

Fall 2021 Geography Career Mingle

Who should I talk to and what should I ask about?

A career mingle is designed so that you can talk to professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds and disciplines in a short amount of time. So, at a high level, you should talk to anyone attending that sounds interesting to you or anyone who represents an organization you would like to learn more about. Unlike a traditional job fair, at a career mingle you are going to be asking the questions. These conversations where you are asking all the questions are often called informational interviews. The UTK Center for Career Development has an [informational interview guide](#) that you should review before you attend the career mingle. There is also a great informational interview guide in the UTK [BigInterview](#) platform (here is a [BigInterview getting started guide](#)). You'll need to register for BigInterview with your UTK email. Once your account is set up, click the Learn tab at the top of the screen, then click on Written Curriculum, then select Module 4.

The Geography Career Mingle offers three ways to interact with the attending organizations.

1. One-on-One Interviews – Use these 10-minute sessions to meet individuals one-on-one.
2. Group Sessions - Use these 30-minute sessions to meet individuals in a group setting with other students
3. Open Zoom Panel – This session is only available with the Geography Career Mingle After Hours event in Handshake. The panel will focus on sustainability, green infrastructure, and the built environment. Unlike the group sessions above, this panel will have representatives from multiple organizations.

Prior to attending a session in the career mingle, spend some time researching the different organizations you want to meet. We've provided a link below each organization's name to make it easy to find them. There are also links directly within Handshake.

Many of the people attending the career mingle are UTK Geography graduates. Look for this symbol:



We highly recommend that you treat these informational interviews just like you would a job interview.

- Attend the sessions you sign up for. Each employer will see your name for your sessions.
- Arrive to your sessions on time.
- Dress appropriately even though it's virtual.
- Come prepared to the session with questions.
- Ask for the person's contact information so you can follow up with a thank you of some kind.
- Ask if you can contact them with follow up questions. If so, ask for their preferred form of communication (email, LinkedIn, etc).

I can't stress this point enough. Each of these people operate in tightly knit professional communities. You don't want to make a bad impression with an organization or in an industry you'd like to work in.

We've provided instructions at the end of this document if you've never used Handshake before and need help finding and registering for sessions.

This is the highest concentration of professional geographers you'll have the chance to interact with as a student here at UTK, so **don't miss this opportunity**. Some of you may be nervous about talking to these professionals. That's normal. The good news is that each one of these people loves what they do and are eager to share their professional passion with you. Remember, they signed up for this event because they want to talk to you.

Have fun and be curios.

Below is a list of the organizations and people attending the career mingle. Feel free to look them up on LinkedIn and search for their name and the name of their organization online. We've also included some specific topics you may want to ask about with each organization.

Career Mingle | Wed. Nov. 17 | 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm ET

USDA Forest Service

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/>

Todd Schroeder

Be sure to ask me about:

- Post-graduate research opportunities
- Navigating the federal hiring process
- Remote sensing

Knox County Engineering and Public Works

<https://www.knoxcounty.org/epw/>



Vi Tran

Be sure to ask me about:

- Graduate School
- GIS in local government

Tennessee Valley Authority

<http://www.tva.gov/>



Sam McCloud

Be sure to ask me about:

- TNGIC
- Undergraduate research

State of Tennessee, Department of Finance and Administration, Strategic Technology Solutions

<https://www.tn.gov/finance/sts-gis.html>

Dennis Pedersen - Dennis has served as the Director of GIS Services in the Department of Finance and Administration, Strategic Technology Solutions for 16 years, and has worked in State government managing and coordinating GIS activities since 1993. He has been part of the Tennessee Base Mapping Program since its inception in the late 1990's and has led the development of enterprise GIS solutions and other statewide GIS/mapping initiatives including Tennessee's participation in the USGS 3DEP program. Dennis holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Geography from Carroll University in Wisconsin, and a Master of Science degree in Geography from Northern Illinois University. He is active with the National States Geographic Information Council and the Tennessee Geographic Information Council and served as President of TNGIC in 2000.

Be sure to ask me about:

- URISA, TNGIC, and AAG
- I didn't have an internship
- GISP

Calvert Street Group

<http://www.calvertstreet.com/>



Madison Allen - Madison Allen works for Calvert Street Group, a public affairs consulting firm that specializes in land-use development, in Nashville, TN. She graduated from UTK in 2019 with a double major in Geography and Psychology.

Be sure to ask me about:

- What is it about Calvert Street that sets you apart from your competitors?

- What is something interns have gained through their experience interning at Calvert Street?
- What extracurricular activities do you think are beneficial for students to get involved in if they want to do the type of work you do?

Oak Ridge National Laboratory

<http://www.ornl.gov/>

Chris DeRolph

Be sure to ask me about:

- Internships
- Post-Bachelors Research



Jesse Piburn Be sure to ask me about:

- Pokemon Go
- Internships
- Data Science

East Tennessee Development District

<http://www.etdd.org/>



Emily Craig

Be sure to ask me about:

- Grad school versus entering the workforce
- Supporting local government
- Scenic byways

Knoxville-Knox County Planning

<https://www.knoxplanning.org/>



Terry Gilhula

Nick Schoenborn

Alex Zendel

Erin Kelbly

Andrew Beasley

Aubrey Weiland

NASA Earth Science Disasters Program

<https://disasters.nasa.gov/>

Ronan Lucey - I am a Research Associate supporting the NASA Applied Science Earth Science Disasters Program. In this role, I serve as an administrator of the NASA Disasters GIS Mapping Portal, as well as a provider of Program coordination support for Latin America / Caribbean and domestic partners throughout the Disaster cycle – risk, resilience, response, and recovery. I received my bachelor's degree in Geography from the University of Massachusetts, and my master's degree in Earth System Science from the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

