

Earth & Environment

Weekly News

May 22nd - May 28th

Hi Earth & Environment team!

Congratulations to all our graduates and happy summer to everyone!

A quick heads up: we'll be switching to bi-weekly newsletters during the summer.

UPCOMING EVENTS & HAPPENINGS

TUESDAY 05/16

9:30am - 4:30pm: [IS&T RCS Boot Camp - ChatGPT and Transformer Models for Natural Language](#)

Human communication is rich and complex, and one of the main ways we encode it computationally is through Natural Language Processing (NLP). In this tutorial, we'll explore the latest advances in NLP, focusing specifically on transformer models like ChatGPT. First, we'll dive into word embeddings, a technique for encoding words as vectors that capture their semantic meaning. We'll look at the popular word2vec method and explore how to perform linguistic operations using simple vector arithmetic. Next, we'll introduce transformer models like ChatGPT that are trained to generate text, allowing them to perform a wide range of tasks including translation, summarization, and even creative writing. We'll delve into how GPT works and learn how to use it to perform a variety of NLP tasks. Throughout the Boot Camp, attendees will work in small groups applying all these principles/techniques firsthand. After each section of the Boot Camp, each group will come up with a small project that applies the techniques learned in a novel way.

WEDNESDAY 05/24

11:00am: [Yasmin Romitti Dissertation Defense](#)

"Adapting to a warming climate: electricity demand, air conditioning, and the health impacts of extreme heat." **CAS 132.** Zoom link available [here](#).

THURSDAY 05/18

1:30pm: [IS&T RCS Vendor Presentation - Easily Build Dynamic Dashboard Applications in ArcGIS Online](#)

GIS is no longer about creating static maps (well... unless you want to). With ArcGIS Online users can connect to thousands of authoritative real-time datasets, analyze this data, modify symbology, and then configure custom applications. This session will demonstrate some of the recent updates to ArcGIS Online by showing a configurable dashboard getting built on the fly.

CONVOCATION AWARDS



Amir Wilson
College Prize for
Excellence in Earth &
Environment

Each year, the College Prize is awarded to one student who demonstrates extraordinary achievement, both in and out of the classroom. We are proud to present this award to Amir Wilson, who is both academically stellar and heavily involved in environmental/sustainability initiatives outside of the classroom. He graduated magna cum laude with a BA in Earth & Environment and an MS in Remote Sensing & Geospatial Science.



**Becky Petrou
O'Rourke**
Dr. Farouk El-Baz
Environmental Science
Prize

Named for the Founding Director of the Center for Remote Sensing, this award is given annually to an exceptional student in the Earth & Environmental Science major. Several professors have remarked that Becky is one of the best students they've taught in years. She graduated summa cum laude with a minor in Chemistry.



Cora Funke
Dr. T.R. Lakshmanan &
Dr. Lata Chatterjee
Environmental Analysis &
Policy Prize

Named for a married team of scholars, this prize is awarded to a student in the EAP major who demonstrates exceptional service to BU and our global community. Cora wrote for the *Emerald Review*, organized with DivestBU, and completed an Honors project mapping mutual aid in the Boston area. She graduated summa cum laude with a double major in Political Science.



Andrew Bouchie
Franklin C. Erickson Prize

The Erickson Prize, named for the first Chairperson of the Geography Department at BU, recognizes an extraordinary Junior. This year, we are pleased to award it to Andrew "Drew" Bouchie, who has been described as "a beacon of light for our future" and as deeply intellectually generous. He will graduate next year with a degree in Earth & Environmental Science and a minor in Marine Science.

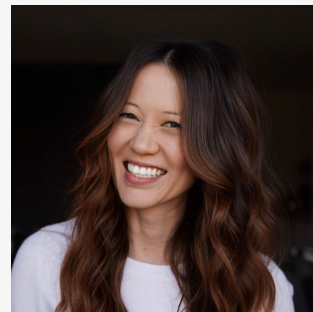


InihAbasi Sunday
Treicy Torres Memorial
Environmental Justice
Award

Named for EAP major Treicy Torres, who passed away in 2017, this award honors an extraordinary student, dedicated to environmental justice. InihAbasi Sunday has committed himself not just to the classroom but to his community, volunteering with The Muddy Water Initiative, Daily Table, the Greater Boston Foodbank, and more. We are so proud to give him this award. He will graduate next year with a BA in Earth & Environmental Science and a minor in Biology.

Kyounggho Ryu
College of Arts and
Sciences Teaching Fellow
Award

Every year, we award a Teaching Fellow for their deep dedication to their students. We are proud to give this award to Kyounggho Ryu, who exemplifies the intelligence, organization, and enthusiasm that are the foundational qualities of any great teacher. He is a PhD Candidate whose work focuses on vertical moisture transport from the surface to the atmospheric boundary layer (and further to the free atmosphere).



Sarah Black
Earth & Environment Teaching Fellow
Award

Alicia Spaziante
Earth & Environment Award for
Excellence in Masters' Research

Every year, we award a Teaching Fellow or Assistant for their commitment to our department and all of our students. We are proud to award Sarah Black for her brilliance, organization, and dedication. She has been lauded as a proactive teacher whose kind approach means to world to her students and helps them succeed. She is a PhD student studying coastal sedimentology whose research focuses on Massachusetts shoreline response to sea level rise, erosion, and storms.

