

GET's Fourth Teacher Exchange in Puerto Rico

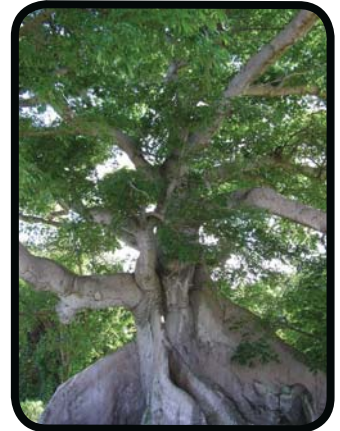
Fall 2007



Global Environmental Teachings

GET THE NEWS!

What does the beauty of El Yunque, taste of mofongo, sound of Afro-Caribbean fusion, and the sparkling waters of Bahia Mosquito have in common? They are all found in Puerto Rico, La Isla Del Encanto (the Island of Enchantment). Puerto Rico offers a tremendous amount of beauty and biodiversity. From 200 foot cliffs banking the ocean to an extensive freshwater aquifer that sculpts a massive cave system in the Karst Region to rain clouds slowly misting the dense tropical forests of El Yunque, this island offers a magnificent opportunity to explore island ecology. Explore diverse cultures and customs, unique geological features, and specific habitats for various endangered species all enclosed in 3,500 square miles of land coverage, about the size of Delaware.



GET is offering their fourth opportunity to explore Puerto Rico with local teachers. Participants will be enrolled in a spring online course on tropical ecology followed by a travel program in Puerto Rico for two weeks in the summer of 2008. This is a short term, study tour where teachers learn about island ecology while participating in a teacher exchange. All formal K-12 teachers, librarians, or administrators are eligible to participate. Applications are taken on a first-come, first served basis.

When: Online course dates are January 30-March 3, 2008. Travel course dates are tentatively June 17-July 1, 2008.

Graduate Credits: 3 credits (1 online prior to traveling and 2 while in Puerto Rico)

Program Benefits: 3 graduate credits, all in-country transportation, entrance fees, meals, and accommodations are included.

Program Costs: This program is valued at approximately \$3,500 but is being offered to teachers at a reduced cost of \$1,995. (Does not include airfare from the mainland US to Puerto Rico.)

Application: 10 educators from the mainland USA and 10 educators from Puerto Rico will be selected for participation based on a first-come, first-served basis. Science, social studies, foreign language, or any teacher interested in cultural issues related to the environment is encouraged to apply.

Deadline: Applications must be received by December 21, 2007

More Information: Visit the GET Website at www.uwsp.edu/get and click on Puerto Rico or email Susan Ermer at sermer@uwsp.edu.

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Standing in the security check line at the airport the other day I let my mind wonder. A thought of my grandfather crossed my mind. He spent two of his teen years growing up in China back in the 1920's. My great grandfather was working for General Electric in the refrigeration sector at the time. Virtually, he was introducing refrigeration to parts of China. Then the stock market crashed and the US dove into the "Great Depression." As a result, my great grandfather and his family returned to the USA. While I was standing in line for security check, I thought about this story and wondered what sort of line(s) my grandfather stood in as they boarded a train from Indiana across America to a dock somewhere on the western coast. There they boarded a ship that sailed them across the Pacific Ocean. I couldn't help but think how times have changed.

Our freedom of travel and mobility has allowed us to gain firsthand information and knowledge of other cultures, people, and countries throughout the world. Grandfather used to talk about his time in China. His stories would come to mind during GET's development phase of their China program. What would he say today if he could return to China and see the change? It would be like a new world to him. We have a great freedom today to gain access to information, travel to, and learn about other countries. The technology of the internet has opened doors for us. Email has allowed us to expand our community and stay in touch with friends and family despite the oceans that distance us. Online courses allows us to connect with others miles away to share knowledge and ideas. It seems the world is at our fingertips, the difficult part is deciding where you want to go.

GET takes advantage of this freedom and encourages teachers to embark on a journey abroad, virtually or physically. The more we learn and understand about the environment and natural world around us, the more likely we are to protect and respect it.

In this edition of GET the News you will learn how GET is evolving and changing. The development stage is over. We will maintain our offerings of international exchanges in Puerto Rico (2008), South Africa (2009), and China (2010). More online course opportunities are being created. We will say good-bye to Jamie Mollica (Hiler) as she accepts a full time position with the WI K-12 Energy Education Program. Congratulations Jamie on your marriage and new position! We say hello to Karla Lockman, GET's Puerto Rico Program Leader 2008.

Enjoy this edition of GET the News to learn more about the changes and opportunities.

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A special thanks to all the committee members for your support during the development phase of GET!



