

Fall 2014

Geography News, v37n2, Fall 2014

Geographic Alliance of Iowa.

Let us know how access to this document benefits you

Copyright ©2014 Department of Geography, University of Northern Iowa

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/gainews>



Part of the [Education Commons](#), and the [Geography Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Geographic Alliance of Iowa., "Geography News, v37n2, Fall 2014" (2014). *Geography News*. 6.
<https://scholarworks.uni.edu/gainews/6>

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the Geographic Alliance of Iowa at UNI ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Geography News by an authorized administrator of UNI ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uni.edu.

Offensive Materials Statement: Materials located in UNI ScholarWorks come from a broad range of sources and time periods. Some of these materials may contain offensive stereotypes, ideas, visuals, or language.



Geography News

Volume 37 Issue 2– Fall 2014

Coordinator's Corner **Alex Oberle**

Another great year has gone by for the GAI, and thanks to all of those who have supported the organization in so many ways. We had a record number of workshops including new topics: AP Human Geography, ArcGIS On-line, and geography/literacy for secondary educators. Next year we look forward to repeating many of these workshops and adding yet another new one. I want to focus this Coordinator's Corner on the release of the new section of our website on Fulbright-Hays learning objects.

As many of you know, the GAI has been extraordinarily successful with U.S. Department of Education funded Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad, especially under past Coordinator Kay Weller's tenure with her efforts to design and lead three of the four projects. In total, the GAI secured four grants—an unprecedented number—that puts us on par with major universities like UW-Madison and UCLA. These four projects to Nigeria, India, Bangladesh, and Chile engaged a group of mostly Iowa educators in collecting, creating, and disseminating curricular materials that relate to those countries. These included not only lesson plans which have been indexed and posted on our website for almost two years, but also thousands of photographs and dozens of video clips. Thanks to the years of hard work of former GAI SC Member Anne Hoepfer, many of these were posted on our old Microsoft Frontpage website, but with the change in servers didn't make the transition to our new site.

Thanks to our outstanding Undergraduate Research Assistant, Mollie Ullestad, and the efforts of DeWayne Purdy at UNI's University Relations, we now have a searchable database that is customized just for these Fulbright-Hays projects. I'm using the term "learning objects" to characterize what we have: learning objects are essentially digital

resources that support learning. What we have now is well over 200 photographs from all four countries that are indexed according to country, topic (e.g. livestock, transportation), geography theme (e.g. economic, physical), and place (e.g. Santiago, Simla). So a search in our customized search box will pull learning objects that meet whatever search criteria you enter. All photos are high resolution and are available for download as high resolution so you can use them in a PowerPoint, student project, poster, slideshow, etc.

In the next year we plan to add additional photos and a companion site for video clips. Ideally, since this was released nationally via the National Geographic Alliance Network, we'd like to get example lesson plans and units that use our Fulbright Hays learning objects and share those via our website as well. I really do think these photographs and the way that they can be easily searched and downloaded will be a real asset, and while Nigeria and Chile are important in their own right, I think the GAI can make the assertion that we are the "go to" place for the geography of South Asia since we have both India and Bangladesh lesson plans and now learning objects.

Please do share this resource with fellow educators and encourage them to use our learning objects. Even if you never teach about any of these countries, or even teach geography at all, there may well be times that you need a photograph of mining, poverty, or a religious temple, so this database would be a very simple way to search for these, and know that any image you find is free of charge and has no proprietary restrictions at all since it was funded by taxpayer money.

Changes at National Geographic

I'm pleased and honored to have been elected by fellow Alliance Coordinators to serve a three-year term on the Alliance Coordinators Council, a leadership group of seven alliance coordinators who work directly with National Geographic leadership to advance the common good of the Alliance Network. This year, the council's role is particularly exciting and groundbreaking as we are providing direct input and planning for National Geographic's organization-wide restructuring. Little is known at this point about how the restructuring will play out except that "silos" within the organization have been broken down, and Nat Geo is now aggregated into three larger missions. The Alliance Network and Nat Geo Education are part of the new "Teach" mission, and now work directly with Nat Geo Kids which used to be a separate part of the organization. Other changes as part of this are the Geography Bee now being directly linked with alliances rather than a separate entity as had been the case in the past.

The AC Council is now fully engaged in the restructuring process including two intensive webinars and two in person visits to Washington D.C. over just a 30-day span. These changes are brought about by the new CEO, Gary Knell, who began in January. Knell is a strong advocate for education, including having served for 22 years at Sesame Workshop where he expanded the international reach of Sesame Street. Mr. Knell also has extensive journalism and media experience, including serving as CEO for NPR. Knell has extensive global expertise as a member on the Council for Foreign Relations. Mr. Knell is active on social media, especially Twitter, and you can follow him at @garyknell. In fact, he follows the GAI, and I believe we are the only alliance to have that honor!



