

AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

American Geographical Society Awards Alexander and Ilse Melamid Medal

Description: The Alexander and Ilse Melamid Medal, awarded by the American Geographical Society (AGS), is one of several prestigious honors given by the Society. Dr. Kendra McSweeney, Professor of Geography at the Ohio State University will receive the medal during the AGS Fall Symposium, to be held virtually later this month.

[New York City, NY] – [November 11, 2020] — The American Geographical Society (AGS) announced today that Dr. Kendra McSweeney, Professor of Geography at the Ohio State University has been selected to receive the 5th Alexander and Ilse Melamid Medal. The prize will be presented on Thursday, November 19, 2020 during the Society’s annual Fall Symposium to be held online due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Established in 2002, the Alexander and Ilse Melamid Medal is the latest medal to be awarded by AGS. It was named after AGS Councilor Alexander Melamid, who served on the board from 1975 until his death in 2001. Dr. Melamid was the recipient of another AGS medal, the Samuel Finley Breese Morse Medal, which he received in 1991. After Dr. Melamid’s death, the medal was created in his honor by his wife, Ilse. This medal seeks to award those who examine the influence of humans on the natural world. It is awarded in recognition of “...outstanding work on the dynamic relationship between human culture and natural resources.”

Dr. Kendra McSweeney is a Professor of Geography at the Ohio State University (OSU). She received her MSc in Geography from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville and her PhD from McGill University in Montreal. Her research focuses on the relationships between people and forests, and how those relationships are mediated by demographic, economic, and political factors at multiple scales. Most recently, she is studying how and why the transshipment of cocaine through Central America is associated with social and ecological devastation in indigenous homelands. Her research has been funded by the National Science Foundation, the National Geographic Society, the National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center (SESYNC), the Open Societies Foundation, and the American Geographical Society.

Dr. McSweeney has received the Distinguished Career Award from the Cultural and Political Ecology Specialty Group of the AAG and the Carl O. Sauer Award from the Conference of Latin American Geography. At OSU, she received the Distinguished Undergraduate Research Mentor Award and the Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching, and as stated by the Vice President of AGS, Dr. Deborah Popper, has been selected as the newest recipient of the Alexander and Ilse Melamid Medal for her “outstanding contributions to geography and geospatial science” and for “embracing geography’s fieldwork tradition.”

The American Geographical Society (AGS) is a 21st-century learning society dedicated to the advancement of geographic thinking, knowledge, and understanding across business, government, academe, social sectors, and most importantly with teachers and students. Established in 1851, AGS is the oldest professional geographical organization in the United States. It is recognized worldwide as a pioneer in geographical research and education for over 169 years. The mission of AGS is to advance and promote geography in business, government, science, and education. Our goal is to enhance the nation’s geographic literacy to engender sound public policy, national security, and human well-being worldwide. AGS seeks to engage the American public, from its youngest to its oldest citizens, with new and amazing ways to understand and characterize our changing world. The Society maintains its

headquarters in New York City.



Dr. Kendra McSweeney

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