribution to AGS today!