



Geography News

Volume 38 Issue 1- Spring 2015

Coordinator's Corner Alex Oberle

In the last newsletter I talked about the many changes happening at National Geographic so I want to focus on Nat Geo again, since I believe the new initiatives will have a major positive impact on the GAI and Iowa teachers. The new priorities at Nat Geo streamline resources and expertise and refocus on educators--K-12 teachers but also informal educators. There are three main initiatives that are already underway and will be moving forward quickly: Educator Community Hubs ("Hub"), Educator Community On-Line Platform ("Community"), and Educator Certification Pilot ("Certification"). The goal of all of these is to create a stronger national network among alliances and between individual alliances and Nat Geo with the idea that we can accomplish more for geography education with coordinated efforts than we can as individual alliances. This idea has been around for decades but with the new initiatives it really puts this into practice.

The GAI is directly and immediately involved with the Hub initiative, one of five alliances that will be creating and piloting this in the next six months. Essentially, the Hub idea is a way to better coordinate statewide organizations for cross-promotion. For example, ever stop in a touristy shop in Pella and see pamphlets and ads for the Czech and Slovak National Museum in Cedar Rapids? This is the general idea, that the GAI is promoted by such organizations (and these are just hypotheticals since I've not yet talked with these organizations) as the State of Iowa Historical Museum, National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium, etc. and that we do the same for them. These hubs would be on-site with partner organizations, but will also have an on-line component as well.

The Community initiative is the creation of a robust, on-line system to create a community of "geo educators". You are probably thinking the same thing that I was at first: with existing social media isn't this going to just be "reinventing the wheel"? In reality, this system promises to be very powerful, integrating existing social media but providing a common place for educators to go and learn about geography, be inspired by geography, talk about geography, and get access to a whole range of geography resources. Rather than the piecemeal system that exists today, this new Community leverages the "economy of scale" and brand recognition of Nat Geo with the on-the-ground efforts and expertise within state alliances.

Lastly, the Certification initiative will be part of the Community and will consist of on-line and in-person training that takes a play from the playbook of the Google Certified Teacher program. Almost like scouting "merit badges", teachers earn certification for such things as AP Human Geography, GIS, or Oceans as well as "credits" for participating and volunteering for alliances and affiliate organizations. There will be a whole range of certification levels and the perks of advanced levels will include free or discounted NG materials, travel to leadership institutes, international travel opportunities, etc. While many of these will be national "badges", individual states can develop their own and get them added so, for example, we could have "Iowa Geography" or anything else we'd like specific to our state

Teaching the Holocaust Today: Why and How

Monday, June 15th
9:00AM to 5:45PM
Grandview College
Des Moines, IA

UNI's Center for Holocaust and Genocide Education, in cooperation with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, presents a one-day professional development program that will provide teachers with the resources needed to effectively teach about the Holocaust. Through interactive discussions and hands-on participation, teachers will explore how to approach this complex history with their students.

This program includes books and resources from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Educators will receive a certificate of participation at the completion of this program. Breakfast and lunch will be provided.

To register for the program or for information about academic credit, contact Stephen Gaies, Director of the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Education, University of Northern Iowa, at stephen.gaies@uni.edu

UNITED STATES
HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
MUSEUM



National Parks and Bioblitz

One of the changes at National Geographic is aligning the Society and all state alliances on an annual national initiative. In 2016, this will be a partnership between Nat Geo and the NPS to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of our national parks. As part of this every state will be having a “BioBlitz” in its national parks or public lands. A “BioBlitz” is an activity where students, educators, and volunteers go out and identify all plants and animals within a small transect, basically “citizen science” with a strong geography and technology component. While the funding is still pending, the GAI has requested money from Nat Geo to support this initiative, celebrate our parks, and—most importantly—to engage Iowa students. Assuming funding, we will be working with Iowa’s County Naturalists to coordinate BioBlitzes in county parks across the state in May 2016. The goal is to have these set up in such a way that every single school in Iowa will be no more than a 50 mile drive from a BioBlitz and as part of this we’ll offer small grants to help schools cover transportation costs. We will also be teaming up with two UNI History scholars, both nationally renowned for their research in national parks and public lands in the US West, to create a project where UNI students share and document their own experiences with US national parks to create a visually-rich on-line “exhibit”. The exhibit will then be connected with standards like the Iowa Core and National Geography standards to be shared to Iowa K-12 schools. Since about 93% of our UNI students are Iowans, this will be a great way to link with one of the GAI’s guiding focus areas: Iowa’s connection to the world.