Resources for Elementary Education

An interesting mapping resource from National Geographic's Mapmaker Interactive is GeoTours. A GeoTour is a tour of bookmarks on an interactive map that you can share with the world. You can include photographs, information, website links, etc. for each bookmark, and can arrange the bookmarks to tell a story. A GeoTour of Iowa has recently been created, and you can view it here: <http://bit.ly/1vHCcNw>

Another fun mapping resource from National Geographic is State Tabletop Maps. These are maps of each state that you can download, print, and assemble. Students will literally gain hands on experience working with these large, tangible maps. You can view State Tabletop Maps here: <http://bit.ly/1yDWyhz>



Recognize this area? It's west-central Iowa between Des Moines and Council Bluffs. This tile is from the tabletop map for Iowa. This is one of the dozen or so tiles that you'd print out to complete the state of Iowa, and students would then assemble these. Most have the names of cities and rivers, so the one above is one of the more challenging parts to this "puzzle".

2015 Workshops

We're pleased that several workshops have been funded in full by National Geographic for Summer 2015, and we will once again offer UNI Geography credit (graduate or undergraduate) at the greatly reduced rate of \$75 per credit for our professional development. One change for this year will be that we'll work to announce specific dates and locations for workshops earlier in the year, likely by the first week of March rather than in April. Otherwise, as in a typical summer, the workshops themselves will be scattered across June and July.

Our new "Geography, Technology, and the Iowa Core" workshop that we offered across Iowa the past several years has been changed to a Part II and our trial run of the Part II in Cedar Falls this past summer was quite successful. We'll offer two workshops in 2015, likely in north-central Iowa and then perhaps in the Des Moines area. Another workshop that we'll offer but likely in a different iteration and location is "Geography, Conflict, and Human Rights". It will certainly keep its focus on human rights and ending genocide, but the new version may more directly connect with the Common Core E/LA and primary sources. Two other workshops that will again be offered, but in a different location, will be an on-line GIS workshop for both social studies and science educators and AP Human Geography. We'll continue to offer our "Geography: Teaching With the Stars" and plan to have both on-line and in person workshops.

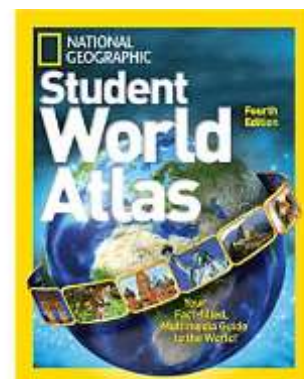
Brand new for 2015, and with the details yet to be set, is a traveling workshop on the topic of "Game and Fish". I can say that we will have a limited number of seats and that the majority of participant travel costs for the workshop will be paid by the GAI. We plan to focus on northeast Iowa, likely starting at UNI, then travelling to the Fayette/Decorah area, and then the Mississippi River. Please stay tuned, especially as this workshop will be in particularly high demand and have limited space.



Nancy Lockett of MISIC works with Brian Morgan (Algona HS) during a workshop to develop "text sets" that connect Geography with the Common Core E/LA.

New Resources

Recently, the GAI purchased some great books, DVDs, and wall maps for Iowa teachers to use in the classroom. The books include: *Answer Book- Fast Facts About Our World*, *Where the Locals Go*, *Book of Peoples of the World*, *Secret Journeys of a Lifetime*, and *Student Atlas of the World*. All of these books are extremely interesting and contain beautiful photographs and information that can be used in a variety of ways. The DVDs purchased are "Guns, Germs, & Steel", about why the world is so unequal, and "The Human Family Tree", about tracing the human journey through time and space. The wall maps include U.S., Britain/Ireland, and China political maps, a map of the Middle East, a map of the earth at night, and a world map for kids that displays all of the country flags. We'll be giving these materials away for free during upcoming 2015 workshops.

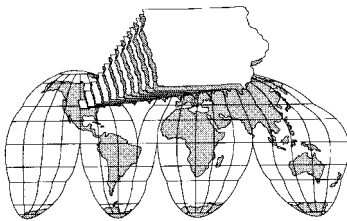


Geographic Alliance of Iowa
Department of Geography
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50614-0406

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

319.273.5952
Toll free in Iowa 1.800.601.3899

Putting Iowa in its Place!



Geography News is a free publication of the Geographic alliance of Iowa and produced with the support of the Department of Geography at the University of Northern Iowa. The GAI is funded through a grant from the National Geographic Education Foundation and the Henry Wallace Foundation. Permission is granted to reproduce any part of the newsletter.

GAI Coordinator: Dr. Alex Oberle
Email: Alex.Oberle@uni.edu
Phone: 319-273-6332

GAI website: <http://www.uni.edu/gai>

Phone: 1-800-601-3899 or 319-273-5952