This series of panels and paper sessions are to be a type of resurgence of an inspiring panel that took place during the 2011 AAG in Seattle, Washington: Decolonizing, Healing and Hopeful Geographies: (Re)membering Indigenous Relationships to the World. Through conversation the collective task was to research, reclaim and reassemble Indigenous relationships to the world through various methodologies: decolonizing knowledge, engaging healing, and forging hopeful geographies for a more just world.

This symposium builds upon this discussion, but is meant to expand into “other” understandings and implications of hope and to intersect with one of the featured themes of the 2013 AAG annual meeting in Los Angeles: Activist Geographies: Struggles for Social and Environmental Justice. The geographies of hope symposium is composed of 8 different panel and discussion sessions, all with a common thread of addressing geographies of hope, a kind of geography that inevitably addresses both the means—struggles and activism—and the ends—social and environmental justice—of activist geographies. Yet the symposium explores how hope takes place in a multiplicity of scales, is articulated in various dimensions and forms, and is defined in diverse ways, contingent upon the theoretical framework, the positionality and the cosmovision of the researcher.

The paper sessions and panels are to include the following: Hopeful New Political Economies Plenary: What Exactly are Geographies of Hope? What is Hope? (panel); Hopeful Political Economies (paper session); Gaining Ground? Geographies of Viable, Equitable Agricultures (& the Seeds Thereof)(paper session); Hope and Social and Environmental Justice Geographies (paper session); Geographies of Hope: Sustaining Resilience in the Face of Climate Change and its Mitigation (panel); Geographies of Hope and “Mas Allá”: Cosmologies, Dreams, Emotions, Healing and “Other” Geographies Be(y)on(d) the Map (panel); Giving Back: Defining Reciprocity in Research (paper session); and the last session, Carving out Future Pathways for Geographies of Hope (panel), is to be a discussion panel that open up questions of hope to the audience, encouraging a panelists-audience conversation that
brings together some of the topics discussed during the previous Geographies of Hope Symposium sessions.

**Geographies of Hope Symposium I: Plenary: What Exactly are Geographies of Hope?**

*What is Hope?*  
**(PANEL, COMPLETE)**

**Organizer, Julianne Hazlewood**

Do we need to know how to define hope in order to engage hope? Ernst Bloch discusses utopian hope as the Not-Yet-Consciousness, the multiple principles of a utopian world, and a ‘utopian homeland’ of social justice and social change. In the 1970’s, Paulo Freire, defined hope as an ontological need (for social change). At the turn of the millennium, in *Spaces of Hope*, David Harvey proposed that the possibilities for liberation exist within the contradictions of a capitalist global economy, and that people can cultivate and create small changes, leading to significant material transformations in global society. In the last decade hope has been constructed as both an emotional geography and a “philosophy for change”; geographers have begun to discuss what constitutes hopeful geographies through reference to case studies. Then, what is hope?—an ontological necessity, a utopian space, material transformations, a philosophy, an emotion, new relationships to the world, or a possibility for social change? Does hope involve structural changes in the global political economy? Does hope need to be sowed, tended and harvested from the ground up within agro-ecological systems? Is hope always related to socio-environmental justice? Is hope about rebuilding relationships to the world, constructing networks of resistance and proactivity? Is hope about engaging Indigenous solutions to the climate change crisis? Does hope take place in dreams and rearranging space through cartographic representations? Is hope possible without healing? Does hope involve transforming ‘negative’ emotional geographies into hopeful ones? Does hope stem from decolonization and reciprocal research, an ethics that moves Indigenous and “other” knowledges, which have been historically racialized and colonized, from the margins to the center? And finally, for a world in crisis, is there hope for greater social and environmental justice? Why or why not? The geographies of hope symposium plenary panel will focus on these questions.

**Geographies of Hope Symposium II: Hopeful Political Economies (PAPER SESSION, OPEN)**

**Organizer: Lindsay Shade**

The phrase political economy suggests that politics and economy are not two separate spheres but are always intertwined. Geographies of political economy are concerned with the ways in which political economic processes are spatialized and accordingly shape our world. New geographies of hope contribute critical insights into the ways that political economic processes are enacted at different scales, and in different milieus. This panel session aims to place greater emphasis on the contested politics of economic process and practice, drawing attention to the ways in which political economy not only shapes our lives, but also the ways in which people remake and create new political economies through their every day practices and forming novel networks for change. Often, people’s aspirations for justice and ‘living well’ drive hopeful new forms of engagement with seemingly hegemonic political economic structures, which they challenge, resist, and transform through their engagements. From the worldwide Occupy movement, to Indigenous people’s and peasants’ defense of culturally-based, subsistence livelihoods in the face of dispossession, to changing processes of urbanization where claims for a Right to the City have exercised new forms of collective power, to new ‘intentional’ concepts such as transition towns, people around the world are positing and practicing radical new political economies. We invite papers that invoke the
inter-play of hope and practices of social change in the contexts of resisting, transforming, and/or constructing new political economic structures. We welcome a wide range of themes, including but not limited to, relations between people and landscapes, difference, and desire in the constitution of hopeful political economic imaginaries.

