

COLORADO GEOGRAPHIC ALLIANCE

Spring 2015

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2015 NCGE in Washington, D.C.

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

Want to be a member of NCGE to take advantage of great webinars, lesson ideas, and other resources?
[Join here for a reduced rate as a](#)

Welcome to the [Colorado Geographic Alliance](#). We are delighted that you are taking an interest in geography education across the state of Colorado, whether through a workshop or support of teachers in your area. COGA is a statewide educator's organization in which the collective knowledge of experienced teachers of geography, geographers in academia, and professional geographers is shared to strengthen the position of geography in Colorado schools. COGA works with the social studies, science, environmental, and technology communities to build on mutual objectives and to strengthen 21st century skills of Colorado students. While many of the opportunities in the newsletter have passed, please consider how you can join in our work. We are particularly interested in your thoughts about the possibility of a giant map of the state of Colorado. Look for upcoming opportunities in the fall and if you have any questions, please email coga@uccs.edu. This newsletter is published approximately three times each year.

Projects and Programs

Imagine a Giant Map of Colorado

Several schools in Colorado have hosted Giant Traveling Maps from National Geographic, and we have heard how inspirational these tools have been for students in learning about other places. COGA plans to develop a map of Colorado - ideally several maps to be located in various pockets of the state - that could provide a similar experience with a state focus, but we would like to hear from you about how the map would be most useful for you as a teacher, parent, or community member. Please complete an online [survey](#) by Friday, May 29th so your views are included in the discussion.

Thank you for your time.

Upcoming Workshops

Integrating the Social Studies Across Colorado History

Professional development designed to enhance skills in teaching the core concepts and tools from history, geography, economics and civics that are emphasized in Colorado's 4th grade social studies standards. Four leading social studies organizations collaborate to bring this day-long workshop to elementary teachers. An expert in each subject area will help you understand how each discipline views the world and, more specifically, Colorado. Presentations will blend content and pedagogy and will share resources to take back to your classroom.

Wednesday, May 27, 2015, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Museum of Western Colorado, 462 Ute Avenue, Grand Junction

For more details, click [here](#). To register, please contact Kim Davis at kim.davis@d51schools.org

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.

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

Saturday, October 10, 2015, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

History Colorado Center, 1200 Broadway, Denver

To register, call 303-866-2394 or email reservations@state.co.us

If you are interested in hosting this workshop at your school or district, please contact April Legg at 303-866-2394.

Teaching Geography Using Primary Sources

Grand Junction, Thursday, May 28, 2015, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Join the Teaching with Primary Sources Western Region and the Colorado Geographic Alliance to learn how to use resources from the Library of Congress to enhance geography in your classroom.

For more information click [here](#). To register, please contact Kim Davis at kim.davis@d51schools.org.

Geospatial Technology Workshop: Enhance Your Curriculum with ArcGIS Online

Roger Felch and Christine Nichols are offering a free GIS workshop for K-12 teachers this summer. They have been awarded an Esri grant for a workshop to support the introduction of ArcGIS online and other geospatial technologies to K-12 classrooms throughout Colorado. The workshop will familiarize K-12 teachers with ArcGIS software and its many classroom applications and support the development of lessons that will enhance curriculum through spatial problem solving. Join them to begin or advance your proficiency with ArcGIS Online. You can acquire and implement a FREE ArcGIS Online Organizational Account with Esri for you and your school. This workshop will help you create a lesson using ArcGIS Online. Current classroom teachers and educators in school districts serving low-income students will be given first priority. Click on the [link](#) for more details.

National Geographic Free Online Course - FLOW Education: Facilitating Learning through Outdoor Watershed Education

This course is designed for classroom educators (grades 4 through 8) to learn about watersheds and outdoor education using the Chesapeake Bay watershed as an example. The course introduces technologies for investigating watersheds and helps teachers plan and implement outdoor experiences. There are two session options in 2015 - June 17 - July 29 and September 16 - October 28. [Contact National Geographic to register.](#)

Teaching Geography Using Primary Sources



As 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.

