

Spring 2009  
[www.uccs.edu/coga](http://www.uccs.edu/coga)

## Greetings from the Coordinators

Welcome to the spring edition of the COGA Newsletter. We expect to publish approximately three times a year (April, August, and December). Your submissions and ideas are always welcome.

We are delighted to be communicating with people across the state of Colorado with the goal of providing geography education to students in all schools at all grade levels. Our main objectives are to equip educators with solid geographic content knowledge, skills and an awareness of the uses of the geographic perspective, providing opportunities for educators to develop effective skills for geography instruction. We are also striving to ensure the geography is valued as an important part of the curriculum by state and local governments, school districts, employers, and citizens. As part of this effort, we are working with school districts, nonprofits, other educational entities, and government agencies to leverage our resources to continue quality professional development programs and opportunities for collaboration.

The National Geographic Society, which sponsors the Colorado Geographic Alliance in cooperation with the Colorado Geography Education Fund, has asked that Alliance Coordinators undertake strategic planning efforts in light of ongoing budget restrictions. While the Colorado Geographic Alliance is fortunate in having some additional money for programming during this economic downturn, our hope is to continue to use our existing funds efficiently, secure new sources of funding, and to develop a plan so that the organization remains viable. The importance of geography education increases during times of economic and political stress, and we must continue to address the shortcomings in geographic knowledge in the community.

What can you do to support geographic education in Colorado? There are numerous opportunities – we suggest just a few below:

1. Volunteer to join the COGA Steering Committee which assists the coordinators in developing programs, identifying funding sources, and increasing contacts between COGA and teachers throughout the state. A nomination form is available the back page of this newsletter.
2. Propose a collaborative workshop or community event to be hosted with the Colorado Geographic Alliance. Would your school like to offer a family geography night? Could the public library support the visit of one of the giant traveling maps? (Description at [www.ngsednet.org/community/index.cfm?community\\_id=515](http://www.ngsednet.org/community/index.cfm?community_id=515).) Would teachers in your district benefit from a focus on how to incorporate geographic concepts into literature classes? Send an email with your idea to [coga@uccs.edu](mailto:coga@uccs.edu).
3. Write a grant to obtain funding for geography-related education. If your school, district, or organization envisions offering geographic programs, we are available to review your grant application, suggest collaborative approaches, and identify sources of grant funds.
4. Participate in programs offered through the Colorado Geographic Alliance, including professional development workshops, public engagement programs, and National Geographic Society–sponsored activities, such as the Geography Bee and Geography Awareness week. Additional details on activities are available in this newsletter as well as on the COGA website ([www.uccs.edu/coga](http://www.uccs.edu/coga)).

Although the Colorado Geographic Alliance is housed at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, we are working diligently to ensure that students and educators across the state are included in our programs. Your help will be needed to accomplish this objective, so if you are on the Eastern Plains, the Western Slope, or tucked in a corner of the state, let us know what your geographic education needs might be. And remember, we cooperate with other geographic alliances in Arizona, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Utah, and Wyoming.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with ideas and suggestions. We look forward to meeting you.

Steve Jennings and Rebecca Theobald  
Coordinators, Colorado Geographic Alliance  
coga@uccs.edu

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## The Big Picture

*Daniel C. Edelson is the vice president for education programs at the National Geographic Society and the executive director of the National Geographic Education Foundation, in Washington. He wrote the following commentary for "Education Week" as part of the campaign to implement policies that create demand for geographic education and ensure that there are sufficient resources to meet the need for high-quality geographic education for all students.*

EDUCATION WEEK

Published Online: January 23, 2009 / Published in Print: January 28, 2009

### COMMENTARY: **Geography and 'Generation G'**

by Daniel C. Edelson

Volatile global economies. Bouncing fuel prices. International food shortages. Our world is changing, not always for the better. Yet we are doing too little to prepare young people for troubled new realities. As we enter a new era in American politics, it's time to ask how we fix this problem.

The children in school today are America's first global generation. They make up what I call "Generation G." Gen-G inhabits a planet in which our generation's assumptions no longer hold. Just as the generations preceding ours were wrenched from their isolation by world wars—and we from our insulation by 9/11—the lives of America's children are being transformed by the world's increasing interconnectedness.

Problems such as terrorism, climate change, and the global economic crisis show us clearly that we can no longer behave as if change elsewhere does not affect us. This new reality may, in the long run, be good for America. But unless we prepare Gen-G for all its dimensions, the adaptation will be painful.

