

## Atlantic Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers (ACAG)

### 2023 Annual Report

The ACAG Executive membership consists of: Dr. Carissa Brown (MUNL, ACAG President (2022-2025); Dr. Mathew Novak (SMU), ACAG Secretary-Treasurer (2022-2025); Dr. Josh Lepawsky (MUNL), Member-at-Large (2022-2025); Dr. Dave Lieske (MTA), ACAG Member-at-Large (2022-2025), Mr. Johnathan Carter (NB), Member-at-Large, Mr. Joshua Barrett (UGuelph but based at MUNL), Member-at-Large, and Miranda Frison, student-representative (2022-2024).

The 32<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the ACAG (ACAG 2023) was held virtually on November 2-3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, and was hosted by us at Memorial University. There were 60 official registrants. The keynote lecture was presented by Dr. Richard Shearmur from McGill University School of Urban Planning, who spent part of his sabbatical in our Department: “Why Newfoundland? A response to family, friends and colleagues”.

There were 21 presenters during the annual meeting, who gave a mix of traditional oral presentations and rapid “lightning talks” for emerging research. We were thrilled at the engagement in this year’s conference. All presentations were well prepared and engaging, and much discussion was had during our question periods. Three student prizes awarded:

**Best student presentation:** Marina Cuselli, Memorial University: The use of nature-based infrastructure for mitigating coastal erosion

**Founder’s Award:** Tolulope Victoria Akerele, Memorial University: Building Inclusive Transit System for Immigrants in Canada’s Small and Mid-sized Cities

**Lightning Talk Award:** Olivia Kokkinen, Saint Mary’s University: Comparing Different Methodologies in Connectivity Modelling for Protected Areas Design in Southwest Nova Scotia

Honourary mention: Mary Londero, Memorial University: Integrating Scientific and Community Knowledge for Marine Conservation through the I-ADApT Framework: A Burgeo case study

One thing that is special about ACAG is our representation of the many different subdisciplines of Geography. Here at Memorial University, we actively work against divisions of human and physical geography, social science and natural science. I think the talks we have each year at our annual ACAG conference also meet that goal, and I think we have managed to maintain participation of all subdisciplines of geography in a balanced way. I am also very, very proud that we continue to be a comfortable and welcoming place for undergraduates to give their first conference presentation, and that we have continued participation of Geographic professionals. It is the bringing together of all of these members of our geography community that creates opportunity, engagements, and idea generation between our Atlantic Canadian members.

The virtual meeting format continues to work for our division. I think we are in the unique geographic position, pun intended, that our division is so widely distributed that it is simply too costly for folks to travel to Memorial University when we host, and for Memorial University members to travel out of province when the host is in the Maritimes. I also really value that the virtual format is much more inclusive and equitable, and allows a range of people attend who

might not make that commitment if it involved travelling, such as our dear members who are now retired. This year we tried something different by having our meeting on weekdays rather than the weekend, as we have for the past few years. I think the original choice of scheduling on weekends was a vestige of in-person meetings, when members needed to teach / take classes and then travel. Yet, I'm also conscious that holding the meeting on the weekend means that some members are not able to attend, because they have caretaker or work obligations. The weekday meeting required a bit of finessing for the programming to meet everyone's schedule needs, but it wasn't so onerous that it was a hindrance. In the future, we are considering alternating weekend and weekday meetings from year to year.

Our 33<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the ACAG Division will take place in the fall. Details to follow!

Carissa Brown, Memorial University

ACAG President

12 July 2024

### **2023 Financial Report**

January 2023 saw an opening balance of \$4,429.65 with expenses comprising of student awards given at the annual conference totalling \$750.00. The year ended with a balance of \$3,854.65.

Opening Balance:	\$4,429.65
Revenue:	\$175.00 (ACAG Annual Rebate)
Expenses:	\$750.00 (Student Awards)
Closing Balance:	\$3,854.65

At current drawdown rates, our funds will be depleted in approximately six years. Discussions began at this year's AGM about the possibility of instituting a registration fee or optional donation for attendees at the annual conference to support student awards.

Mathew Novak

ACAG Treasurer

January 25, 2024