

II. Advisory (Executive) Committee

Marilyn Bahney (Chair)
MV Elementary and Junior High
Moran, KS 66755
(620) 852-3103
email: lamb@ckt.net

Lynn Boitano-Thompson
GC Alternative High School
Garden City, KS 67846
(620) 276-7600
email: lynn@ucom.net

Judy D. Dollard
10308 Noland
Overland Park, KS 66215
(913) 492-7357
email: ksdoll@aol.com

C. Don Everhart
Consultant Olathe District Schools
Olathe, KS 66061
(913) 764-4171
email: cdeverhart@juno.com

Deb Hamil
Anthony Middle School
Manhattan, KS 66502
(785) 587-2890
email: debraha@manhattan.k12.ks.us

Cheryl Heinrichs
KGA Publicans Director
KGA Office Manager
Fort Hays State University
600 Park Street
Hays, KS 67601
(785) 628-5821
email: kgalib@fhsu.edu

John Heinrichs
KGA Coordinator
Department of Geosciences
Fort Hays State University
600 Park Street
Hays, KS 67601
(785) 628-5821
email: jheinric@fhsu.edu

Richard Lisichenko
KGA Co-Coordinator
Fort Hays State University
600 Park Street
Hays, KS 67601
(785) 628-4159
email: rlisiche@fhsu.edu

Pamela Keller
St. Mary's School
Salina, KS 67401
(785) 827-4200
pkeller@sacredheartknights.org

Sandra Wallace
660 S. Ohio, #135
Salina, KS 67401
Wshwallace@aol.com

Rosanne Wilson
Shawnee Heights Middle School
5431 SW 11th Terr
Topeka, KS 66604-2036
(785) 228-2484

Elizabeth Vrabac
St. Thomas Aquinas
Overland Park, KS 66215
(913) 345-1411
email: vrabac@stsaints.net

III. Application

(a) Need

Geography education in Kansas has shown significant improvement since the formation of the Kansas Geographic Alliance in 1991:

- Kansas has a set of geography performance standards in place, and has begun assessment to those standards.
- Membership in the KGA has risen to 1,100.
- The number of committed Teacher Consultants (TCs) has risen to 117.
- The Kansas Geography Bee has become a premier educational event in the state, and Kansas students have performed very well at the national level – including winning the national Bee in 2004.
- There has been a steady rise in the number of teachers applying for, and receiving grants for projects and experiences related to geography education.
- The KGA has formed valuable partnerships with many other educational organizations in Kansas

However, substantial opportunities for improvement of geography education in the state exist. The spectrum of needs in Kansas remains similar to those identified in 2003, and includes the following:

- As seen by college-level geography instructors, awareness of human and physical geography outside the United States among graduating high-school seniors is at unacceptably low levels.
- The nature of social studies certification in Kansas (requiring a history degree) means that a continuing need exists for training of pre- and in-service teachers in geography content and instructional/assessment techniques. This is related to a broader need in Kansas to raise the importance of geography as a school subject to policymakers and other stakeholders.
- Many areas of Kansas are underserved with geography teachers who are “highly qualified” under the definition of the No Child Left Behind legislation. As a result, there is a growing need for the kind of in-service activities the KGA offers. In addition, Kansas has recently put in place alternative certification programs to address the lack of teachers in rural areas. This, as well, creates a need for refresher training.
- The turnover rate of K-12 teachers in Kansas, as in the rest of the US, is very high. As a consequence, there is a dire need for training for new teachers and teachers in training, to assist them in surmounting the many challenges involved in K-12 education.
- Skills with geographic technologies such as GPS, GIS, and remote sensing are not distributed as widely among educators in Kansas they should be.
- Many geography teachers lack experience of cultural and physical landscapes outside Kansas.

- Many Kansas classrooms are deficient in materials for geography education (maps, globes, CD-ROMS, and other media). The state's budget situation makes it increasingly difficult for schools, particularly those classified as Title I, to purchase these items.

