

National Geographic Society Education Foundation
GENIP Report
May, 2003

Foundation Grants

In 2003, the Education Foundation initiated a second year of competitive grantmaking. Three grant programs have been established:

- **Teacher Grants:** funds innovative experiential learning opportunities for classrooms. Typical awards amount to \$5,000.
- **Grosvenor Grants:** supports Geographic Alliances and other statewide networks of geography educators with funding assistance for teacher professional development and student experiential learning. Typical awards amount to \$50,000.
- **Venture Fund:** funds proposals that reach children through nontraditional educational opportunities. Typical awards amount to \$100,000.

For both the Venture Fund and the Grosvenor Grants, successful proposals received in the spring round will be funded in late May and those received in the fall will be funded by mid-November. Teacher grant winners will be notified in late August

In 2002, the Education Foundation awarded 77 competitive grants, totaling nearly \$3.6 million, reaching an estimated 15,620 teachers and 642,000 students. Projects ranged from the exploration of bird habitats in West Virginia to art and music geography programs in California. Visibility for the Foundation's grants has significantly increased.

The Foundation recently engaged Policy Studies Associates to assist with reporting and evaluation activities.

Education Outreach

We continue to provide materials to support geography education through the alliances, to conduct national programming for the Society, and to assist with educational extensions for key NGS initiatives.

- **Roper Poll Follow-up:** Following the release of the NGS/Roper Poll on Geographic Literacy on November 20th, the Foundation has initiated a series of steps to engage new partners in the effort to combat geographic illiteracy. As a result of the poll, National Geographic Television & Film is in active discussions with Sesame Workshop to produce children's programming on culturally sensitive topics. Palm Pictures has entered into a joint venture with National Geographic Mission Programs to produce live events around the country featuring diverse cultures and world music. The Roper Coalition on Geography Awareness will hold its inaugural meeting on May 29 to discuss other ways members can work together through traditional and nontraditional formats to engage youth interest in geographic literacy.

- Geography Action 2003!—Habitats. NGS has launched its 2003 theme with a curriculum-based website, featuring 6 different habitat types. Both NGS children's magazines, NGKids (home) and NGExplorer! (school) jointly produced and distributed a poster with us—encouraging children to take action to protect habitats. Our goal is for 1 million children to sign up online to take the “Habitat Hero” pledge. National educator training featuring is planned for June 2003, followed by several media events in September. A satellite broadcast is scheduled for October. Geography Action/Awareness week will be featured on television's “Jeopardy!” during Geography Awareness week with the possibility of a “Habitats” question category.
- Teacher Mentor Institute: The second year of the NGS national Teacher Mentor Institute is scheduled for July 20-30,2003. During the first year, NGS trained 30 alliance “Teacher Consultants”, representing 10 states. This group of “TC's” is currently back in their home districts working one-on-one with novice teachers. Each veteran teacher has developed a Geography Action Mentor Plan that describes how they will support other mentor teachers in their states.
- Iraq Map Giveaway: In November 2002, we distributed 50,000 new maps of Iraq to schools through the geographic alliance network. The maps were supported by online lesson plans (www.nationalgeographic.com/iraq).
- Editorial Extensions: In addition to other outreach, the Foundation has worked in partnership with NGS divisions to provide educational content for various media platforms. For example, we are currently working with the “Cittercam” television series to introduce its point-of-view science technology to students and teachers across the country.

New NGS Outreach Structure

In an effort that will strengthen its educational outreach, the Society has reorganized the Mission Programs division to create a new “Education and Children” department that will encompass the work of the Education Foundation, Geography Education Outreach, the National Geographic Bee, the World Challenge, and work related to Project JASON. The reorganization also creates three additional departments for public and special programs; research, conservation, and exploration grantmaking; and development. The Committee for Research and Exploration, now a part of the research, conservation, and exploration grantmaking department, is making a special push to increase the number of applications submitted from the geographic research community.