

Winter 2015

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2015 NCGE in Washington, D.C.

Celebrate and learn at the [100th National Council for Geographic Conference in Washington!](#)

Deadline for proposals: 2/1/15
[Register now!](#)

Want to be a member of NCGE to take advantage of great webinars, lesson ideas, and other

Welcome to the new year! We are delighted to have many new members in the Colorado geography education community. From COGA to you, Happy New Year!

Upcoming Events

Night with a Geographer - Winter/Spring 2015

Kick off the new year by attending one of COGA's "Night with a Geographer" series for winter and spring 2015. Designed to bring professional geographer's thoughts and insights on current topics to the public, these talks are geared towards the general public and educators with time set aside for a question and answer session and open discussion afterwards. We hope to bring interesting topics, ideas for the classroom, and plenty of time to meet and share thoughts with other professionals and educators who share one common interest: Geography! All talks are scheduled to run from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. This month's event is at 215 Canal Street in Pueblo. **Reservations requested**, but not required. Email info@steelworks.us or call (719) 564-9086 for more information.

January 15th: [Steelworks Center of the West](#) in Pueblo, with speaker Christopher Markuson, GIS Manager in Pueblo County, "Fighting Fire With Data".

April 2nd: [Steelworks Center of the West](#), with speaker John Harner, Professor, Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Colorado Colorado Springs. His topic is "Mapping Urban Change in Colorado Springs".

Look for "Night with a Geographer" in at the [Fort Collins Museum of Discovery](#) later in the spring. Interested in hosting a "Night with a Geographer" in your community? Email coga@uccs.edu to explore options and locations.

resources?

[Join here for a reduced rate as a partner through COGA.](#)

Giant Map Borrowing Opportunities



National Geographic's Giant Traveling Maps are a great resource for teaching map skills to students in preschool, elementary, and middle school.

The maps are available for 2-week periods, and [COGA can help pay for the rental!](#)

There are floor maps of Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, South America, and the Pacific Ocean. [Colorado schools have hosted several maps](#) and you can check the COGA website for ideas about how to incorporate them into your classroom.



Like Us on FaceBook

[Check out our blog!](#)

Colorado Geographic Alliance

Department of Geography and Environmental Studies

1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80918

Teaching Geography Using Primary Sources



As we reported last fall, the Colorado Geographic Alliance is working with the Library of Congress [Teaching with Primary Sources Western Region](#) (TPS), as well as Geographic Alliances in Arizona, Nevada, and Oregon to develop workshops using primary sources to teach geography at any grade level. The workshop - in both one-day and two-day formats - is now available for presentation at schools and districts across the state. Please contact coga@uccs.edu if you are interested in scheduling one for educators in your area. There is no charge for the workshop.

Fourth Grade Professional Development

COGA continues to participate in the Integrating the Social Studies Across Colorado History Teacher Workshops. COGA is partnering with History Colorado, the Center for Education in Law and Democracy (CELD), and the Colorado Council for Economic Education (CEE) to produce engaging activities and lectures about the social studies. These workshops have been very popular and we would be delighted to arrange one for your school or district. For more information visit [History Colorado's](#) webpage for educators.

COGA News

Geospatial Technology in the Classroom



Geographic Information Science (GIS) encompasses computer hardware and software systems that are used to store, display, analyze, and map information related to multiple fields. These tools include maps and globes, global positioning (GPS) units, and web-based interactive programs such as Google Earth.

Students in Colorado benefit from learning how to use geographic information and COGA is working to support their teachers to be knowledgeable and comfortable with the technology. Focusing our efforts on preservice teachers as well as groups of teachers in underserved rural and urban areas, we have nurtured leadership in a variety of locations across the state.

Teachers in Calhan, Elizabeth, Grand Junction, Limon, and Windsor now can experiment with GIS in the classroom, knowing they have people to call when they have questions about technology.

Wondering what your students can do? Check out [geospatial technology lesson plans](#) on the COGA website, create projects using [MapMaker](#) at National Geographic, and get ideas from [story maps](#) developed through Esri, Inc. Thanks to the Gay & Lesbian Fund for Colorado which provided seed money for this project, and to the regional office of Esri, Inc. in Broomfield, Colorado that provided advice and technological resources to support the program. COGA hopes to find additional funding to spread this project to other schools and districts in the state.

