The Association of American Geographers (AAG) 2014 Annual Meeting was held in Tampa, Florida from April 7th to 13th, 2014. It attracted thousands of geographers and other attendees with various backgrounds to enjoy one of the most important events for the geography community.

Yang Xu and Ziliang Zhao, two CISML students specialized in Geographic Information Science (GIS), got the opportunity to attend this grand annual meeting with their travel partially supported by the Center for Intelligent Systems and Machine Learning (CISML) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The two students from Geography Department presented their papers at the meeting about their research progress on GIS and Transportation. Yang Xu gave a presentation entitled “Understand individual and aggregate human mobility patterns from mobile phone location data – a case study in Shenzhen, China”, and Ziliang Zhao shared his study in a presentation entitled “Cellphone towers as sensors: uncovering the pulse of the city using cellphone tracking data”. The presentations introduced their research as a teamwork led by Prof. Shih-Lung Shaw from Geography Department at UT. Their research demonstrated how cellphone tracking data can be used to uncover the dynamics of the urban landscape, and to gain insights of people’s travel and activity patterns in their everyday lives. The research findings on human mobility patterns and population flows provide useful information on business, planning and policy decisions.

The students also got the chance to learn from other people on a variety of research domains such as space-time GIS, GIS for transportation and high-performance and geospatial computing. During the stay in Tampa, they attended sessions, communicated with other people and widened their visions through various types of academic related activities.

The AAG 2014 Annual Meeting turned out to be a very successful event, which allowed the students to expose themselves to the research frontier. It was a great opportunity for the students at the University of Tennessee to take an active part in this international conference.