



## **YaJuan "Grace" Zhang**

### **BS -- Geographic Information Science -- Natural Resources Management Concentration**

#### **About Me:**

My name is Yajuan "Grace" Zhang, and I am a senior student in Geographic Information System (GIS). I will graduate in spring of 2018. I am from Beijing, the capital of China. Beijing is a comprehensive city and was the ancient capital of six dynasties, which attracts a lot of American travelers. This exposed me to American culture, and I fell in love with it. My mother always tells me how important a college degree is to people's lives and how important it is to live by dreams and achieve them. So I decided to follow my heart and get a degree in the United States. To study here is a great platform to learn more advanced technology, gain knowledge, and get to know a lot of new friends from various cultural backgrounds. I am very excited to learn new things here, and I make a little progress every day. I like Zumba, listening jazz & hip-hop, jogging, reading, eating new food, and hiking to get close to nature.

#### **Why GIS?**

Honestly, I did not know what GIS was before I came here, and I just chose a major to begin college. I was thinking I would change my major later. When I started taking GIS classes with Dr. Adam, Mr. Palmer and Dr. Casas, I gained the knowledge that GIS is the perfect combination of art and science. I feel very fascinated and accomplished when I am able to collect data with GPS tool in the field, create beautiful maps, play with data to make smart decisions, and interpret data to analyze patterns and trends through different spatial data analysis methods in Arcmap and crimsat. GIS benefits almost all industries and organizations. I like to improve the quality of our nature and environment because I believe that humans negatively impact our nature and environment, which leads to global warming, earthquake, and hurricanes. Another reason I love my major is that I enjoy the GIS projects' diversity and I rarely do the same monotonous task every time. That's where my passion lies.

#### **Future Plans:**

I will maintain my GPA above 3.8/4.0 during college. Once I receive my GIS degree, I want to become a professional GIS analyst and help some companies in natural resources to build digital databases, gather data in the field, and perform high level data analysis. In the meantime, I will complete two GIS professional certifications: Esri Technical Certification and GISP as my work experience accumulates accordingly. Eventually, I will work for a government agency in natural resources management and use my GIS knowledge and work experience to make a better plan to solve problems

for environment, forestry, or water resources protection. I regard GIS as my career, and I want to be one of the best GIS analyst in the future.