GPS Units for Loan: Don't forget - COGA has ten GPS units that can be loaned (for free) to schools for educational use. [Click here for info!](#)

New Leadership at National Geographic Society

In January 2014, [Gary Knell](#), former president of National Public Radio and CEO at Sesame Workshop, took on the leadership of National Geographic, a position previously held by [Gilbert Grosvenor](#) - a champion of geography education; Melville Grosvenor, a pioneer in photography; and Alexander Graham Bell. Following a "listening tour" of National Geographic locations in Washington DC and across the country, Knell announced additional changes to the management of the National Geographic Education Foundation, from which the Colorado Geographic Alliance receives its primary funding. The National Geographic Alliance Network is now managed under Education and Children's Media, with Kathleen Schwille, Vice President for Curriculum, replacing Danny Edelson as head of the Education Foundation. Dr. Brenda Barr continues to serve as Director of the Alliance Network Programs. The good news for Colorado is that Dr. Edelson has accepted the position of [President and Executive Director](#) at [Biological Sciences Curriculum Study](#), headquartered in Colorado Springs. We welcome him to the Colorado science, technology, and social studies communities.

Resources for Your Classroom

[National Geographic Education](#) has a wealth of information for you to download and use in your classroom. Check out maps of regions and continents, mapping activities for a variety of grade levels, and games that teach map skills. Investigate the [Colorado GeoTour](#), prepared by Poudre School District fourth grade teacher, Sarah (Sam) Richings-Germain.

You are Experienced, Passionate, and Knowledgeable about Geography

Your Views Matter

Remember the invitation in the spring of 2014 to participate in a survey of "Geo-Capabilities", an international project aiming to uncover common goals in geography education across differing national contexts? If you took time to answer those questions, the results of the survey are now available. [Professor Phil Klein of the Department of Geography & GIS at the University of Northern Colorado](#) has found that the "capabilities" approach clarifies how education promotes human potential and development. Seventy-seven Colorado teachers responded, mostly (62%) high school teachers, with the remainder evenly divided between elementary and middle grades. The sample represents an experienced group, passionate and knowledgeable about geography, motivated to furthering their own education. Over 75% have earned a postgraduate degree and almost 90% participated in geography-related professional development activities in the past year.

In answer to an open-ended question about what geography education specifically helps students to know, understand, and be able to do, the most common themes mentioned were that geography helps individuals to learn how one personally fits in the world; understand world systems and current events; value cultural diversity; use a spatial perspective in decision-making; and make connections among varied explanatory factors. Answering what the absence of geography education means for human development, common themes identified were ignorance of world conditions; a narrowed, isolationist worldview; no understanding of human-

environment interactions; a lack of tolerance; and even a greater risk of environmental or political disasters. Many respondents noted how geography education helps develop informed voters and consumers and enhances critical thinking and the ability to incorporate diverse perspectives to understand the contemporary world.

Thanks to Professor Klein for sharing these details. Should you wish additional information about the study, please contact him directly at phil.klein@unco.edu.

Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) for Social Studies

The Colorado Geographic Alliance has been working with other social studies disciplinary organizations across the state to support summative assessments for social studies at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Senate Bill 08-212 identified civics, economics, history, and geography as content areas in which students must demonstrate competency as part of post-secondary and workforce readiness. Over the course of thirteen years of schooling, CMAS assesses students on their achievement in social studies only three times at the state level. Social studies assessments determine student mastery of knowledge, informed critical thinking, decision-making, and reasoning skills. Mastery of these skills benefits the public good and results in an educated workforce that is a component of a healthy and vital economy.

The number of district social studies coordinators serving teachers and students in the 178 school districts of Colorado has increased over the last two years. Districts such as Adams 12, Aurora, Boulder, Littleton, Douglas County, Poudre, Saint Vrain, and Greeley have added staff or increased staff time devoted to social studies instruction, resulting in a closer look at curriculum alignment and professional development opportunities. Principals and teachers now regularly call coordinators with questions about standards, curriculum, and assessment. The past year has seen an increase in instructional time dedicated to social studies and the introduction of high quality curriculum and instructional resources in the classroom. COGA has worked with members of the state Standards and Assessments Task Force as well as members of the legislature to answer questions about the role of summative assessments in the teaching and learning of social studies. For additional information, check out the [Task Force website](#), review the [Colorado Department of Education](#) perspective on standards and assessment, or email coga@uccs.edu.