If you are interested in presenting a paper for this session, please send an abstract of no longer than 250 words and PIN # to Lindsay Shade (lshade@gmail.com) by October 16th.

Geographies of Hope Symposium III: Gaining Ground? Geographies of Viable, Equitable Agricultures (& the Seeds Thereof) (PAPER SESSION, OPEN)

Organizer: Garrett Graddy

Recently, geographers have embraced the subjects of food and agriculture by investigating the complex and often unjust political economies and political ecologies at work in historical and contemporary agri-food systems. This is critical research—to be commended and continued. Amidst these explorations of soil and labor exploitation, however, we seek to foster concurrent conversation on explicitly hopeful research findings. This topic can go in a number of directions.

- Where is ecologically resilient, socially equitable agriculture taking (or trying to take) place?
- Where is bountiful, nourishing food being (socially re)produced? How, by whom, and why? With what obstacles, and to what effects?
- Where are promising pieces of agrarian reform or agricultural policy being proposed and actualized?
- How are farmers and fishers, farmworkers and food processors mobilizing for—and even achieving—just conditions?

In addition to empirical research, we invite theoretical analyses on ongoing scholarly and political debates, namely:

- What constitutes ‘productive’ farming, ‘healthy’ food, ‘intellectual property,’ ‘improved’ seeds—and even quality of life?
- Where are agro-ecological alternatives growing?
- (How) Are these alternatives destabilizing discourses of modernity?
- How are they dismantling legacies of racism, colonialism, and patriarchy?
- How does the rallying cry of ‘food sovereignty’ unfold and impact these dynamics?
- What new/ancient ecological epistemologies are (re)emerging in these processes?
- Do these ‘findings’ call for alternative research methodologies?

Alongside bold, critical reflections, the goal of this panel is to share insights—to explore and connect geographies of decolonizing, healing, and hopeful agricultures. Join us.

If you are interested in presenting a paper for this session, please send an abstract (~250 words) and PIN # to Garrett Graddy (American University School of International Service) at garrettgraddy@gmail.com by October 16th.

Geographies of Hope Symposium IV: Hope and Social and Environmental Justice Geographies (PAPER SESSION, COMPLETE)

Organizer: Beth Rose Middleton

Geographies of social and environmental justice trace the physical, conceptual, cultural, and spiritual terrains of struggles for more just spaces in which to live, work, and play. The act of creating those spaces might be explained as developing a geography of hope. Such a geography emerges from the intersections of personal and political relationships to place,
community, and region, over time and at multiple scales. Geographers of hope often exist in a borderlands of identity, bridging diverse worlds in a way that creates new methods for navigating between and within them. A geography of hope for achieving social and environmental justice may involve mapping the legacies of historical and contemporary dispossession and injustice, in order to achieve a future of recognition, restitution, and healing; or it may involve utopian visioning by diverse parties to reclaim geographies of energy production or urban development. This panel will explore the relationships between the praxis of hope, and social and environmental justice geographies. We invite papers that interrogate the concepts of hope and geographies of hope, in a context of social and environmental justice movements. What are the terrains of struggle? What role does a geography of hope play in forging alliances, building movements, developing creative responses, and envisioning more just futures? Is hope a useful concept in social and environmental justice geographies, or is a more “activist” lens required? What might the concept of “hope” teach us about productively transforming geographies of social and environmental injustice into spaces of greater justice and inclusion.

**Geographies of Hope Symposium V: Geographies of Hope: Sustaining Resilience in the Face of Climate Change and its Mitigation**  
(PANEL, OPEN)

**Organizer, Jay Johnson**

While the major population centers of the world are only beginning to glimpse the environmental changes related to anthropocentric climate change, less populated areas of the globe, such as the Arctic and Pacific islands, are already under assault. The Indigenous and “other” peoples of these often marginalized regions are responding to the environmental changes that they are witnessing using a variety of techniques and technologies evolved over thousands of years of habitation in these landscapes, as well as through engagement with Western science. As social and natural scientists we have the opportunity to learn from the peoples and communities with ancestral knowledge of these changing environments, established over long periods, which have produced sustainable and resilient strategies for both adapting to global climate change and resisting often unjust mitigation strategies stemming from UNFCCC negotiations. How these communities respond may provide both hope and answers for other populations’ adaptations around the world. This panel will discuss various research projects aimed at understanding Indigenous adaptation and mitigation strategies for sustaining resilient landscapes and cultures in the face of climate change.