COGA Leadership Council Seeks New Members

The Colorado Geographic Alliance provides professional development for elementary and secondary teachers, supports policy efforts at the state and district levels, and offers public engagement opportunities including giant traveling maps, talks with geographers, and activities during Geography Awareness Week. Current professional development programs include working with teachers to incorporate geospatial technology in their classrooms, teaching geography using primary sources, and integrating social studies across Colorado history. If you are interested in helping lead this organization, please consider submitting an application to join the COGA Leadership Council, whose purpose is to steward the organization through careful adherence to COGA's mission, vision, values, and strategic plan. Leadership Council members serve for

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!](#)



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[Check out our blog!](#)

Colorado Geographic Alliance
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three-year terms, meet three times a year, and are drawn from across the state and from different types of organizations and perspectives. An application form is available [online](#). Completed applications should be emailed to coga@uccs.edu.

COGA News

Esri ConnectED Grant

Colorado Geographic Alliance receives one of 40 Esri ConnectED Teacher Professional Development Awards in Geospatial Technology



In February 2015, Esri awarded grants to support professional development of educators to help implement Esri's ConnectED offer in communities across the country. Click [here](#) to see schools with GIS from Esri and ConnectED.

Along with Castle View High School, COGA received a \$5,000 grant to help teachers to become proficient in ArcGIS Online. COGA will be working with GIS professionals from [plan-it GEO](#), a geospatial technology firm specializing in urban forestry, planning, and natural resources located in Arvada, and the Englewood Schools, which is developing curricula based on the South Platte River.

The [South Platte River Project](#) with Englewood builds on the work that COGA undertook with school district in Elizabeth, Grand Junction, Limon, and Windsor to support teachers as they work to move geospatial technology into their classrooms. If your school or district is interested in hosting a workshop on this topics, please contact coga@uccs.edu.

2015 Grosvenor Fellow from Boulder

Congratulations to Colorado Teacher and 2015 National Geographic Grosvenor Teacher Fellow, Amy Austin!

Amy Austin is the literacy specialist and sixth and seventh grade reading and language arts teacher at Centennial Middle School in Boulder. After graduating, she moved to London where she taught second, third, and fifth grades and was the Geography Coordinator of an ethnically diverse British primary school.

She was accepted to the Japanese Fulbright Memorial Fund program in which she traveled to Japan with 170 other teachers from across the United States to live, learn, and interact first-hand with Japanese teachers, students, administrators, and government officials. In 2012, she was accepted as one of only eight teachers from North America to teach conversational English at the Guangdong University of Foreign Studies in Guangzhou, China.

Amy was accepted to be a 2015 Grosvenor Teaching Fellow for the opportunity to travel to geographically remote parts of the globe, alongside outstanding National Geographic professionals. This summer she will embark on an 11-day expedition aboard the National Geographic Explorer vessel, as they travel to Oslo, Norway and explore Arctic Svalbard.

We look forward to hearing more about Amy's adventures and seeing photos upon her return.

GPS Units in the Classroom

GPS Units Give New Meaning to Middle School Students in Saint Vrain Valley Schools

With a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit, students can determine

where they are anywhere on the planet. Saint Vrain social studies teachers district-wide used handheld GPS units supplied by the Colorado Geographic Alliance to use the geospatial technology as they practiced 21st century skills and explored the Roman Empire. Find out more [here](#).

Colorado Geographic Bee Winner



Congratulations to the [Colorado Geographic Bee](#) winner 7th grader William Jacob (Jake) Hofgard of Louisville Middle School, Louisville! He will be competing in Washington DC later this month.

Each year thousands of schools in the United States participate in the National Geographic Bee using materials prepared by the National Geographic Society. The contest is designed to inspire students to be curious about the world. Schools with students in grades four through eight are eligible for this entertaining and challenging competition.

