



Charles G. Manyara, GISP, Ph.D., Professor of Geoinformatics, Dept. of Geospatial & Earth Sciences, Radford University

Education / Other professional licenses or certifications:

- M.B.A., Business Administration, Radford University (2012)
- Ph.D., Geography & Natural Resource Management, Michigan State University (2001)
- M.A., Geographic Information Systems & Remote Sensing, Ohio University (1993)
- B.Ed. (Science), Mathematics & Geography, Kenyatta University, Kenya (1987)
- Certified GIS Professional (GISP), GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) (2023–present)
- FAA Remote Pilot (Part 107), Federal Aviation Administration (2021–present)

Professional Experience:

- Tenured Professor, Remote Sensing / GIS / Surveying, Radford University (2016–present)
- Tenured Associate Professor, Remote Sensing / GIS / Surveying, Radford University (2007–2016)
- Assistant Professor, Remote Sensing / GIS / Surveying, Radford University (2000–2004)
- Lecturer, Remote Sensing / GIS, Radford University (1998–2000)
- Lecturer, GIS/Cartography, Wayne State University (1997–1998)
- GIS Technician, Natural Resources Conservation Service – USDA (1997–1998)
- GIS Technician, Michigan Department of Natural Resources (1996–1997)
- Technology Specialist, SSURGO Program (1990–1991)
- Mathematics & Geography Teacher, Cardinal Otunga High School, Kenya (1987–1989)

Organizations & Professional Membership:

- GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) – GISP (2023–present)
- Association of American Geographers (AAG), multiple specialty groups (1992–present)
- American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS) (1992–present)
- Kenya Scholars & Studies Association (KESSA) – Founder Member (2007–present)
- Virginia Geographic Alliance (2002–present)
- Gamma Theta Upsilon Honor Society – Member & Chapter Advisor (2002–present)
- Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society (2009–present)
- Reader Educational Testing Service (ETS) – AP Environmental Science & Human Geography (2008–present)
- African Studies Association (1992–2009)
- Member Board of Directors, Kenya-USA Diaspora Sacco (KUDS) (2024–present)

Statement of Interest:

I am honored to submit my candidacy for the position of GISP Elected Board Director for the GIS Certification Institute (GISCI). The GISP credential represents far more than a professional designation; it is a public affirmation of ethical practice, technical competence, and sustained professional commitment within a discipline that increasingly informs decisions affecting communities, infrastructure, environmental stewardship, and public safety. I am motivated to serve because I believe deeply in GISCI's mission and in our shared responsibility to protect the integrity, relevance, and public trust associated with the GISP certification.

As a Professor of Geospatial Science at Radford University, my work spans education, workforce development, research, and professional service. I engage daily with students preparing to enter the geospatial profession as well as mid-career practitioners returning for reskilling as technologies, data practices, and professional expectations evolve. In both contexts, I consistently emphasize the core values that GISCI embodies transparent and defensible certification standards, clearly articulated expectations, and an ethics forward culture that positions GIS professionals as trusted stewards of spatial data, analysis, and decision support.

If elected, I will actively support and advance GISCI's current and future priorities. I strongly believe in maintaining a rigorous, regularly updated exam blueprint and certification framework that reflects real world practice while remaining impartial, fair, and accessible. As the geospatial field continues to expand into areas such as unmanned aircraft systems, advanced remote sensing, data governance, and GeoAI, GISCI must balance innovation with continuity. New competencies should be thoughtfully integrated without compromising the foundational standards of professionalism, ethics, and public accountability that distinguish the GISP credential.

I also see meaningful opportunities to strengthen communication and engagement across the broader geospatial community. Clear, consistent outreach to employers, educators, professional societies, and international partners is essential to reinforcing the value, expectations, and credibility of GISP certification. Expanding pathways for students and emerging professionals through initiatives such as Pre GISP and GISP E, mentoring networks, and employer partnerships will help demystify certification, encourage early ethical formation, and sustain the long-term vitality and diversity of the profession.

I bring board- ready experience grounded in governance, collaborative leadership, and service. My academic leadership roles have included strategic planning, policy review, accreditation processes, and committee leadership, all of which demand impartial judgment, confidentiality, and consensus building among diverse stakeholders. In addition, my experience founding and leading nonprofit organizations has strengthened my appreciation for stewardship, transparency, and mission driven decision making in volunteer supported institutions.

It would be a privilege to represent certified GIS professionals across academia, government, private industry, and the nonprofit sector. I am committed to active participation in board meetings, committee work, and in person engagements, and I will approach this role with diligence, collegiality, and a strong focus on public interest. I believe the GISP credential must continue to stand as a trusted, internationally recognized standard of excellence, and I welcome the opportunity to contribute to that mission through service on the GISCI Board of Directors by offering a balanced, pragmatic, and future focused perspective.