(b) Scope of Work

The KGA's program for 2004-2005 reflects the needs described above, matches the National Geographic Society's priorities, and contains both traditional Alliance activities with a record of success and innovative activities to reach out to new audiences in new ways. We plan to address the content and skill needs of Kansas geography teachers through a broad array of professional development efforts, including regional training workshops, an Advanced Summer Geography Institute, a Teacher Grant program to stimulate innovative classroom projects and a fall geography education conference. These programs will also provide teachers with a valuable support network. We will also engage in outreach and curriculum activity through our newsletter (*KGA Insights*), website, and Resource Center. The Alliance will continue its participation as the sponsor of the Children's Exploration Camp at the annual Nicodemus Homecoming Celebration. We will also work to obtain external resources for KGA programs through direct fundraising contacts and grant proposals. Finally, recognizing the new environment created by the No Child Left Behind legislation, the KGA will embark on a broad campaign to increase the visibility and importance of geography among policymakers at the state and local levels.

1. Program Descriptions

1.1 Professional Development Activities

1.1.1 Advanced Summer Geography Institute

Purpose: To give selected Kansas geography teachers experience with applying geography knowledge in the field and interpreting the cultural and physical landscape in unfamiliar environments. In 2004-2005, the KGA will conduct an Advanced Institute involving a 10-day field trip to large urban areas in the Midwest. Participants will explore the changes in urban geography over the past few decades (the appearance of the "Rust Belt", the development of mature minority communities, suburban sprawl, the rise of "New Urbanism", and the nature of sub-communities within large urban agglomerations). In addition, participants will use GPS and GIS technology on a daily basis to assist their personal observations. We will follow the general plan of the very successful "Northern Plains to North Woods" ASGI conducted in 2003, in which participants rotated through various roles on the trip – including navigator, meteorologist, recorder, photographer, readers, etc. In addition, all participants will develop an original lesson plan based on their experiences and produce a geographic poster summarizing one of the main themes of the experience. In 2003, the posters were displayed at the KGA Fall Education Conference, and were the major item of discussion during breaks – demonstrating the value of sharing the participant's new geographic understanding.

Particular cities that will be visited during the ASGI will include Kansas City, Chicago, Gary, and Detroit. Tours of the various areas within these cities will be conducted by knowledgeable local civic leaders and academic specialists, and connections will be developed between the KGA members and their counterparts in other state alliances.

Beneficiaries: Kansas geography Teacher Consultants (directly), other Kansas geography teachers (through dissemination of lesson plans and posters, and students.

Number impacted: At least 8 KGA TCs will participate in the 2005 ASGI.

1.1.2 Geopower Regional Teacher Training Workshops

Purpose: To give Kansas geography teachers basic geography content information, familiarity with the Kansas Geography Standards, and background on the KGA and its programs. We will conduct four Geopower regional weekend workshops in the NW, SW, NE, and SE portions of Kansas during the program year. At the workshops, teachers will participate in content and lesson plan presentations, inquiry-based group activities, and a walking tour to demonstrate the skills required in interpreting the physical and cultural landscape. KGA TC teams will lead the workshops, with support from the KGA office for logistics, planning, and promotion. The first of the Geopower workshops was offered in January 2004, and participation was very good (16 teachers attended). Two of the Geopower participants went on to attend the 2004 Summer Geography Institute.

Beneficiaries: Kansas geography teachers (directly) and their students.

Number impacted: A minimum of 15 teachers will attend each of the four workshops.

1.1.3 Pre-service Teacher Training Workshops

Purposes: To give Kansas geography and social studies teachers in training the knowledge, skills, and support network they need to confidently approach K-12 geography education and thereby reduce the “burnout” that plagues the teaching profession. The KGA will identify a responsible Teacher Consultant for every postsecondary institution in the state that operates an education program in geography or social studies, and that TC will contact relevant faculty at those institutions and offer to put on a workshop of class session at which the geography standards will be introduced along with lesson plans, materials, and the KGA. Such sessions have been offered regularly by KGA TCs at Kansas State University, Emporia State University, and Fort Hays State University for several years – however, there are at least four universities in the state which have not been reached.

Beneficiaries: Preservice geography and social studies teachers in Kansas (directly) and their students.

Number impacted: A minimum of 100 preservice teachers will be reached through the program.

1.1.4 KGA Teacher Grant Program

Purpose: To provide support to Kansas geography teachers for innovative geography education projects. The KGA will create a pool of \$2000 to be distributed in the form of competitively awarded grants to KGA TCs. Teachers wishing a grant will write a proposal and submit it to the KGA Professional Development Committee, who will select the awardees. Selection will be made on the basis of reach, impact, and visibility.

Beneficiaries: Kansas geography students, through innovative educational approaches.

Number impacted: We estimate that there will be 5-10 awardees, potentially impacting 100-200 students.