New Online Course



A new course is being offered from UW-Stevens Point, *Basic Concepts of Sustainability: Sustainability and Society!*

Citizens of a sustainable society can be defined as a people, regardless of geographical location, who believe in the care of nature to be as equal as to the care of people to people. How do we go about accomplishing such a society built on cooperation and peace rather than confrontation, fear and war? In this course, we will explore just that, the importance, the why and how of a sustainable society. We will learn to work with nature rather than against it; approach problems in nature and turn them into solutions in nature; act and think globally and locally; establish a durable, waste-free resource base and connect with like-minded individuals with the same ethical principles and form extended families that cross not only political boundaries but also cultural boundaries. Join us on this unique opportunity to act as a catalyst towards a sustainable future for us all. Mother Earth and your great-grandchildren will thank you!

Course: NRES 340/540: Sustainability and Society

Instructor: Mai Phillips

Dates: April 2 to April 30, 2008 (course opens a few days early to allow time to familiarize yourself with the online platform)

Location: Online

Credit: 1 graduate credit from UW-Stevens Point

Registration: Contact Tim Byers at tbyers@uwsp.edu or call 715-346-4176

Additional Online Course Offerings

Applied Environmental Education Program Evaluation

This 12-week online course is designed to assist environmental educators and natural resource professionals in evaluating their education programs. Course dates: February 18 – May 9, 2008. To learn more, visit the course web site: www.uwsp.edu/natres/rwilke/eetap or contact Angela Lemar (Angela.Lemar@uwsp.edu) for a registration form.

Fundamentals of Environmental Education

An 11-week online course about the fundamentals of environmental education is appropriate for both classroom teachers and for non-formal educators who work with students and/or teachers. Course dates: February 4 – April 18, 2008. To learn more, visit the course web site: www.uwsp.edu/natres/rwilke/eetap or contact Angela Lemar (Angela.Lemar@uwsp.edu) for a registration form.

Climate Change Online Workshop Series

Climate Discovery is a series of six-week courses for middle and high school educators. The course offerings include: Introduction to Earth's Climate; Earth System Science: A Climate Change Perspective; and Understanding Climate Change Today. More information can be found at http://ecourses.ncar.ucar.edu/climate_change_series.html



EPA Environmental Education Grants

The Grants Program sponsored by EPA's Environmental Education Division (EED), Office of Children's Health Protection and Environmental Education, supports environmental education projects that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills to help people make informed decisions that affect environmental quality. Awards greatly vary but more than 75 percent of the grants awarded by this program receive less than \$15,000. Deadline for submissions: December 20, 2007. Visit online for more information www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants

WEEB Grants

The Wisconsin Environmental Education Board (WEEB), located at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, is seeking proposals for the 2008-2009 grant cycle. This program awards grants for the development, dissemination, and implementation of environmental education programs. The Board anticipates awarding \$45,000 for general environmental education grants, \$190,000 for forestry grants, \$190,000 for school forest grants, and \$85,000 for energy education grants.

Proposals are due February 15, 2008. For an application packet or more information about the program see the Board's website at www.uwsp.edu/cnr/weeb or contact Ginny Carlton, Administrative Specialist, at 715/346-3805, email: weeb@uwsp.edu

Outdoor Classroom Grants

Lowe's, International Paper, and National Geographic Explorer partner in an outdoor classroom grant program for K-12 public schools to provide schools with additional resources to improve their science curriculum by engaging students in hands-on experiences outside the traditional classroom. Grants may be used to create new outdoor classrooms and/or enhance existing outdoor learning environments. Grants will be reviewed three times a year; the next deadline is February 15, 2007. Visit online for more information:

<http://www.lowes.com/lowes/lkn?action=pg&p=AboutLowes/outdoor/index.html>

More Teacher Travel Opportunities

NOAA's Teacher at Sea Program

Gain first-hand research experience in Fisheries, Oceanographic/Coastal Research, or Hydrographic Surveys on a government ocean research vessel with NOAA's Teacher at Sea program. The deadline for application is December 31, 2007. <http://teacheratsea.noaa.gov>

Fulbright in Japan

Japan Fulbright Memorial Teacher Program annually provides American primary and secondary school teachers and administrators with opportunities for professional development through short-term (3 weeks) study visits to Japan. The trip is three weeks, all expenses paid. The application requires a rationale, follow-up and references. www.fulbrightmemorialfund.jp Application Deadline is December 10th.



After a year and a half working half-time for GET, I have taken a full-time position just down the hall with the K-12 Energy Education Program (KEEP). I will miss the opportunity to learn more about the countries GET participants visit and to experience the adventures through them. I enjoyed my time working with Susan and look forward to seeing the new things GET has to offer. Long live GET!