New this year (!), this award recognizes a student for their exceptional work in master's thesis research. Alicia Spaziante impress her thesis committee with her depth of knowledge and mastery of her chosen topic, the quality of her writing, and her outstanding thesis presentation. She graduated this weekend with a Master of Arts in Earth & Environment.

E&E IN THE NEWS

Assistant Professor Xiaozhou Ruan named 2023 Hariri Institute Research Fellow

Asst. Prof. Xiaozhou Ruan has been named a [2023 Junior Faculty Fellow by the Hariri Institute](#) at BU! As the Institute noted, "Dr. Ruan's research develops novel parameterizations of small-scale ocean physics into global climate models. These parameterizations have far-reaching implications for modeling the Earth's climate system."

To learn more about Asst. Professor Ruan and his work on physical oceanography, you can check out his page [here](#).



Professor Lucy Hutyra comments on trees as climate resiliency *and* the need for systemic change in Axios article

"Tree for tree, [urban] trees are potentially doing a lot. ... But they are not the whole solution."

Professor Lucy Hutyra was recently cited in an Axios article on the ["climate gains of urban trees."](#)

She notes the importance of trees are one part of the solution, but that they aren't **"going to offset fossil fuels which are also concentrated in cities."**

Professor Nathan Phillips quoted in [BU Today](#) article on David Zaslav at Commencement

Over 350 people, including the WGA, IATSE, Local 26, and alumni, picketed outside of BU's commencement ceremony on May 21st. Inside the stadium, students booed Zaslav, saying "pay your writers."

Several graduates and faculty members joined the picket line before, after, and during the ceremony. Prof. Phillips also joined and noted, "I applaud the people here who are

asserting their rights, as workers, to fair wages and fair treatment.”



You can also follow the E&E Department on Twitter [@BUEarth](#) and on Instagram [@bostonuearth](#) for more news and updates!

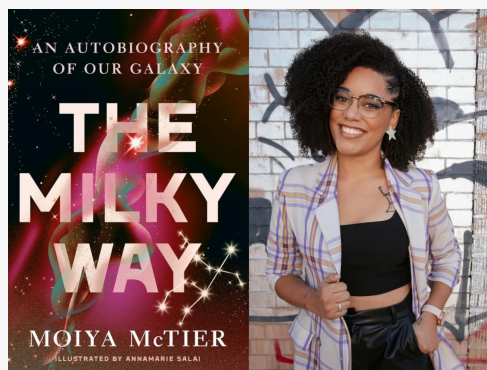
OPPORTUNITIES

[Check out previous opportunities here.](#)

ADVISING REMINDERS

E&E Summer Classes - Information

FUN-GI SECTION



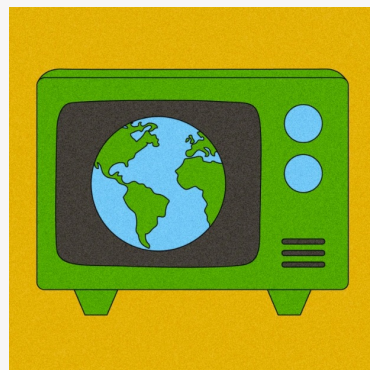
SUMMER MEDIA RECS

The Milky Way: An Autobiography of Our Galaxy

By Dr. Moiya McTier

Are you looking for some interesting and accessible summer science reading? Have you ever wished that the galaxy was a little bit snarky?

Dr. Moiya McTier, an astrophysicist, folklorist,



The Next Cameo On Your Favorite TV Show Could Be Climate Change

By Claire Elise Thompson

"Last September, cozied up in a hotel room at my very first journalism conference, I watched the Netflix original movie *Do Revenge*. ...the moment that made my eyes widen the most wasn't a wardrobe choice, a plot twist, or a reveal. It was about 20 minutes into the movie, when one of the main characters stood

science communicator, and host of the podcast [ExoLore](#), writes from the perspective of our galaxy. In it, "Milky" reflects on how stars are born, how black holes work (plus how they relate to our mental health), and how humans have always looked at the stars with wonder.

This book is perfect for anyone who wants to learn more about space, physics, and what it means to be human in a rapidly changing world. Plus, it's incredibly funny (and there's a bit of a love story).

watching a group of her fellow students, later referred to as "the Greta Thunberg brigade," stage a climate protest on their high school campus.

... 'Of course, we do need new stories like [Extrapolations](#) and [How to Blow Up a Pipeline](#) where climate is the central focus,' says Anna Jane Joyner, the founder and CEO of [Good Energy](#), a climate storytelling consultancy. 'But we also just need to see it acknowledged in any kind of story.'"



Meme / Joke of the Week

Embrace your inner frog this summer.

If you would like to submit a meme or a joke for the weekly newsletter, please reach out to Emma Roth (they/them) at emroth@bu.edu

If you have updates, announcements, or events that you would like sent via the newsletter, please reach out to Emma Roth (they/them) at emroth@bu.edu.



Sent by byearth@bu.edu in collaboration with



Try email marketing for free today!