



Fall 2017

Intern Spotlight: Katie Wheatley, GISP

Q: When did you graduate?

A: B.S Geography (Earth and Atmospheric Science track)
Salisbury University – December 2006

Q: Where is your hometown?

A: Pasadena, Maryland

Q: When did you first use GIS?

A: I was a sophomore in Dr. Scott's Intro to GIS class

Q: What interested you in working with the ESRGC?

A: I originally had chosen to focus on meteorology and the Earth and Atmospheric track. I took an internship at Fox 5 News in DC with their chief meteorologist, Sue Palka. I realized that I couldn't quite handle the on-air weather stuff. However, during that internship, I found my love for making maps and the graphics that went into her weather segments. After the internship I spoke to Dr. Scott, who was my advisor. We shifted gears. I took cartography, remote sensing, environmental hazards, and other advanced geography courses that weren't related to meteorology to broaden my focus and help me shift towards GIS and mapping.

Q: What project(s) did you worked on as an intern? How long were you an intern?

A: I worked at the ESRGC from Jan. 2007 – Sept. 2007. I always knew it would be a short stint, but was grateful to have the opportunity to get real world experience, especially right after college. My biggest project focused on the Bay Restoration Fee that had been implemented by Former Gov. Ehrlich. We had to gather data from each county for those billed under the Bay Restoration guidelines. This required a lot of communication with each county in order to acquire the correct data, to then join spatially in GIS so we could visualize who was being affected by the fee. I also did some minor field data collection jobs.

Q: Where are you working now? What are you working on?

A: After the ESRGC I worked for an environmental remediation company in Baltimore, MD; Cabrera Services Inc. Cabrera focuses on cleaning up radiological contaminated sites around the country for future development. I was employed there for six years before moving onto my current job at EA Engineering, Science and Technology, Inc. PBC. I work under our Site Characterization Dept. where I mainly focus on the environmental cleanup of military ranges. I map a lot of unexploded ordnances (UXO) projects, including mobile data collection in the field where these UXO hazards are located. I am also the lead GIS Analyst on a large Air Force project involving the assessment of 40 plus Air Force sites across the country. In 2015, I earned my Geographic Information System Professional (GISP) Certification.

Q: How has working with ESRGC prepared you for your current position?

A: Working at the ESRGC was greatly beneficial. Being able to accept a job before even graduating college was exciting and I made sure to make the most of my limited time working there. I gained a lot of on the job experience that you can never really learn by sitting in a class. I learned how to talk to clients, manage my time and schedule, and efficiently organize and manage large amounts of data for multiple projects. These few examples were valuable skills to learn early on, and I have carried with me throughout my career.

Q: Have you gone to any GIS conferences? How did they go?

A: I have gone to a few ESRI User conferences, and I attend the Towson University GIS (TUgis) conference every year. I enjoy the networking aspect of these conferences and getting an opportunity to see what other GIS professionals are doing with their skillsets. It is also a nice chance to catch up with those I don't get to see, or talk to, that often in the GIS world.



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really learn by sitting in a class."*

-Katie

Q: Dream job? (Doesn't have to be GIS/ESRGC related)

A: Making weather related maps. Either for the National Weather Service, or a private meteorology enterprise.

Q: What do you like to do in your spare time?

A: Following the weather is still very much a big part of my life, and my biggest hobby outside of work. I am one of the lead contributors for the tornado website <http://www.ustornadoes.com/>. I make tornado outbreak maps each season, and have written a few other articles for the website. I also make yearly snowfall total maps for the Washington Post and their weather section, The Capital Weather Gang. I have had snowfall maps published in the book Snowmageddon: Washington's Record-breaking Winter of 2009-10 that was authored by a co-founder of the [ustornadoes.com](http://www.ustornadoes.com) website. Besides the weather, I am happily married to another previous ESRGC employee, Jason Wheatley. Together we are raising our daughter, Kelly. I am a fan of football, reading books, video games and spending time with my family.

Q: Do you have a LinkedIn?

A: I do - <https://www.linkedin.com/in/kathleen-wheatley-gisp-11bb0597>