Has your school ever participated in the National Geographic Bee? For the first time ever, grades 4-8 can experience the Bee for free - a Free-Bee! National Geographic is offering a free trial of the Bee for educators and students to experience the contest. Engage students in learning geography through an exciting contest by requesting the National Geographic Free-Bee [here](#).

Click on the link to learn more about the [National Geographic Bee](#).

Colorado Science and Engineering Fair Winners



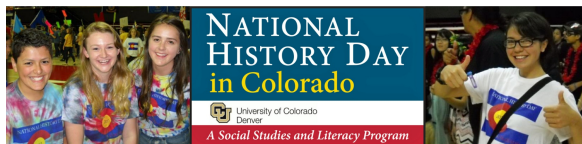
The 60th Annual Colorado Science and Engineering Fair was held on the campus of Colorado State University in Fort Collins April 9-11. Every year, COGA awards a prize to the Senior and Junior projects for the best use of geography.

This year the Junior winner was Kelsey Brethauer, a 7th grader at Windsor Charter Academy for her project titled *Bad Beads*. She examined the distribution of the small plastic beads contained in personal care products such as face scrub found along Cache la Poudre River. She found that the beads were located in sediment near larger communities along the river. Kelsey's teacher is Lara Holt.

In the Senior category, Emma Scholz of Sterling High School created an in-depth analysis of the *Geographical Correlation Maps of Malaria Hemoglobin SS Disease Allele Frequency and Ecology of Ethiopia*. She had taken a summer class in the use of GIS at the University of Northern Colorado and learned how to analyze spatial data. This was an excellent project that looked at a variety of spatially variable attributes and draws conclusions from that analysis. Emma's teacher is Aaron Edinger.

Leadership and Legacy in History

National History Day in Colorado is a project-based social studies and literacy program that engages students in the study of Colorado



history and beyond. Students participated in 12 regional contests across the state and regional winners competed on Saturday, May 2 at the state competition held at the University of Colorado Denver. The Colorado Geographic Alliance awards a Junior and Senior prize to the competitors who demonstrate the best use of geography in their projects.

Congratulations to Brandon Samora from the Connect School in Pueblo for his project on the *Legacy of James K. Polk: the Dark Horse Leading Manifest Destiny*. This performance presented Polk's role in the expansion of the United States. Brandon examined the intersection of politics and geography and its expression: Manifest Destiny. Using a map as a backdrop he presented information about the expansion of the U.S. in Oregon, Texas and the Southwest.

Congratulations to Judith Aragon and Kristianna Pott of Bear Creek High School in Lakewood on their project, *The Leadership and Legacy of Catherine II, the Great, A German Princess Who Fell in Love With Russia*. The development and growth of Russia under the leadership of Catherine the Great was the main topic of this presentation with a large floor map used to great effect. By moving across the map they were able to represent graphically the expansion of the Russian Empire during Catherine's reign.

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 and check out other GeoTours to introduce your students to states across the country, or make your own using [National Geographic's MapMaker](#) program.



Nights with a Geographer

Designed to bring professional geographers' 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. COGA is pleased to collaborate with institutions such as the [Steelworks Center of the West](#) and the [Fort Collins Museum of Discovery](#) to sponsor talks that are geared towards the general public and educators with time set aside for a question and answer session and open discussion.

On January 15th, Christopher Markuson, GIS Manager in Pueblo County discussed *Fighting Fire with Data* and on April 2nd, John Harner, Professor, Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Colorado Colorado Springs presented his research on *Mapping Urban Change in Colorado Springs*. If you missed Dr. Harner's presentation, he will be sharing it again at the [Colorado Archeological Society Pikes Peak Chapter](#) May 19 meeting in Colorado Springs.

Do you have an idea for an interesting geographic topic to discuss with other professionals and educators who share a common interest in

geography in your community? Contact COGA and we will work to identify a location and presenter in your area.

Opportunities

National Geographic Big Cats Initiative



Big Cats Education

As part of National Geographic Society's Big Cats Initiative, National Geographic Education is working with our explorers and grantees to help teachers like you educate your students about the importance of big cats and conservation efforts to protect these large predators.

