

Press Information

Name: Kevin Kane

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Company: Iowa State University GIS Facility

Telephone: 515-294-0526

E-mail: kkane@iastate.edu

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Central Iowa GIS Day Events

Celebrate Your World With GIS

Ames, Iowa—Iowa State University's GIS Facility, along with the City of Ames and Story County, will host Central Iowa GIS Day with an open house Wednesday, November 14, 2007. Beginning at 9 a.m., the event will include speakers on current local and statewide GIS topics and a poster session showcasing GIS projects of students, staff, and faculty at Iowa State University along with projects from across central Iowa.

This year's open house features speakers from city, county and state agencies using GIS as well as GIS applications currently being researched at Iowa State University. These applications include Iowa's natural resources, agriculture, transportation, and public health. The speakers will highlight how GIS is being used in Ames, Story County, and the state of Iowa, as well as nationally and internationally to solve many of our most pressing concerns. The GIS Day event information is posted at www.gis.iastate.edu/gisday.

"The use of GIS technology has increased dramatically at the city, county, and state levels in the past 5 years," said Kevin Kane, director of Iowa State's GIS facility. "GIS is also one of the fastest growing information technology careers for students, more and more of whom are realizing the benefit of having GIS as part of their studies."

Held each year on the Wednesday of National Geographic Society's Geography Awareness Week (November 12–16), GIS Day is a global event that celebrates geographic information system (GIS) technology, the innovative technology that uses geography to bring countless benefits to the world. The central Iowa GIS open house provides an opportunity for those curious about GIS to see its applications in action.

A GIS is a computer-based mapping tool that takes information from a database about a location, such as streets, buildings, water features, and terrain, and turns it into visual layers. The ability to see geographic features on a map gives users a better understanding

of a particular location, enabling planners, analysts, and others to make informed decisions about their communities.

Although you may not be aware of it, GIS touches our lives daily. It is used throughout the world to solve problems related to the environment, health care, land use, business efficiency, education, and public safety. The power supply directed to homes, the patrol cars and fire trucks that keep neighborhoods safe, and the delivery trucks on the road all function more efficiently because of GIS. This technology can also help businesses place ATMs and restaurants at more convenient locations, allow people to pull maps off the Internet, and help farmers grow more crops with less chemicals.

Most recently we have seen how GIS technology can be used to aid Homeland Security initiatives, map the recent fires in southern California, and monitor the spread of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The applications of GIS technology are endless, limited only by the imagination of its users. From border patrol agents to doctors, and from federal agency employees to local city planners, people in nearly every profession all over the world are reaping the benefits of this extraordinary technology.

GIS Day serves to make people aware of GIS technology and the important contributions it is making in the fields of science, technology, information, and the humanities. It is a grassroots event and a reflection of the enthusiasm and commitment of individual GIS users everywhere.

This year marks GIS Day's ninth year, so be sure to join the celebration and become a part of this annual tradition. For event registration, support, and ideas or to find a GIS Day 2007 event near you, visit www.gisday.com.

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GIS at Iowa State University

The GIS Support and Research Facility is a public computing facility established to support the use of geographic information system (GIS) technology at Iowa State University. The mission of the facility is to provide a high level GIS research support laboratory for students, faculty, and staff as well as to provide GIS

education and outreach to the Iowa State University community and the state of Iowa.

GIS Day is principally sponsored by the National Geographic Society, the Association of American Geographers, the University Consortium for Geographic Information Science, the United States Geological Survey, the Library of Congress, Sun Microsystems, Hewlett–Packard, and ESRI.

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