My name is Karla Lockman and I am excited to be the trip leader for the Puerto Rico-Wisconsin teacher exchange in 2008. I have been doing environmental education for 6 years and enjoy giving students an opportunity to learn in the outdoors. I developed and instruct Teaching About the Environment Outdoors, a UW-SP online course. I live with my husband Bryan, dog Dakota, and two cats near Manawa, WI.



Contests

Nature Conservancy Photo Contest

The Nature Conservancy invites you to enter your favorite images of lands, waters, plants, animals, and people in nature. They seek original digital images of beautiful nature photography representing the diversity of life on Earth. The contest is open to all participants age 18 and older, regardless of residence or citizenship. The deadline for entry is December 31, 2007.

http://support.nature.org/site/PageServer?pagename=contest_ph6

National High School Essay Contest!

Each year, the United Nations Association-USA publishes a topic and question of particular importance to the international community. Students then conduct research and write a response to the question, based on research they conduct and their own views and opinions. This year's National High School Essay Contest on the United Nations focuses on the following question: What can the US do to help combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases around the world?

Winners of the contest receive a financial reward, and the possibility of a trip to New York to attend the UNA-USA Members' Day at the United Nations in April, 2008. For more information, and to download application materials, please visit the UNA 2008 National High School Essay Contest website at www.unausa.org/essay2008. You can also contact Liubov Grechen, essay contest coordinator. She can be reached at (212) 907-1328 or at lgrechen@unausa.org.



(Continued from page 6-*Success in China*)

Following a week exploration and study in Xinjiang, the group of teachers traveled to Yunnan together to experience the tropical ecosystems in China. Participants visited the Shilin Stone Forest, a karst region which is part of a half a million square kilometer UNESCO World Heritage Site that represents one of the most spectacular examples of humid tropical to sub-tropical karst in the world. The teachers also visited Kunming's top Green School to learn about the programs they engage students in to learn about natural resource management and environmental issues. To round out the travel study program, participants visited Yunnan's biodiversity hot spot in the Xishuangbanna region of southern Yunnan. During a 4-day study, teachers stayed at the Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Gardens while they learned about some of the 11,500 botanic species and experienced the rich ethnic diversity in this unique province. Sprinkled throughout the exchange were sessions teachers were given to share ideas, learn about the school systems in the USA, China, and South Africa, and gain experience with practical teaching methods.

Upon departure, teachers walked away with more ideas and tools to enrich their classroom lessons. Each teacher created a plan for the coming year to integrate newly acquired information into their curriculum.

The follow-up and future of this program is to reunite the teachers on North American soil in Wisconsin July 2008. This will provide the necessary follow-up to assess the integrated activities and expand on the enriching program.

GET Participant Testimonies

"As a geography teacher who teaches about a week's worth of China to 8th graders, I cannot tell you how stoked I am to improve my knowledge of it firsthand."

~John Hanson, Madison, Wisconsin
Environmental Studies of China Online Course

"I feel very happy for the opportunity to share with other teachers and students. It's the most important experience that I have in my professional and personal life. Thank you GET! I will appreciate and teach to my class the information that I learned. Xie xie!"

~ Elizabeth Pabon, Canovanas, Puerto Rico
China Travel Program

"This has been an AWESOME experience! The GET Programme allows us to look past ourselves & our comfort zones. It highlights the similarities and differences we have, and for that our eyes are opened to the beauty of our uniqueness as human and the splendor of the natural environment!"

~Michael Hager, Cape Town, South Africa
China Travel Program Participant

Dates to Remember

November 14-17, 2007: North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) Conference “Explore New Horizons for Environmental Education” in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

November 24-28, 2007: Tbilisi + 30 Conference “*Environmental Education towards a Sustainable Future - Partners for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development*” in Ahmedabad, India.

November 30-December 4, 2007: Tbilisi + 30 Tour *Sustainability in the Himalayan Foothills* - India.

December 1, 2007: World AIDS Day

December 10, 2007: Japan Fulbright Memorial Teacher Program Application Deadline

December 20, 2007: EPA Environmental Education Grant Proposals Due

December 21, 2007: GET Puerto Rico Teacher Exchange Application Deadline

December 31, 2007: Nature Conservancy Photo Contest Deadline and NOAA’s Teacher at Sea Application Deadline

January 15, 2008: National High School Essay Contest Submissions Deadline

February 15, 2008: WEEB Grant and Lowes Outdoor Classroom Grant Proposals Due



UNEP Picture.World
Environment Day June 5, 2007

GET’s Partnerships

GET is a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of global environmental literacy. GET is a collaborative effort between the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education (WCEE) and the Global Environmental Management Education Center (GEM) in the College of Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. Base funding for GET is provided by GEM through a cooperative agreement grant with the Wisconsin Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).



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