Big Cats Initiative Sister School

Program

The National Geographic Big Cats Initiative Sister School Program (BCISSP) is a unique, interactive, and community service learning opportunity. Its goal is to inform students in the U.S. of the decline of big cats in Africa and connect them to the local students. Learn how to get your school involved below. All schools are welcome!

Education objectives and activities include [Big Cats in Captivity](#). Here, teachers can learn how to expand their students' knowledge of animals in captivity. [Kobu the Lion](#) is one great example of a learning objective for Big Cats Education; he lives at [The Wild Animal Sanctuary](#) just outside of Denver which hosts visits for schools interested in teaching students about big cats.

To learn more about how your school can get involved, go to [Big Cats Initiative Sister School Program](#).

History Colorado: El Movimiento

History is about time- the time you spend with your family in places that matter. Discover your connection to the people and events that shaped Colorado's past. Explore History Colorado museums and historic sites, browse a full program and event calendar, and get info about Colorado's many heritage destinations.

El Movimiento: The Chicano Movement in Colorado: February 7th - October 25th

History Colorado will open the exhibit El Movimiento: The Chicano Movement in Colorado on February 7, 2015, immersing visitors in the urgency, passion and vitality of one of Colorado's most important social movements. In the 1960s and 1970s, Chicano activists in Colorado-an important center of the Chicano movement-fought to end discrimination, secure rights and gain political and social power through education, culture and the arts. El Movimiento uses artifacts, images, and the voices of Chicano activists to tell about the struggle for labor rights, the founding of the Crusade for Justice, and much more.

Visit the [History Colorado](#) site for more info!

COGA partners with a variety of organizations across the state. Visit our website [here](#) to learn about the many groups supporting geography education from multiple perspectives and click [here](#) for a list of Geography Related Organizations in Colorado.

The Great Nature Project

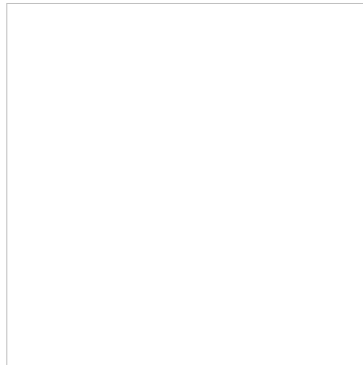
Where Will YOU Be May 15-25?

Take part in a global snapshot of biodiversity! The Great Nature Project is a worldwide celebration of our planet's natural wonders and a huge scientific undertaking to document the Earth's incredible biodiversity. Let's show the world Colorado's beautiful landscapes and biodiversity. Whether you are hiking or just enjoying your lunch break, we encourage you to look for living organisms, snap pictures of those organisms, and upload the pictures to the [Great Nature Project](#) website.



COGA Updates

COGA Facebook and Blog



Follow us on Facebook!

Our [Facebook page](#) posts upcoming events that are open to the public. You can also find interesting links to photo galleries and articles on geography.

Check out our Blog as well!

[COGA's blog](#) shares workshop opportunities and professional development sessions for educators as well as geography education resources.

Welcome to the New COGA Administrator

Alexandra Sinchak

Alex joined the COGA team in March of 2015. She is an undergraduate currently pursuing a BA in Geography and Environmental Studies with a minor in Sustainability. She has lived in Colorado Springs her whole life and always planned on attending the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

Alex found her passion for environmental activism and climate justice her sophomore year, and has been managing the Fossil Free Divestment campaign on the Colorado Springs campus for Fossil Free CU, to move the university's investments away from the fossil fuel industry to more renewable forms of energy. Alex is the Chair of Divestment and Climate Change for the student organization Students for Environmental Awareness and Sustainability. She is interested in the need to value and conserve resources along with embracing new ideas and goals of environmental restoration. Alex is looking forward to working with the Colorado Geographic Alliance to further its influence on the education system in Colorado to increase interest and awareness of geographic education.

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

CONTACT COGA:

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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