

## AINA NEWS

*AINA's 75th Anniversary*

December 2020 marked the 75th anniversary of the Arctic Institute of North America. The colourful history of AINA has been described in a number of *Arctic* publications. To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the institute in 1966, Raleigh Parkin, John C. Reed, and David C. Nutt each wrote about its origins, past and current history, and the future of the institute (Nutt, 1966; Parkin, 1966; Reed, 1966). In 2005, Robert MacDonald (2005) wrote a paper for the institute's 60th anniversary that celebrated its many accomplishments and described the challenges it has faced.

Our 75th year opened with the extraordinary challenge of the pandemic, but the institute remained busy with almost uninterrupted work at the journal *Arctic*, the Kluane Lake Research Station, and the Arctic Science and Technology Information System (ASTIS). Two new postdoctoral fellows and an undergraduate student have joined in current AINA projects (see below), building on the institute's program to support our mandate to preserve and disseminate information on environmental, physical, and social conditions in the North.

*Postdoctoral Fellow Michael Allchin Joins AINA*

Dr Michael Allchin has joined AINA as a post-doctoral fellow specializing in mountain environment observation and monitoring. Funded in part by the Canadian Mountain Network and Yukon Government, his initial goal is to improve understanding of the distribution of equipment and activities involved in measuring a wide range of environmental phenomena in and around Canada's upland landscapes. The findings of this research will help to identify gaps in coverage and assist in the development of a comprehensive mountain observation strategy. These outcomes will, in turn, guide the development of new systems to support the discovery, search, visualization, and retrieval, and thus sharing, of scientific data and Indigenous knowledge relating to mountain environments among government agencies, academic researchers, and the lay community.

Michael's career in the environmental sciences dates from the early 1990s. Having graduated with a BSc in geology from the University of Bristol, and following military service and a short spell with an international IT consultancy, he was employed as an environmental information systems development manager at the UK Natural Environment Research Council's Institute of Hydrology, subsequently the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. On moving to British Columbia, Canada, in 2001, he continued to work with the same group as a contractor for another ten years developing geospatially based software to implement the outputs of hydrological research within operational systems primarily for use



*Michael Allchin (Photo by Kirsten Allchin).*

by environmental regulatory and protection agencies. From 2009–12, he was employed by the University of Saskatchewan as data and information manager for two major research networks focused on cold-regions hydrology and cryospheric change. He went on to take (remotely) a MSc in geographical information science with the universities of Leeds and Southampton before embarking on doctoral studies at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) where his research described and quantified trends in seasonal snow cover across the Northern Hemisphere between the early 1970s and late 2010s. Since 2016, he has also worked as the manager of the Quesnel River Research Centre, a UNBC field station in the foothills of the Cariboo Mountains.

*Postdoctoral Fellow Srijak Bhatnagar Joins AINA*

Srijak Bhatnagar joined AINA in the fall of 2020 as a postdoctoral fellow in the Genome Canada-funded project entitled, "The Role of Genomics in Fostering and Supporting Arctic Biodiversity: Implications for Wildlife Management, Policy and Indigenous Food Security." Dr. Bhatnagar earned his PhD in microbiology from the University of California Davis, where he studied the effect of various environmental factors on the microbial ecology of ecosystems. Subsequently, he joined the Energy Bioengineering and Geomicrobiology group at the University of Calgary where he has been mapping the microbial ecosystem of the Canada's Arctic Ocean with a special focus on biodegradation and cleanup of oil spills. With expertise in genomics, he joins the Genomics in Society Interdisciplinary Research Teams (GiSRT) at AINA. The GiSRT project aims to harmonize the distributed genomics knowledge pertaining to species that are of cultural, social, and economic interest to northern Indigenous peoples. As part of the project, Dr. Bhatnagar will engage with partner organizations to jointly develop



Srijak Bhatnagar (Photo by Margaret Cramm).

genomics knowledge mobilization tools that will support scientific decision making. Dr. Bhatnagar will work with a team of genomics experts and end-users to assess gaps in scientific work associated with conservation and biodiversity with a view to supporting end-users with interests and responsibilities in co-management of wildlife and monitoring of conservation and biodiversity.

#### *Emily Marston Joins AINA as a Project Coordinator*

Emily Marston, an undergraduate student from Royal Roads University, joined AINA in December 2020 as the project coordinator for Dr. Maribeth Murry and Dr. Peter Pulsipher's project, "The Role of Genomics in Fostering and Supporting Arctic Biodiversity: Implications for Wildlife Management, Policy and Indigenous Food Security."

This project brings together expertise across disciplines and a diversity of cultures and organizations to collaboratively develop genomics knowledge-mobilization tools that support environmental decision making. Emily's role is to help maintain organizational discipline, support a synergistic approach, and share progress reports through project progression.

A born and raised Alberta farm kid, she graduated from Olds College in 2018 with a diploma in environmental stewardship and rural planning and is in her third year at Royal Roads University, pursuing an environmental management degree, with hopes of continuing on to a masters degree.

Emily is most grateful for the generous support of Dr. Maribeth Murry and Genome Canada in providing her with



Emily Marston (Photo by Jen Chipperfield Photography).

the opportunity to work on the project, considering it the "best Christmas present ever." She anticipates that working on the project with its team of experts, while continuing with her studies, will greatly build her professional expertise.

#### *Data and Information Services News*

The ArcticNet Publications Database ([www.aina.ucalgary.ca/arcticnet](http://www.aina.ucalgary.ca/arcticnet)) now describes more than 4700 publications from ArcticNet, 359 publications from the Canadian Arctic Shelf Exchange Study (CASES), and 211 publications from the International North Water Polynya Study (NOW). There are more than 5100 publications in this database including 3400 refereed publications, 714 student theses, and 1000 other non-refereed publications. AINA is pleased to work with ArcticNet to provide this searchable archive of ArcticNet's refereed and non-refereed scientific publications.