

EDUCATION EVENT REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Attendee's Name: Joseph Kerski Title: Cartographer, PM

Location: Dallas TX

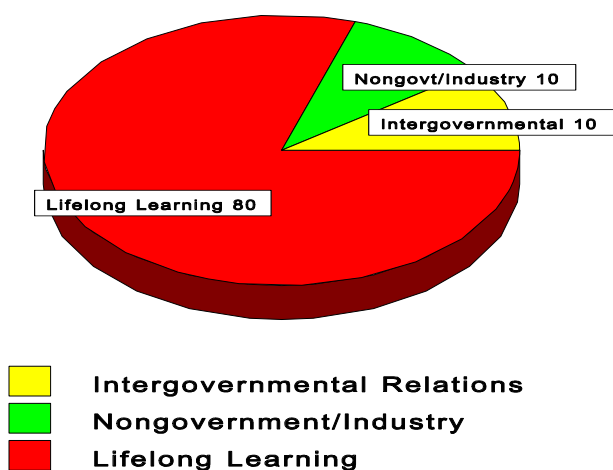
Other USGS Attendees:

Trip Date(s): 15-17 April 1999

Purpose of Travel: **Geo-Tech 11 Conference**

- (1) Conduct 4 workshops;
- (2) Operate USGS exhibit at conference;
- (3) Co-conduct training for GIS institute for educators.

Outreach Focus Areas



Summary:

Geo-Tech is an annual national conference, emphasizing K-university geography education across the USA by bringing together national leaders in geographic educational technology. By participating in this conference, we demonstrated the leadership that the USGS-NMD has in digital data and services that teachers can use at all grade levels. This conference is seeking to expand its traditional geography base into earth science. By participating in this event, the publicity generated from teachers and students across the country for the USGS could be enormous, particularly with high media attention on both the need for geographic skills as well as the need for educational technology by students in America. I conducted four workshops at the conference:

- 1) Exploring cultural and physical geography with USGS topographic and thematic maps.
- 2) Implementing GIS in Secondary Education: Catalysts and Challenges.
- 3) Using USGS Digital Imagery in the Curriculum.

4) Teaching About Antarctica Using USGS Resources.

I co-conducted a GIS institute with instructors from ESRI. This was a followup training to the first national summer GIS institute, held during July 1998 at Southwest Texas State University in July. The institute last summer was supported by GENIP, NGS, and the Texas Alliance for Geographic Education. These teachers are using USGS digital data to do incredible things in the classroom.

I operated a USGS exhibit at the conference. Approximately 500 teachers attended the conference. I displayed and handed out miscellaneous topographic maps for Texas, including historical 15' maps that I obtained for the conference via Pete Modreski, GD, teachers packets, information sheets, hazards posters, water education posters, GIPs, and other items. Other exhibitors included the Texas Natural Resources Information Service, the Texas Bureau of Economic Geology, national book publishers in geography and science, and ESRI.

My emphasis for attending this conference was two-fold: First, capitalize on USGS strength in technology. The explosion in educational technology presents the best opportunity that the USGS has ever had to get our data and products into the hands of students and educators across the country. Educators who are trained in the types and applications of our data are a powerful lobby for the USGS. Students familiar with our data will form an expanded future USGS customer base. The second objective was to "train the trainers"--teachers--to magnify our effectiveness and maximize our limited resources. These trainers will themselves network with and train other teachers, administrators, and students.

Publicity:

The Geo-Tech conference is unique for two main reasons: First, it brings in well-known educators and associated potential publicity. This year, the keynoter was Dr Jane Goodall, anthropologist. Last year, Dayton Duncan, the biographer of a book on Lewis and Clark and the director of the PBS special on the explorers, was one of the keynote speakers. I spoke with Mr. Duncan and will send him some USGS historical and explorer maps which can bring recognition to our agency. Teacher Ann E. Bancroft, the first woman to ski to both the north and the south poles, was the other keynote speaker. I talked with her about the USGS, and will send her some of our excellent Antarctica maps that she can use in her outreach work. Second, GeoTech is held in the high school where the principal herself, Kate Collins Dailey, is on the board of the National Council for Geographic Education. The USGS should continue to work with the NCGE on a variety of projects, particularly the joint publication of educational information, as I recommended last year. This would bring in funding for educational outreach.

Recommendation:

The Geo-Tech conference should remain on our list of participating in each year as one of the important educational conferences. This is especially pertinent as we seek to concentrate efforts on targeted audiences and de-emphasize "general public" events where the benefit is questionable for the resources expended. This is a strong candidate for a conference we participate in each year, but some handouts should rotate, in case some of the attendees are the same.

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