As educators, we must ask ourselves if we are meeting our responsibility to do this. Are we teaching Gen-G students what they need to know *about* their world in order to succeed *in* that world? Are we, for example, creating workers who know how to minimize the use of energy in making and transporting goods? Are we preparing citizens to make decisions about how to use scarce freshwater, whether to irrigate wheat or to provide habitat for salmon to spawn? Are we preparing them for a culturally rich society in which descendants of European immigrants are no longer the majority?

*Read the remainder of Edelson's commentary at the site below:*

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/01/28/19edelson.h28.html?tmp=1630531127>

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## Colorado sends Alden Savoca to National Geographic Bee

After both written and oral competition, Alden Savoca will be heading to Washington, DC to compete in the National Geographic Bee competition on May 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Alden is a 14-year-old home-schooled eighth grader from De Beque who used his favorite resource, the National Geographic Visual Atlas of the World, to help him out-duel 101 other Colorado semifinalists to take the top spot in the 21st annual Geographic Bee. For winning the Colorado Bee, Alden was awarded a renewable half scholarship to the University of Denver. The event was held at the University of Denver campus, sponsored by Pine Creek and Google.

The coordinator for Colorado's Geographic Bee is Kevin Porter of Arvada. Kevin has assembled a talented staff of geographic educators and COGA-trained professionals including Shanna and Tony Hurt, Marianne Kenney, Sophia Linn and Esther Worker of ESRI. Thanks for all their hard work in organizing schools, teachers, and students. And best of luck to Alden as he competes against students from 49 other states and five districts and territories.

You can catch the Bee Finals on the National Geographic Channel on May 20th. It will be broadcast later on PBS. To learn how to enter your school (open to grades 4 through 8) in next year's Geographic Bee competition visit: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geographybee/> or contact Kevin at [kdporter\\_world@yahoo.com](mailto:kdporter_world@yahoo.com).

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## Geographic Educator to Lead Association of American Geographers

Kenneth E. Foote, Professor of Geography at the University of Colorado at Boulder, was recently elected to the Vice Presidency of the AAG, which he will undertake in 2010. In addition to his work in cartography, cultural geography, and American landscape history, Ken has focused attention on issues of geography in higher education, particularly instructional technologies and professional development for early-career faculty. He currently serves as the Associate Chair for the Colorado Geography Education Fund, which supports the work of the Colorado Geographic Alliance.

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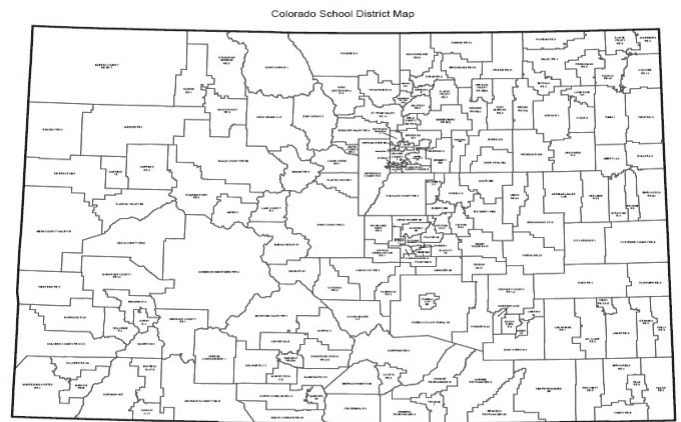
## Geo-Packs Coming Soon to these Lucky Winners

Thanks to everyone who took part in the survey regarding professional development and ideas for COGA. If you would like to share your opinion before the survey closes, please visit:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=usJ6Z8HUzHNxEgZ8\\_2bib0MA\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=usJ6Z8HUzHNxEgZ8_2bib0MA_3d_3d)

The winners of the Geo-Packs, chosen at random from all survey participants, are:

Rose DiCenso, Sabin Middle School  
Regan Foust, Canon City Middle School  
Steve Grasmick, Fowler Elementary School  
Steven Koops, Lewis Palmer Middle School  
Andy Jensen, Broomfield High School  
Randy Majors, Fruita 8/9 School  
Stephanie Reininger, Widefield Elementary School  
Dana Seymour, Bromley East Charter School  
Lynn Tidwell, Aspen Crossing Elementary  
Kris Toyne, Julesberg Schools



## **National Geographic Society offers a variety of programs for students and teachers**

### **My Wonderful World**

<http://www.mywonderfulworld.org/index.html>

In addition to providing a place where educators, parents, students, nonprofits and corporations can promote geographic learning in school, at home, and in communities, My Wonderful World offers geographic games and resources for all ages.

