

OUTREACH – EDUCATION EVENT REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Attendee and Report Writer's Name:
Joseph Kerski, Geographer.
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Event: 2004 National Geographic Society
Geography Bee

Location: Jefferson County Public Schools,
Lakewood, Colorado

Event Date(s): December 2003 and
January 2004

Each year for the past 15 years, thousands of schools in the United States participate in the National Geographic Bee using materials prepared by the National Geographic Society: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geobee/index.html>

The contest is designed to encourage teachers to include geography in their classrooms, spark student interest in the subject, and increase public awareness about geography. Schools with students in grades four through eight are eligible for this entertaining and challenging test of geographic knowledge.

After years of telling teachers to participate in the Geography Bee, and working with staff at National Geographic on various geography education initiatives over the years, it was a great thrill for me to finally run a Bee event. I did this at a local elementary school near the Denver Federal Center. I coordinated the events with a parent volunteer, a sponsoring teacher, and the principal of Deviny Elementary School. I encourage others to get involved and do the same. We held a practice session in December 2003, the preliminary competition on 9 January 2004, and the final competition on 13 January 2004. Most of the competitions are oral, but the winning student takes a written examination,

sent to the National Geographic Society to compete in the state and national events. The national event is hosted by Alex Trebek and offers a \$25,000 college scholarship for the winner.



Preliminary Competition—it was a privilege to work with these excellent students!



Joseph Kerski, clad in map jacket, hands out ribbon and map to winning student. I distributed USGS and ESRI maps and pencils to all participants. Also pictured are second-place student and parent volunteer.

I would like to thank the Deviny Elementary Staff for the privilege of working with their students and teachers, and the USGS for its support of educational outreach.

*** End of Geography Bee Training Report ***