Benjamin Fincher
Curriculum Vitae

Department of Geography
Texas A&M University
733 Lamar St, Room 201C
College Station, TX 77843-3147

bfincher@tamu.edu

Education

Ph.D. (in progress) Geography- Texas A&M University (2021-present)
  College of Geosciences. Advisors: Wendy Jepson & John Patrick Casellas Connors

M.A. 2018 Community Planning- University of Washington, Tacoma
  College of Urban Studies. Capstone: 2018 *Roadmap to City Engagement* Advisor: Anne Taufen

Certification 2016 Geographic Information Systems- University of Washington, Tacoma
  College of Urban Studies.

Continuing Education 2015 Geographic Information Systems- The University of Texas at Dallas
  School of Economic, Political and Policy Systems.

B.A. 2013 International Studies, Latin American History Focus- Abilene Christian University
  College of Foreign Language.
  Study Abroad Cultural Program, Montevideo, Uruguay (2010-2011) | Spanish Class taken at *Universidad Católica del Uruguay* in Montevideo, Uruguay (1 semester)

Areas of Interest

Environmental/Social Justice | Infrastructure | Uneven Development | Water Security

Research Positions

2021-Present **Research Assistant**
  Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension, Dallas

- Advised by Dr. Wendy Jepson, I am working with the Urban Water Innovation & Sustainability Hub (Urban WISH) to advance economic and environmentally sustainable urban water futures across communities in North Texas.

- Generated five-part **Qualtrics** survey to distribute to Dallas-Fort-Worth metropolitan water system utilities to understand utility operation during COVID-19 and 2021 Texas Freeze. Survey is part of data collection for paper in progress: *Texas Water Utilities Under Stress: COVID-19 and Climate Disruptions in Changing Economic Times*. Targeted for: *WIRES Water*

- Writing a **Systematic Literature Review** on drinking water utility operation during and how moratoriums become a governance strategy during COVID-19. Find article title in publications for preparation section: *U.S. Drinking Water System Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Targeted for: *Water Security*.

2018 (Summer position) **Research Scientist**
University of Washington, Tacoma, WA
- Longitudinal study identifying regions in King and Pierce County, WA which have experienced socioeconomic change. Used SPSS to understand the statistical significance of each socioeconomic type.
- Observed regions at the block group level that experienced considerable changes in median household income, educational attainment, and racial/ethnic mix.
- Compiled data used by Dr. Ali Modarres' presentation *Measuring Gentrification across Three Decades* at University of Washington, Tacoma.

2016-2018 **Geographic Information Systems Analyst**
Safe Streets Campaign, Tacoma, WA
- South Sound Livability Study- Demographic and Socioeconomic Profiles made for all Safe Streets Neighborhood Groups. Complied 58 Neighborhood Profiles within Microsoft Power BI.
- Participatory Mapping Project- Participatory Action Research project to enhance community building and document community histories. Community experiences are drawn on maps which help broadcast patterns of how community members interpret communal space and depict where resource allocation is needed.
- Facilitated 20 mapping sessions in Tacoma and Unincorporated Pierce County and directed them in the application process for the City of Tacoma's Neighborhood Innovative Grant Program.

Relevant Work Experience

2019-2021 **Community Environmental Management Specialist**
Communities Unlimited, Knoxville, TN
- Assisting rural East Tennessee municipalities, unincorporated areas and utility districts maintain state compliance to drinking water and wastewater sources.
- Worked with over 20 rural East Tennessee communities since start date with state compliance-related items, rate setting adjustments, asset management planning, GIS mapping of water systems, grant writing for water infrastructure improvement and have assisted with leverage funding for these infrastructure improvements. Funding sources include Housing and Urban Development (Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), EPA (State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF), and USDA-Rural Development (RD Apply, Community Facilities)).

2015-2016 **Geographic Information Systems Intern**
Tacoma Fire Department, Tacoma, WA
- Georeferenced and geocoded incident data in database.
- Edited excel spreadsheets to help data be easily uploaded into ArcGIS
- Reproduced maps for internal use.

2013-2014 **Federal Way Public Schools AmeriCorps Academic Tutor**
AmeriCorps National Service, Federal Way, WA
- Worked with K-5 students in small group sessions with reading competency and mathematics for students in English and Spanish.
- Facilitated after-school homework help Monday-Friday for 3rd-5th grade students.
- Service session included 2013-2014 school year and summer.

Publications in Preparation

2022
Fincher, B. "U.S. Drinking Water System Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic", Targeted for *Water Security*.

Conference Presentation in Preparation

2022

    Fincher, B. *Mapping Demographic and Housing Characteristic Data in 1940 Dallas, TX*. - Plans for paper presentation at Southwest American Association of Geographers (SWAAG).

- Using 1940 archival census enumeration district and census tract data to disseminate demographic and recorded dwelling unit repair/plumbing needs in Dallas, TX.

Reports*

2017

- Livable City Year 2017. *A Roadmap to Civic Engagement*. University of Washington, Seattle, WA. Prepared for City of Tacoma.
- Livable City Year 2017. *56th and Pacific Placemaking*. University of Washington, Seattle, WA. Prepared for the Department of Planning Services, Tacoma, WA.

*Reports available upon request.

Awards/Recognition

Director's Award for Service to the Community

    Awarded in 2017 by Department of Urban Studies at University of Washington, Tacoma for work as GIS Analyst for Safe Streets Campaign.

Professional Training

- 2017-2018 GIS Society Member at University of Washington, Tacoma (Attended 2017 GIS Summit in Portland, Oregon)
- 2011- Student at *Probigua Spanish-learning School* in Antigua, Guatemala (80 hours total of one-on-one sessions)

Computer Skills/Software

- Qualtrics
- NVIVO
- R studio (basics)
- ArcGIS Pro & Desktop
- QGIS (basics)
- Adobe Illustrator (basics)
- Microsoft Office

Languages

- English (fluent)
- Spanish (satisfactory/rudimentary)

Organizational/Volunteer Activities

- 2013-2014 English Language Learning Assistant (Federal Way Public Schools, Federal Way, WA Adult English Language Learning Night Classes)
- 2011-2013 Volunteer at Meals on Wheels, Abilene, TX.
- 2009- Volunteer at South Plains Food Bank, Lubbock, TX

Professional Membership

- Association of American Geographers (AAG), 2021-Present