### **Geography Awareness Week**

<http://www.mywonderfulworld.org/gaw.html>

Geography Awareness Week is held the third week of each November, promoting the importance of geography education in the United States.

### **Project BudBurst**

[http://www.windows.ucar.edu/citizen\\_science/budburst/](http://www.windows.ucar.edu/citizen_science/budburst/)

Project BudBurst engages the public in making careful observations of the *phenophases* such as first leafing, first flower, and first fruit ripening of a diversity of trees, shrubs, flowers, and grasses in their local area.

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## **Geography Standards Under Review**

The Colorado Department of Education is coordinating the revision of content standards, which are conceptual statements of expectations that describe what a student should know and be able to do. The committee for social studies, which includes geography, history, economics, and civics, is meeting in May and June. If you are interested in tracking the discussion, please visit the website at:

[http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/OSA/stand\\_rev\\_content\\_subcommittee\\_meetings.html](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/OSA/stand_rev_content_subcommittee_meetings.html)

Look for opportunities to comment on the standards during town meetings in August.

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## **Recent and Upcoming Workshops**

Geography and Economics of Globalization, June 2008 – Twenty-seven secondary school teachers were introduced to the economic changes that had taken place over the last thirty years, addressing economic theories of globalization and their geographical conditions and effects. This workshop was conducted in partnership with the Colorado Council on Economic Education at Front Range Community College.

Geo-Literacy, July 2008 – Fifteen elementary school teachers learned about geography and spatial thinking approaches that they could translate into literature lessons, while enjoying the mountains in Breckenridge.

Geography of Elections, November 2008 – Just following the presidential election, twelve teachers (and one interested student) learned about electoral patterns and regional distinctions, putting current events in a geographic focus at Colorado College.

Geography and Technology, February 2009 – Twenty-six participants heard about the latest developments in geographic information technology and explored opportunities for incorporating Google Map and Google Earth in the classroom, using the computer lab facilities in the Geography Department at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

## **Register Now!!! Summer Institute June 28 – July 2, 2009**

Water and the World: A View from Colorado, June–July 2009 – Participants will explore issues associated with the spatial distribution of water using examples from Colorado, but applicable to many situations found around the world. The goal of this institute, being held in Woodland Park, is to integrate content with a sound pedagogic approach to geography.

Geo-Literacy, Fall 2009 – Back by popular demand, a condensed geo-literacy workshop will be held in southern Colorado in September.

In addition to offering stand-alone workshops, the Colorado Geographic Alliance has provided resources for district-wide programs and nonprofit organizations, and has collaborated with other educational groups to support geographic professional development. Please contact the coordinators at [coga@uccs.edu](mailto:coga@uccs.edu) if you would like to explore hosting a workshop at your site, or developing a program in partnership with COGA.

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## **Welcome to Pre-service Teachers**

The Colorado Geographic Alliance offers free pre-service workshops for Colorado colleges and universities. This service is provided at no cost and is an excellent way to introduce pre-service teachers to a professional organization that can assist them as they begin their teaching career. To schedule a workshop, please call Steve Jennings at 719-225-4056 or email your request to [coga@uccs.edu](mailto:coga@uccs.edu).

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## **Best Use of Geography in a Science Fair Project**



At the 2009 Colorado Science and Engineering Fair, Colorado Geographic Alliance steering committee member David Diggs presented Johanna Phillips, Senior Division, and Kole Van Treese, Junior Division with awards for the best use of geography in a science project. Ms. Phillips, a freshman at Monte Vista High School in Monte Vista, won for her project entitled “Infested Forests and Evapotranspiration” which identified whether selective clear cutting, brought on by spruce budworm infestation, is beneficial in increasing streamflow. Mr. Van Treese, an eighth grader at Sargent Jr/Sr High School in Monte Vista, was hoping to find a correlation between arsenic concentrations and well depth. in “A ‘Well’ of a Problem”. You may read abstracts of their projects by visiting the 2009 Colorado State Science and Engineering Fair website at [http://csef.colostate.edu/Abstract\\_Database\\_Access.htm](http://csef.colostate.edu/Abstract_Database_Access.htm). In addition to \$100 in prize money, each student received several National Geographic maps and posters to keep them geographically inclined.

