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Geography student wins National Geographic infographic competition.

Riley Champine, a junior studying Geography and Planning, Public Policy and Management, has won first place in the National Geographic Award in Mapping competition, taking home \$900 and a world atlas.

MAY 16, 2014

Champine, a graduate of Marin Academy in northern California, won for his infographic titled, "The North American Soccer Experiment: A Cartographic Visualization of Major League Soccer in 2014," which depicts the history of franchises in Major League Soccer — a project that combined two of his passions, soccer and map making.

"I'm a huge soccer fan," he said.

Champine thought he would study journalism when he arrived at Oregon, but when he started taking geography classes to fulfill general education requirements, he shifted course.



Riley Champine. Photo: Tim Christie

Champine said he took "huge inspiration," as well as guidance, from James Meacham, a senior research assistant in the Geography Department and executive director of the InfoGraphics Lab, who encouraged him and other students to enter the competition.

As Champine crafted his map over eight weeks time, he kept in mind Meacham's adage: A good map tells a story.

"I wanted to go broad, to tell the story of the league," he said. "I thought a map would be a good way to tell a sports story."

Champine said he spent about eight weeks working on the project, and went to Meacham's office hours every week to get feedback and ideas, he said. He used Microsoft Excel to crunch numbers and create charts, and then Adobe Illustrator and InDesign to create the map.

He said he's gotten good feedback on his map in online forums. His favorite compliment? "I can look at your map for a really long time because there's a lot of good information there."

— Tim Christie