1.1.5 Fall Geography Conference

Purpose: Hold a one-day conference in September to which all KGA members will be invited. The conference will include presentations on Geography Awareness Week, the state and national geography standards, instructional and assessment techniques, geography content, developing a geographic sense of place, and the uses of technology in geography. Social time will be provided for members to network and share their ideas and experiences. The conference will also be the venue for meetings of the KGA's committees and the election of new members to the Executive Committee.

Beneficiaries: KGA members (directly) and their students.

Number impacted: A minimum of 40 geography teachers will attend the one-day event.

1.2 Curriculum Development Activities

1.2.1 *KGA Insights*

Purpose: Produce a newsletter, called *KGA Insights*, to disseminate detailed information about Alliance and Society programs, State and National geography Standards, upcoming professional development and grant opportunities. *KGA Insights* also includes at least one complete standards-based lesson plan developed by a KGA TC in each issue.

Beneficiaries: Kansas geography teachers (directly) and their students (indirectly through the dissemination of lesson plans)

Number impacted: *KGA Insights* is currently being sent to approximately 1,200 subscribers. We intend to increase this number by 20%, to 1,440.

1.3 Outreach Activities

1.3.1 KGA Resource Center/Website Development and Promotion

Purpose: The KGA provides information, curriculum, materials, and other resources to the membership through the KGA Resource Center at Fort Hays State University and a comprehensive and current website, hosted by Fort Hays State University. The Resource Center contains several region-oriented trunks, books, videotapes, CD-ROMS, GPS receivers, computer equipment, and field trip support items that can be requested by any KGA member. The Resource Center's catalog is maintained on the website, along with information about KGA opportunities and minutes from committee meetings. Presentations and demonstrations will be made by the Resource Center manager to promote usage of the Center and obtain feedback from users of the Center and the website. The list of available items on the KGA website will be maintained and updated, and an on-line search and request system will be developed. Finally, we will continue our very successful program of providing maps and materials free to all Title I schools in Kansas.

Beneficiaries: Kansas geography teachers and students.

Number impacted: Utilization of the resource center has grown significantly in the past year, with approximately 80 teachers requesting items. We intend to increase the number of requests for resources and teachers serviced by at least 30%.

1.3.2 State Geography Bee

Purpose: Assist in the coordination and logistics of the Kansas Geography Bee. In addition, at the Bee parents and teachers will receive a packet of information about geography and the Kansas Geographic Alliance, and attending teachers will be given geography materials from the National Geographic Society. Finally, the KGA newsletter will be used to provide publicity before and after the Bee.

Beneficiaries: Kansas geography students and their teachers and parents.

Number impacted: At the bee itself, approximately 50 students and their teachers and students. Overall, however, many hundreds of students, teachers, and parents participate in the local Bees and hear about geography through publicity surrounding the Bee.

1.3.3 Geography Awareness Week/Geography Action!

Purpose: Geography Action! materials will be compiled, printed, and distributed by the KGA. Geography Awareness Week (GAW) will be promoted through the signing of a proclamation by the Governor of Kansas; by TC contacts with local newspapers, radio, and television stations; and through TC engagement with the topic during the KGA Fall Geography Education Conference. A GAW quilt-block contest will be conducted and prizes awarded, with the winning entries placed on the KGA website and printed in *KGA Insights*.

Beneficiaries: Kansas geography students.

Number Impacted: Approximately 300 students will receive instruction tied to Geography Awareness Week/Geography Action! Approximately 50 students per year participate in the quilt-block contest. Our goal is to increase the number of students participating in the quilt-block contest by 20%, to 60.

1.3.4 Participation in Nicodemus Homecoming Celebration

Purpose: Provide engaging integrated cross-disciplinary learning activities to children attending the Nicodemus Homecoming Celebration. In 2004, the KGA was invited to sponsor the Children's Exploration Camp at the Nicodemus Homecoming. Nicodemus is a unique community, since it is the only remaining African-American community settled by "Exodusters", who left the South after the Civil War. In collaboration with partners, the KGA will provide learning activities covering geography, history, and science to the children who attend the Homecoming Celebration. KGA Teacher Consultants are currently developing innovative activities for the 2004 event, based on their experiences during the very successful event in 2003. As a side note, based on our successful 2003 activity, the KGA has been invited to assist the National Park Service in developing interpretive exhibits and K-12 curriculum for the Nicodemus National Historic Site. This partnership offers benefits to the National Geographic Society beyond the KGA's educational programs, and will be vigorously developed.

