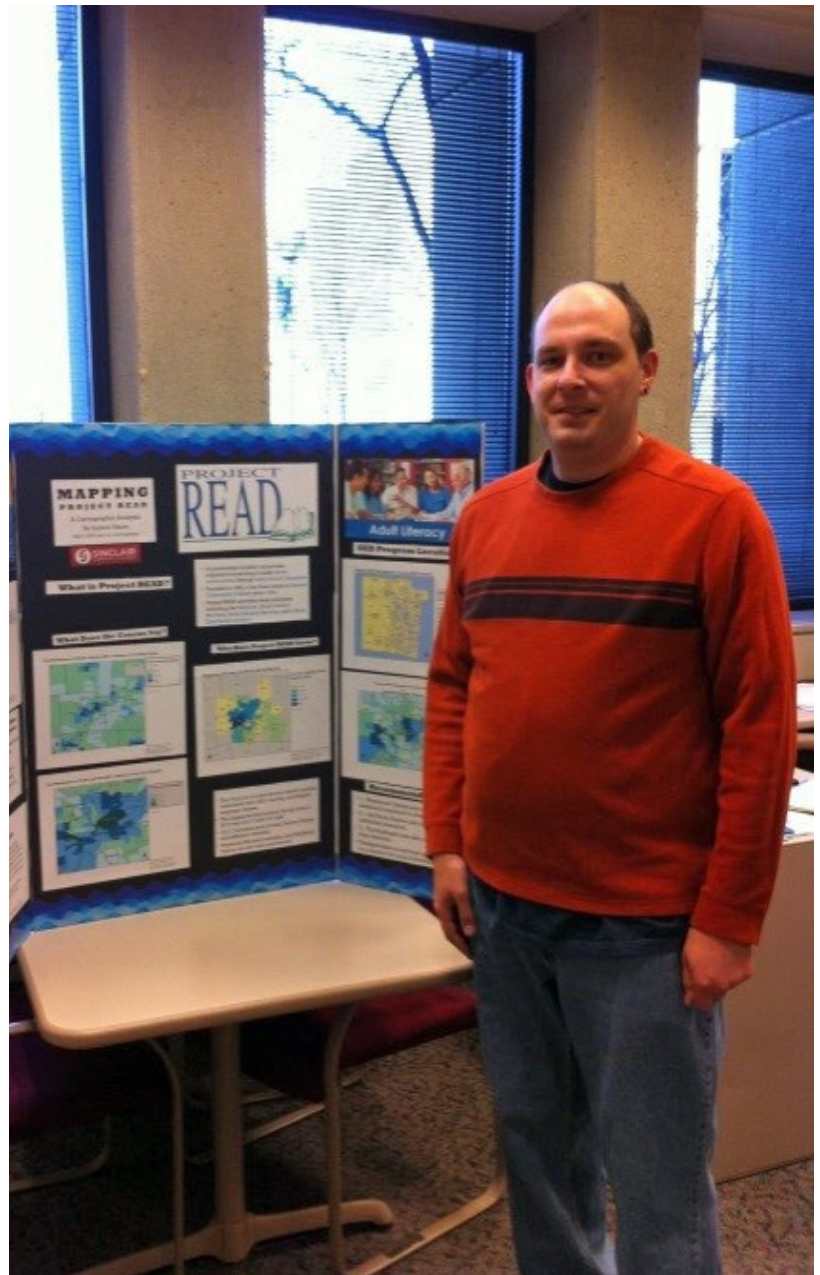**Course name:  GEO 1209:  Cartography**
**Division: Liberal Arts, Communication & Social Sciences (LCS)**
**Project: Neighborhood Mapping Project**
**Community Partner: Project READ**

# LEARNING OBJECTIVE

In this neighborhood mapping project, students were expected to learn to organize a mapping project, collect data, assess the validity and accuracy of data, interact with various community stakeholders, use basic design principles to create maps, and present work in the community.

# PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Jayson Vance, the student, worked directly with Laura Mlazovsky, executive director of Project READ on a visualization project. Project READ is a coalition of literacy organizations which serves youth, adult, and foreign-born students in achieving literacy in English and also provides GED support.  Jayson's project was to geocode each of their programs and then to create maps showing demographics which matched their clients.  These maps were used to identify area where there were gaps in services.  The student worked a total of 13.5 hours on this service learning project.

## RESULTS

Jayson presented this work as a poster at the Service Learning/Honor Symposium and received the award for "Outstanding Research Project. "

## OUTCOMES

What I learned was so much more than about mapmaking, however. I learned about the true costs of illiteracy in a community, how damaging it can be to a person's wellbeing. I learned how important community involvement is in combating the effects of illiteracy. It truly does take an army of individuals to pull this work off. I also learned that I really care about these kinds of social issues a lot more than I realized when I first began this endeavor.

One challenge I faced is the choice of data to use for my project. I proceeded halfway through the project using data from the American Community Survey. I had concerns, however, about the validity of this data, given the problems that the ACS has been known to have. I finally chose to switch my data source quite late in the game to the U.S. 2010 Census. This data proved to be more reliable and ultimately fit my needs the best, so it was the best choice. I would have chosen to use this data from the start if I could go back.

This service learning project was a journey for me of cartographic methods, statistical choices, and a good deal of introspection as well. I had fun and learned a lot.



Profiles can be viewed online at **ctl.sinclair.edu**

## SUBMITTED BY:

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