If you are interested in participating in this panel, please send a description of your work in this area and your AAG PIN # to Jay Johnson (jaytjohnson@ku.edu)

**Geographies of Hope Symposium VI. Geographies of Hope and “Mas Allá”: Cosmologies, Dreams, Emotions, Healing and “Other” Geographies Be(y)on(d) the Map**  
(PANEL, OPEN)

**Organizer: Julianne Hazlewood**

By drawing on the importance of reciprocal respect in a world based on pluriversality and an infinite diversity of Indigenous and “other” life worlds, we ask how we can honor both ancestral and innovative relationships to place and (re)member more integrative understandings of knowing, being, and living. The work to be shared in this panel is based upon experiences and understandings assembled in or along with specific Indigenous and “other” communities who have been affected by historically based racializing processes, acts of domination and power matrices. We propose that decolonizing, dreaming, feeling, and healing are essential to building emergent hopeful geographies, or “geographies of más allá”: geographies that exist beyond every day temporalities and spacialities. Geographies of más allá request the tumbling and crumbling of posts and pillars that have signposted the
“advance” of the discipline. They excavate structures built atop Indigenous and “other” peoples’ constructions, and beyond dualistic schisms that constrain and colonize our everyday lives since “discovery of ‘the New World’”—ie. mind-body, nature-culture, and space-time. The paper presentations in this session discuss geographies that are constituted by diverse matrices of concepts and processes, such as territory, cartographies, everyday life worlds, dreams, feelings and emotions, and the significance of moving through healing historical, spiritual, epistemological and cultural traumas to geographies of más allá. The aim is carving out new paths into unchartered hopeful grounds be(y)on(d) the maps.

If you are interested in participating in this panel, please send a description of your work in this area and your AAG PIN # to Juli Hazlewood (jahaze@gmail.com) by October 16th.

**Geographies of Hope Symposium VII: Giving Back: Defining Reciprocity in Research**

(PAPER SESSION, OPEN)

Organizer: Douglas Herman

Historically, research has involved a one-way relationship in which data is taken by academic researchers with little consideration about “giving back” to the communities with whom we work. “Research” has thus come to be seen as a “dirty word” in many Indigenous and “other” communities. In recent years, university ethics policies have been revised in attempts to address that most research has not reflected pluri-ethnic worldviews and has not been premised on reciprocity. To this end, principles of respectful relationships, consultation and collaboration have been incorporated into research protocols. In addition to these institutional guidelines, individual researchers must define for themselves what the quality and nature of their relationships will be with the communities with whom they work. They must ask themselves, what does reciprocity look and feel like in my working relationships with communities with whom we conduct research?

This session invites papers that investigate what it means to ‘give back’ in your work. What institutional barriers must be navigated in efforts to develop reciprocal relationships with community partners? How do you know when the outcomes of a research project have upheld your ethical obligations or goals of reciprocity? How do you navigate the unequal power relations inherent in academic research with Indigenous and “other” communities, in defining appropriate ways of ‘giving back’? How can research be mutually beneficial, given the historical and ongoing relationships of power in centres of knowledge production? How are the multiple perspectives within an individual community navigated in efforts to ensure positive outcomes for research partners?

For researchers who are members of the communities with whom they work, ‘giving back’ may present unique challenges and opportunities. Can research itself be a form of ‘giving back’? To whom are we ‘giving’? How can culturally-based concepts of gifting, witnessing or diverse ceremonial aspects of knowledge production be incorporated into relationships of reciprocity among academics and research communities?

If you are interested in presenting a paper for this session, please send an abstract of no longer than 250 words and PIN # to Doug Herman (hermand@si.edu) by October 16th.

**Geographies of Hope Symposium VIII: Carving out Future Pathways for Geographies of Hope**

(PANEL, COMPLETE)

Organizer: Julianne Hazlewood

Wrapping things up for now, what are geographies of hope and why do they matter? The Carving out Future Pathways for Geographies of Hope will involve some of the participants
from the first seven geographies of hope panels and paper sessions. These participants will pose some principal questions that have emerged from the previous panels and paper sessions to participants of all sessions, but especially to open up questions of hope to the audience of these sessions. The main idea of this session is to create a panelists-audience conversational space for future directions of the diverse processes and concepts that constitute a multidimensional understanding of geographies of hope that can be put into practice for epistemological and material social change and socio-environmental justice.