Be sure to ask me about:

- Undergraduate opportunities and how to seek those out to prepare you for the working force, particularly in a field like geography where the degree can be applied to a wide range of positions and career paths.
- My background in computer science – I almost failed computer science my freshman year of college and now I use it regularly for work, there was a monumental shift in there that students can learn from.
- What employers/hiring managers are looking for beyond GIS experience and coursework – as a Principal Investigator I do hire students straight out of school, and there are soft and hard skills that are considered valuable and can enhance the resume of prospective hires.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

<https://www.noaa.gov/>



Paul Lemieux III - Paul received his B.A. in Geography and M.S. in Information Science from the University of Tennessee in 2014 and 2016 respectively. He currently works as a Physical Scientist for the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) at the Stennis Space Center in Mississippi. Previously he has interned at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, the ORNL DAAC, and the ORNL Research Library.

If students want to learn about navigating USAJobs for gov't positions I can help with that. I can also talk about navigating internships within the NASA system. Not really aware of any certifications needed for this industry, but ML/AI and Cloud Development are big initiatives being pushed in gov't right now.

Be sure to ask me about:

- Metadata, archives, digital curation, libraries
- Weather, kites
- Connect on LinkedIn

USGS Upper Midwest Environmental Sciences Center



Kyle Landolt

Be sure to ask me about:

- Working at ORNL
- Graduate degrees

Colleen Anderson

Be sure to ask me about:

-

The Trust for Public Land

Kirsten Mickow

Be sure to ask me about:

- The intersection of GIS and land preservation
- Red or green

City of Maryville



Ray Boswell

Be sure to ask me about:

- Internships

Tennessee Department of Transportation

Kim McDonough – Kim has extensive experience working for TDOT. Kim is also heavily involved in URISA, the international professional organization for geospatial professionals.

Be sure to ask Kim about:

- What is a GISP, why should you want to be one, what can you start doing now to earn it?
- What is the URISA GIS Corps?
- What is the URISA Vanguard?
- Where to learn more about TDOT internship opportunities

WSP



Drew Gaskins

Be sure to ask me about:

- AICP

Maxar

Damani Driver

Be sure to ask me about:

- Internship opportunities
- Adding value to satellite data

National Trust for Historic Preservation

Kate Lenzer - Kate Lenzer, M.S., GISP is the Senior GIS Project Manager for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, a non-profit organization dedicated to saving America's historic sites, telling the full American story, building stronger communities, and investing in preservation's future. Kate has spent the last 10 years combining science (GIS) with creativity (cartography) to save both land-based and historic resources across the country.

Be sure to ask me about:

- What's the positive (and negative) of working for a small GIS consulting firm? For a non-profit organization?
- How are you using GIS in the humanities/to understand racial equity/to understand climate change effects?
- I don't know what I want to do with my life, how did you figure out what career trajectory to take?

Bath and Body Works

Beth Rogers

Be sure to ask me about:

- How weather, marketing, and data science drive decision making

Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation

Bonnie Craighead - I graduated from UTK with a degree in Environmental and Soil Science, I then went on to have an AmeriCorps position with the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement in Knoxville, which regulates surface coal mining. After that I spent two years working with the USDA-NRCS as a Soil Conservation Technician before landing at my current position as an NPDES permit writer and coal mine inspector for the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) Mining Section, where I have worked the last two years.

Be sure to ask me about:

- My experience with AmeriCorps
- TDEC offers unpaid, semester long internship programs, including one in the Mining Section
- TDEC employees people with a wide range of backgrounds and degree programs

TerraCycle



Riley Smith

Be sure to ask me about:

-

Student Conservation Association

Stephanie Meeks

Be sure to ask me about:

- My experience with The Nature Conservancy
- My experience with The National Trust for Historic Preservation

After Hours Panel Discussion | Wed. Nov. 17 | 4:00 – 5:00 pm ET

Sherwood Design Engineers

Ian McRae | Innovation Designer

ORNL, Built Environment Characterization Group

Bandana Kar | Group Lead

Contact us with questions

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UTK Geography Career Mingle



Steps to success you can take today

Attend an event

Learn more about employers or roles you're interested in, directly from the source.

Reply to Schreiber Foods

Schreiber Foods messaged you 14 days ago and would love to hear back.

The University of Tennessee-Knoxville Career Center →
View your school's resources

Get Virtual Face Time with Employers

1 Log into Handshake and click on Attend an event

The screenshot shows the Handshake website interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for 'Jobs', 'Events', and 'Employers'. Below that, there are search filters for 'Event Search' and 'On-Campus Interviews'. A search bar contains the text 'geography'. To the right of the search bar are filters for 'This week', 'This month', 'Career fair', 'Virtual', 'Saved', and 'All filters'. Below the search bar, there are two event listings:

- Geography Career Mingle After Hours**: Virtual Session, Wed November 17, 2021, 4:00 - 5:00 pm ET sessions.
- Geography Career Mingle**: Virtual career fair, Wed November 17, 2021, 2:00 - 4:00 pm ET sessions.

Orange arrows point to the search bar and the two event listings.

2 Search for geography and view the two sessions

Created by Michael Camponovo | Tuesday, October 26, 2021