Beneficiaries: Kansas children visiting Nicodemus

Number impacted: Approximately 250 children will participate in KGA-sponsored activities at the Exploration Camp at the Nicodemus Homecoming Celebration

1.3.5 Outreach to Policymakers

Purpose: Raise the level of interest in geography among the government community at state and local levels. KGA TCs, supported by the coordinators, will contact each member of the Kansas Board of Education, all members of relevant legislative committees, and responsible officials in the executive branch. Each contact will begin with a letter describing the importance of geography in the curriculum, the need for geography in the 21st Century, and the roles of the KGA and NGS in supporting geography education. In addition, the contactees will be given the opportunity for a KGA member to make an in-person visit to cover the above points in more detail.

Beneficiaries: The entire Kansas geography and social studies education community, including students, administrators, and teachers.

Number impacted: At least 50 state-level stakeholders will be contacted. A list of contacts and responses will be maintained.

1.4 Fundraising Activities

1.4.1 Direct Fundraising

Purpose: Attract additional revenue to support KGA programs. The KGA coordinator and co-coordinator, assisted by TCs, will systematically approach state agencies and private businesses to obtain matching funds and/or donations to augment the state geography endowment. Recently, the KGA Executive Committee implemented an incentive program to encourage fundraising efforts, and we expect this initiative to provide significant additional resources.

Beneficiaries: Kansas geography teachers and students

Number impacted: At least 50 entities will be contacted in person. A database will be maintained of the contacts, and a report of the activities compiled.

2. Performance Targets/Measures

As a result of the above programs, we have established the following key performance targets:

- 20% increase in KGA membership (from 1,200 to 1,440).
- 30% increase in the number of requests for materials from the KGA Resource Center.
- 20% increase in the number of students participating in the Geography Awareness Week quilt-block contest.
- 20% increase in the number of teachers attending the KGA Fall Geography Conference.
- Engage at least 250 children in educational activities at the Nicodemus Homecoming Celebration
- Contact at least 50 members of the Kansas policymaking community to promote the importance of geography education

Costs to support administration of the KGA are included in the 2004-2005 plan. These costs cover honoraria for the KGA coordinator and co-coordinator, administrative assistance for mailings and handling the paperwork associated with our programs, reimbursement for Executive Committee members who travel to meetings, and costs for paper and postage. These items relate to all of the programs described in this plan and are necessary to accomplishing the targets listed above. Two programs in particular, the Geography Bee and fundraising, are supported by efforts of the coordinator and co-coordinator under the general category of administration (although, to delineate them as specific initiatives, they are given equal status to other programs in the above narrative and the budget).

(c) Leverage

We believe that the KGA's programs have a very high degree of leverage based on the multiplier effect of professional development. Each additional teacher who receives geography training through the KGA impacts approximately 20 students per year. Each trained TC will train 5-10 teachers per year directly and therefore indirectly benefit 100-200 students per year (in addition to their own students). In addition to this multiplier effect, we are leveraging our efforts through partnerships (the Nicodemus Historical Society and the Kaw Valley Heritage Alliance, are examples of current partnerships) and by sponsoring the KGA teacher grant program. Finally, the KGA's efforts are leveraged by the in-kind support given by Fort Hays State University, which provides office space and a large room for the KGA Resource Center free of charge.

(d) Visibility

The KGA maintains a high degree of visibility in Kansas. Our Fall Geography Conference and Summer Institutes are widely publicized. The KGA coordinators and TCs staff exhibits at the meetings of major state organizations, such as the Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education (KACEE) and the Kansas Council for Social Studies (KCSS). The KGA distributes brochures at many other venues, and KGA TCs promote the Alliance at every opportunity among fellow teachers. Each year, the Governor signs a proclamation for Geography Awareness Week, an event which is publicized statewide. Also publicized statewide is the Kansas Geography Bee, and the success of Kansas students has made the Bee a premier educational event in the state. Our participation in the Nicodemus Homecoming Celebration has been covered in a press release, and our activities at the 2003 event will be extremely visible to several thousand visitors.

It is important to note that publicity for the National Geographic Society is incorporated within every activity of the KGA. Our brochures, mailings, and any news articles or interviews with KGA members all contain a reference to the valuable support which the NGS has provided, and continues to provide, to the Alliance.