**Johanna Phillips, Colorado State Science Fair, Inc.**

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## The Visiting Geographical Scientist Program

Funded by Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU), the International Geographical Honor Society, and managed by the Association of American Geographers, the Visiting Geographical Scientist Program (VGSP) sponsors visits by prominent geographers to colleges and universities across the country. Its purpose is to stimulate interest in geography, especially in small departments that do not have the resources to bring in well-known speakers. Participating institutions select and make arrangements with the visiting geographer. The VGSP covers travel costs and provides a small honorarium; host institutions provide meals and housing. If your institution is interested in hosting a Visiting Geographer, please coordinate with the Colorado Geographic Alliance so that we may introduce the scientist to as wide an audience as possible.

Details about the program may be found on the AAG website:  
[http://www.aag.org/education/aag/edu\\_visitingscientist.cfm](http://www.aag.org/education/aag/edu_visitingscientist.cfm)

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## Teaching Geography is Fundamental Act

“On February 26, 2009, Congressman Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Assistant to the Speaker, introduced the Teaching Geography is Fundamental Act, legislation that would help ensure that all young people acquire the vital global knowledge they need to compete in today’s rapidly-changing and competitive global economy.”  
<http://www.jsonline.com/blogs/news/40387042.html>

The current Colorado supporter of the bill in the House of Representatives is Representative Ed Perlmutter. A Senate version of TGIF (S. 749) has been introduced by Senator Thad Cochran of Mississippi. If you are interested in sharing a lesson in geography and civics with students, here is a way to track the bill’s progress.  
<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h111-1240>

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## Meet the Colorado Geographic Alliance Steering Committee!

**Andy Kerr** serves as Secondary Social Studies Curriculum Specialist Department for Learning and Educational Achievement for the Jefferson County Public Schools. He also spends a great deal of time at the capitol building in Denver where he represents the 26<sup>th</sup> district and serves as Assistant Majority Leader in the State House of Representatives. When not in meetings, Andy likes to snowboard, bike, and spend time with family.

**Chris Elnicki** is the Social Studies Coordinator for Cherry Creek School District and current president of the Colorado Council for the Social Studies. During the summer of 1987, Chris was fortunate to participate in a two week COGA institute, profoundly changing his approach to geography, inquiry and curriculum. Chris seeks out wilderness experiences during all seasons and finds great solace wading in streams, waving a stick, and exploring the aquatic world beneath the water’s surface.

**David Diggs** is an Associate Professor of Geography at the University of Northern Colorado. He is one of the authors of "The Atlas of Colorado: A Teaching Resource" which is available on-line for use by teachers and students. In addition, Dr. Diggs has created numerous on-line internet mapping exercises for secondary and college students. He also shares his enthusiasm for maps and cartography in the classroom.

**Donna Arkowski** is Chair of the Geography Department at Pikes Peak Community College where she has been busy implementing a new GIS Certificate program along with an associate degree in applied science which will begin in fall 2009. She travels extensively, using her experiences to help students become more informed on

world places and events. Her favorite part of geographic education is introducing students to the world around them and arousing their interest in the geographical, physical, and human aspects of the study of geography.

**Jeffrey Durst** serves as the School and Youth Program Coordinator at Colorado History Museum where he coordinates educational programs and tours that are interactive, curriculum-based, and object-oriented. He is currently developing a facilitated outreach program that will place museum staff and volunteers in schools across Colorado.

**Jennifer Rocke** is the principal of Louisville Elementary School, a neighborhood school in the heart of old town Louisville. She strives to see her students become self-confident, lifelong learners, and supports the growth of the whole child toward emotional and physical well being as well as toward academic success. In the summer of 2008, she presented a session on “Picture the Standards” for the COGA Elementary Geography/Literacy Institute.

**Joseph Kerski** serves as Education Manager and Geographer for ESRI - Environmental Systems Research Institute, located in Broomfield. Passionate about helping students learn about their community and their world through GPS and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), he conducts workshops and writes curriculum to help teachers use these technologies in their instruction. When not traveling for teaching purposes, he can be found in a cave or at a geocache.

**Julie Malmberg** is a graduate student in human biometeorology at the University of Colorado at Boulder’s Department of Geography. When she is not researching the impacts of radiation on recollections of climate and weather, she keeps busy teaching her three small children about the geography of home and neighborhood. Her preferred weekend activities are reading, hiking, gardening, and spending time with her family.

