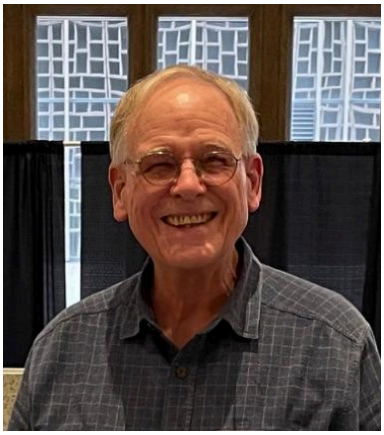
AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

The American Geographical Society Awards 2026 Honorary Fellowship to Mr. George Thompson



[New York City, NY] – [October 20, 2026] — The American Geographical Society (AGS) announces the recipients of the 2026 AGS Honorary Fellowships, recognizing individuals whose work has made significant contributions to geography and geographic understanding. The recipients are Mr. Tim Egan, Author and former New York Times Columnist, Dr. Lola Fatoyinbo, Research Scientist at the Blue Earth Research Project, Dr. Micaela Martinez, Director of Environmental Justice & Research at South Bronx Unite (SBU), Mr. George Thompson, Publisher, Editor, & Author at George F. Thompson Publishing, and Mr. Simon Winchester, OBE, Writer, Journalist, and Broadcaster. AGS will recognize the five Fellows during its annual Fall Symposium, Geography 2050: Africa Shaping Tomorrow, to be held November 19-20, 2026 in New York City.

Thompson began his publishing career in 1984 at Johns Hopkins University Press, where he helped establish influential fields including environmental and landscape studies, geography, planning history, vernacular architecture, and creative nonfiction. In 1990, he founded the Center for American Places (now the Center for the Study of Place), and later GFT Publishing and the Publishing-in-Residence program. Since 1984, Thompson has developed more than 500 place-based books, including more than 50 books by Guggenheim Fellows, earning nearly 200 “best-book” awards and honors. The author and editor of eight books, Thompson is currently completing *An American Place: Landscape Photography and the Ever-Evolving U.S. of A*. His work has received more than $4 million in philanthropic support and earned lifetime achievement awards and commendations from leading geographic, landscape, and architectural organizations, as well as recognition from *Photo District News* for his contributions to innovation in photography.

AGS Vice President and Chair of the Honors and Awards Committee, Dr. Deborah Popper, remarked, “Geographers owe a great debt to George Thompson. As acquisitions editor at Johns Hopkins University Press in the 1980s he somehow convinced people there that geography and place matter, thus changing opportunities for writers and readers to understand what we at AGS know is important.”

Dr. Marie Price, President of AGS and Chair of the Selection Committee, remarked, “The recognition of Honorary Fellows began in the earliest years of the society in the 1850s. It was the Society’s way to acknowledge individual accomplishments in exploration, technical advances, leadership, cartography, research and writing that advance geographical understanding and positively impact society. This year we are delighted to award five Honorary Fellows and welcome these thought leaders into the Society as members. We admire their impactful work and we invite them to engage with us as we champion the importance of geographic tools, research and insights for the benefit of society.”

Founded in 1851, the American Geographical Society was the first professional geographical organization in the United States. For 175 years, AGS has advanced geographic knowledge through research, education, exploration, and collaboration, helping people better understand the connections between people, places, and the planet. For more information about the AGS 175 Campaign or to make a contribution, visit americangeo.org/donate.

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