2015 Workshops

All workshops are \$75 per UNI credit hour (graduate or undergraduate). Go to the link below for more information on how to enroll:
<http://www.uni.edu/gai/news/enroll-now-gai-summer-workshops>

Geography, Technology, and the Iowa Core, Part II

-1 credit hour
-June 10th-June 11th
-Forest City, IA
-Grade level: K-12
-Instructors: Rachel Hansen (Muscatine S.D.); Steve Oaks (Waterloo S.D.); Kathy Sundstedt (Dike-New Hartford S.D. [ret])
-Who should enroll?: Any K-12 educator with an interest in teaching geography and integrating technology-related 21st Century Skills. This workshop is especially useful for those who teach any of the following: geography, history, and other social studies; STEM; TAG; Special Education (but all disciplines are welcome)
* You do NOT need to have completed the Part I to enroll in this new Part II

Using Primary Sources to Teach Geography, Conflict, and Human Rights

-1 credit hour
-June 17th-June 18th
-Iowa City, IA
-Grade level: 7-12
-Instructors: Holly Hanna (Muscatine S.D.); Brittany Roberts (Mt. Pleasant S.D.); Dr. Stephen Gaies (UNI Center for Holocaust and Genocide Education)
-Who should enroll: Grade 7-12 educators who teach social studies (especially geography and history) or English/Language Arts
* This is a new workshop; can be repeated for credit by those who have enrolled in "Geography, Conflict, and Human Rights" in past years

Iowa's Economic Connection to the World: Teaching AP Human Geography

-1 credit hour
-July 9th-July 10th
-Eldridge, IA
-Grade level: 7-12
-Instructors: Don Peterson (UNI Department of Geography) Chad Guge (North Scott S.D.) BJ Van Vleet (University of Iowa, College of Education; recently Des Moines S.D.)
-Who should enroll?: Any 7-12 geography or social science educator who teaches APHG or wishes to develop APHG courses.

Geography, Technology, and the Iowa Core, Part II

-1 credit hour
-July 15th-July 16th
-Muscatine, IA
-Grade level: K-12
-Instructors: Rachel Hansen (Muscatine S.D.); Steve Oaks (Waterloo S.D.); Kathy Sundstedt (Dike-New Hartford S.D. [ret])
-Who should enroll?: Any K-12 educator with an interest in teaching geography and integrating technology-related 21st Century Skills. This workshop is especially useful for those who teach any of the following: geography, history, and other social studies; STEM; TAG; Special Education (but all disciplines are welcome)
* You do NOT need to have completed the Part I to enroll in this new Part II

Globalization for Secondary Educators [On-line Workshop]

-1 credit hour
-July 1st-July 22nd [specific on-line meeting on July 1, July 8, July 15 from 1PM to 3:30PM]
-Location: on-line
-Grade Level: 6-12
-Instructor: BJ Van Vleet (University of Iowa, College of Education; recently Des Moines S.D.)
-Who should enroll: Grade 6-12 educators who wish to teach about globalization. The workshop is especially useful for those who teach any of the following: geography, history, and other social studies; STEM; TAG

Globalization for Secondary Educators

-1 credit hour
-July 13th-July 14th
-Location: Cedar Falls, IA
-Grade Level: 6-12
-Instructor: Steve Oaks (Waterloo S.D.)
-Who should enroll: Grade 6-12 educators who wish to teach about globalization. The workshop is especially useful for those who teach any of the following: geography, history, and other social studies; STEM; TAG

Digital Earth: Integrating Mapping Technologies into Social Science and STEM

-1 credit hour
-July 28th-July 29th
-Location: Cedar Falls, IA
-Grade Level: K-12
-Instructors: Curt Nielsen (College of Education, UNI) Debbie Stevens (Indian Hills CC)
-Who should enroll: Grade K-12 educators interested in incorporated on-line mapping into their curriculum.

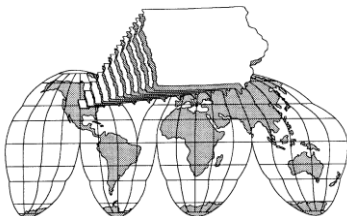
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Putting Iowa in its Place!



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