

# Richard D. Wright Award for Excellence in Applied GIS

## Call for Nominations

### Background

Dr. Richard D. Wright began his academic career as a classically trained cartographer, graduating with a Ph.D. in Geography from the University of Kansas in 1967. For the next 25 years, he served in the Department of Geography at San Diego State University (SDSU), teaching and advising in the areas of traditional analog mapping and cartography. In the late 1980s, Dr. Wright saw the major potential for the use of GIS and computer-aided cartography in helping advance graduate and undergraduate studies at SDSU and was one of the original founders of the **Center for Earth Systems Analysis Research (CESAR)**. Over the next 15-20 years, he was instrumental in generating the external funds needed to build and grow the CESAR lab. In doing so, he brought a range of applied GIS projects to the lab, and these projects and Dr. Wright's guidance and support helped train two generations of applied GIS specialists at the graduate and undergraduate levels. For his many contributions to applied GIS he was awarded the James R. Anderson Medal by the Association of American Geographers Applied Geography Specialty Group in 2002. In 2009, Dr. Christopher Brown established the Richard D. Wright Award for Excellence in Applied GIS to recognize and honor the contributions of Dr. Wright and to also recognize excellence in students interested in similar applied work we conduct at New Mexico State University.

**Qualifications for the Award** – The award seeks to recognize the following qualifications of **both undergraduate and graduate students** at NMSU:

- Sincere interest in the use of GIS and other geospatial tools to ask and answer applied research questions in the areas of environmental and urban geography,
- Excellence in coursework as recognized by high marks in GIS and related classes, and
- Desire to use the skills gathered in these classes to do applied professional work that informs environmental and urban issues and contributes to meeting related challenges.

**Submission and review process** – Nominations for this award should be made to the NMSU Department of Geography Awards Committee by Campus Mail or Email ([brownchr@nmsu.edu](mailto:brownchr@nmsu.edu)) by 1 April 2013. Winners will be notified prior to the Spring Awards reception when awards will be presented. Copies of a current transcript should also be included in the application packet, and the nominations should consist of a short narrative that does the following:

- Identifies the student being nominated and notes their academic qualifications,
- Speaks to the student's interest in the areas of environmental and urban geography and their desire to make a contribution in one or both of these areas, and
- Makes a formal endorsement and recommendation for this award.