2014 Recap

Geography Awareness Week 2014: the Future of Food

11/16/14-11/22/14

Each year more than 100,000 Americans actively participate in [Geography Awareness Week](#). Established by presidential proclamation more than 25 years ago, this annual public awareness program organized by National Geographic Education Programs (NGEP) encourages citizens young and old to think and learn about the significance of place and how we affect and are affected by it. Geography Awareness Week is

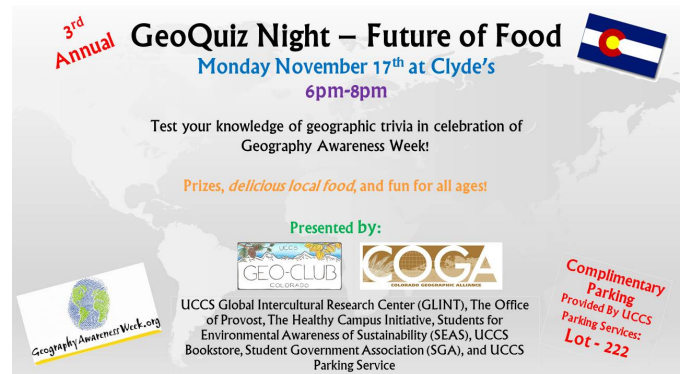


supported by year-long access to materials and resources for teachers, parents, community activists and all geographically minded global citizens.

This past year, the theme of Geography Awareness week

was the "Future of Food", and schools across the country educated students about the connection between food and geography. Students, staff, and faculty at the University of

Colorado Colorado Springs participated in the 3rd annual GeoQuiz Night, centered around food, fun, and education.



[Click here](#) to view the proclamations that support GAW and a slideshow from GeoQuiz Night!

Partnership Opportunities

Colorado Geographic Bee: March 27, 2015



Good luck to those students who will be competing in the [Colorado Geographic Bee](#), which is a preliminary to the National Geographic Bee.

Test your knowledge with this sample GeoBee question:

What is the term for a part of an ocean or sea that cuts far into the bordering landmass and may contain one or more bays?

Answer: Gulf

History Colorado: the 1968 Exhibit

February 7th - May 10th, 2015

The 1968 Exhibit brings to life this pivotal American year through photographs, artifacts, vintage pop culture items, and interactive exhibits. In 1968, the death toll in the Vietnam War reached a new high. Riots and



demonstrations raged across the country, Apollo 8 orbited the moon, and the nation was transformed by the tragic assassinations of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy. The 1960s also charted a dramatic road in America's pop culture. It was in 1968 that "Hair" opened on Broadway, "Laugh-In" debuted on television and Johnny Cash gave his famous performance at Folsom Prison.

Developed by the Minnesota History Center, in partnership with the Atlanta History Center, the Chicago History Museum and the Oakland Museum of California, The 1968 Exhibit is an ambitious, multimedia experience that looks at how the events of the year have fueled a persistent, if often contradictory, sense of identity for the people who were there and those who came after.

Visit the [History Colorado](http://HistoryColorado.org) site for more info!

Educator Exchange Opportunity



American Friends of Russian Folklore invites middle and high school teachers to apply for the 2015 season of the Russian/American Educators' Exchange.

Participants travel to rural Russia to collect Russian folklore by filming holiday celebrations, recording local singers, interviewing villagers

about traditional lore, and photographing local handicrafts. They experience Russian village life firsthand, living in a village house and eating the local food.

They also visit rural schools, where they make presentations about American folklore and meet with Russian teachers to discuss matters of mutual professional interest. Upon return, the American teachers create and share curriculum materials incorporating some elements of the Russian folklore they collected.

The three folklore expeditions are timed to coincide with important holidays of the Russian traditional calendar:

- **Expedition 1:** Easter in **Volgograd province**, Danilov district. April 8 - April 21, 2015
- **Expedition 2:** Pentecost/Trinity Week in **Smolensk province**, Sevsik district. May 21 - June 3, 2015
- **Expedition 3:** Dormition Day traditions and first day of school traditions in **Bryansk province**. August 22 - September 4, 2015

Knowledge of Russian is useful, but not required. Translators will be provided. All educators who work with middle or high school students or curriculum are encouraged to apply. Preference will be given to teachers whose schools are in rural areas.

For details and application instructions, visit russianfolklorefriends.org or emailinfo@russianfolklorefriends.org. Registration for each trip will close 60 days before the trip start date.

Colorado Geographic Alliance

VISION:

Changing our understanding and
experience of the world

MISSION:

To instill and nurture spatial awareness
and geographic literacy

VALUES:

Inspiring passion for Earth and its inhabitants
Connecting people with geography
Honoring inclusivity and diversity
Exploring physical and human environments
Developing spatial perspective

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Ideas for upcoming newsletters? Great topics, links, or
upcoming events you'd like COGA to share with geography

educators? Let us know! We're here to connect.

coga@uccs.edu

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