**Katy Lapp** is retired from teaching and serving as the Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator for Colorado Springs School District 11. She is currently the Methods Instructor and Supervisor of Student Teachers in Colorado College’s Department of Education. Katy believes the best part of teaching pre-service teachers is their willingness to develop lessons that move students beyond the more traditional name-place geography to the investigation of real world geographic issues and events through the use of multiple resources, real data and varied perspectives. In her spare time, Katy enjoys traveling, hiking and scuba diving.

**Lisa Piscopo** is a Research Analyst and the Kids Count Coordinator for the Colorado Children's Campaign. Her doctoral research explained the variability in Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) scores in Denver. She incorporates her studies in sociology, anthropology, political science, archaeology and geography into her work.

**Lorrie Stockwell** serves as Assistant Principal of Douglass Valley Elementary School in Academy District 20. She has been a teacher consultant in the National Geographic Alliance network both in Colorado and Oklahoma for twenty years. Her passion is finding and sharing children's literature and math activities that can be used to teach geographic concepts.

**Marianna McJimsey** is the retired founding Faculty Director of International Studies and a former supervisor of secondary history and social studies student teachers at Colorado College. She served as the first Executive Director of the ASIANetwork, a consortium of over 170 North American colleges to promote Asian Studies. Having grown up in India, she shares a broad perspective on the variety of geographic experiences across the world. One of her favorite geography lessons is creating topographical salt clay maps with college, high school or elementary school students. The kinesthetic creation of the maps by the students, with an emphasis on research and accuracy, is a launching point for a variety of discussion and study emphases of physical and/or cultural/political/economic geography.

**Nancy Koenig** has taught in elementary and secondary schools, regular and special education, and currently teaches fifth grade at Madison Elementary School in Colorado Springs District 11. She has perspective from a

variety of places, including Ohio, Oklahoma, Michigan, and Colorado. Her favorite lesson plans are hands-on history of the United States activities that excite students about their heritage and the land on which they live.

**Nancy Morlock-Hollins** teaches math at Coronado High School in Colorado Springs District 11. After retirement she plans to teach in England, Italy, or Spain. She enjoys incorporating geography into math lessons by using angles of elevations and bearing directions in geometry, and assigning students to find distances between cities around the world and areas of triangular regions in trigonometry.

**Pamela Wridt** is Associate Chair in the Department of Planning & Design in the College of Architecture and Planning at the University of Colorado at Denver. She serves on the Executive Committee for Denver's Child and Youth Friendly City Initiative and enjoys thinking about how young people can apply a geographical perspective to improving their own communities and the city they live in. She is also the project director for the "Children's Guide to Active Living: Community Mapping to Improve Physical Activity" and has recently produced a bi-lingual (English/Spanish) online educational resource for doing community mapping with children and youth to promote civic engagement via geography ([www.umapthecommunity.org](http://www.umapthecommunity.org)).

**Peggy Altoff** has served as a teacher, district coordinator and state supervisor of Social Studies in Maryland, and is currently the Social Studies Coordinator for Colorado Springs School District 11. She is on the board of the Colorado Council for the Social Studies and is past president of the National Council for the Social Studies. She keeps busy by hiking, reading and learning.

**Rick Gindele** started teaching geography in 1993 and for the past five years has taught AP Human Geography, World Geography, and World History at Cherry Creek High School. He has participated six times in the grading of the AP Human Geography exam both as a reader and table leader. He also serves as an AP Human Geography consultant for the College Board conducting workshops and presenting at week long AP summer institutes.

**Rob Gilliam** is a social studies teacher at William J. Palmer High School in Colorado Springs. He enjoys introducing students to geographical concepts such as cultural and urban patterns. He is currently working on his masters' degree at Colorado College and plans to finish his thesis on Recreation in National Parks this term.

These busy individuals could use some additional support. If you are interested in helping steer the work of the Colorado Geographic Alliance, please fill out the information below and send it by email ([coga@uccs.edu](mailto:coga@uccs.edu)) or snail mail to Colorado Geographic Alliance, Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Colorado at Boulder, 1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80918.

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I am interested in serving on the COGA Steering Committee because:

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Organization and Position \_\_\_\_\_

Email and Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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Department of Geography and Environmental Studies  
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