

Our History

This is the story of a purely volunteer effort based only on passionate and intense long night hours and weekends outside of our daily domestic and work responsibilities. These efforts have been fun, challenging and stimulating. We would not trade them for the world. We believe this is the story of an idea that was acted upon to better the world.

October 2001URISA Annual Conference, Long Beach, California.

URISA Board Member Ed Wells, invites Shoreh Elhami to serve on URISA's International Task Force (ITF). September 2002Shoreh submits a report to the ITF task force on possible roles that ITF could take. GISCorps and its roles were listed in that document.

October 2002URISA Annual Conference, Chicago, Illinois.

Shoreh shares the idea with more URISA members including Sanjiv Gandhi, Martha Lombard, Tom Conry (the Core Committee members at the time) and with several GIS Industry leaders such as Jack Dangermond.

November 2002 March 2003Shoreh and Ed work on a summary page on GISCorps and share it with several Board and general members of URISA.

April 2003URISA's staff creates the GISCorps web site under URISA's main site. The on line Volunteers

Application form is débuted and Shoreh signs up as the first volunteer!

May 2003

July 2003Shoreh starts compiling a database of Friends of the GISCorps (FOG) and volunteers. By July 2003, 26

volunteers have joined the GISCorps. The first article on GISCorps is published in URISA's Newsletter.

July 2003ESRI Users Conference, San Diego California.

Shoreh presents the project to an enthusiastic audience at a users meeting arranged by ESRI. Many of the attendees are already GISCorps volunteers, such as Juna Papajorgji, Shoreh also presents the GISCorps to three other user groups

and meets with several GIS Industry leaders. Arc-News publishes a news bit on GISCorps.

August 2003University of Florida, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, makes the first donation to the GISCorps idea, via Juna Goda

Papajorgji.

September 2003Alachua County, Florida, Property Appraisers, makes the second donation to the GISCorps

idea, via the Honorable Ed Crapo. October 2003Shoreh, Ed, Juna, Martha, Sanjiv, and Tom work on an overall plan for

GISCorps in a power point slide show. This is presented to URISA's Board of Directors on October 15th. The Board of

Directors unanimously endorses the GISCorps as an initiative under URISA's auspices. In the following days using the

power point slides, Shoreh and Juna discuss GISCorps with the conference audience. The number of volunteers

increases to 41.

November 2003The Core Committee of GISCorps is formed. The Core Committee is charged with

developing a Strategic Plan (SP) and an Operation Plan (OP). Committee members are:

- Shoreh Elhami, GIS Director, Delaware County Auditor - Adjunct Instructor, Ohio State University, City and Regional Planning Department

- Juna Papajorgji, GIS Manager, Alachua County - Adjunct Instructor, University of Florida, Urban and Regional Planning Department

- Ed Wells, GIS Consultant, Geo-Decisions, Washington D.C.

- Martha Lombard, URISA Past President - President, Spatial Focus, Birmingham, AL

- Tom Conry, GIS Manager, Fairfax County, VA

- Sanjiv Gandhi, IT Manager, City of Orlando, FL

December 2003Juna Papajorgji, gives a presentation on GISCorps to the Alachua County, Florida, Board of County Commissioners, asking for allocation of web resources to host the

GISCorps's web site. Permission is granted. January 2004A draft of the Strategic and of Operational Plan is

reviewed by Elaine Whitehead (former URISA Board member) and by Dan Parr (URISA President).

February March 2004The GISCorps Core Committee elects Shoreh Elhami as its Chair and Juna Papajorgji as its Co-chair.

Martha Lombard presents the Strategic Plan and the Operational Plan draft to URISA's Board. April 2004Florida Chapter

of URISA, in its Executive Board Meeting in Daytona Beach, on April 23, becomes the first URISA chapter to officially

and unanimously endorse GISCorps as a URISA initiative. June 15, 2004First day on the net for GISCorps.

December, 2004BAAMA Chapter of URISA , in California, endorses GISCorps.

March, 2005Alberta Chapter of URISA endorses GISCorps.

Post 2005 activities are included in "Our Projects" webpage.