



Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education  
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point  
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## Wisconsin-Puerto Rico Program Goes Full Circle



For the past two years, the GET program has had the opportunity to collaborate with InterAmerican University of Puerto Rico-Bayamon, Department of Education: Puerto Rico, and Reverence of Life and Beauty, Inc. (REVIBE). In June 2004 eleven Wisconsin educators and eight teachers from Puerto Rico traveled the diverse landscapes of Puerto Rico for two weeks. They participated in environmental education workshops, field experiences, mangrove forest exploration, visits to the beautiful Karst region, and more. This summer ten more Wisconsin educators traveled down to participate in the same exchange with another group of teachers from Puerto Rico.

For most of the participants, the greatest strength of this program was the opportunity to network, share environmental education teaching methods, and build friendships with their Wisconsin and Puerto Rican colleagues.

In July 2005, our goal of completing the exchange for the program was reached with additional funding from the Department of Education-Puerto Rico and the Environmental Protection Agency. The funds provided support to reunite the 2004 group of teachers; this time in Wisconsin! GET coordinated the exchange. The program included tours of the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education, Mead Wildlife Refuge, Lac du Flambeau Ojibwa Cultural Center, Apostle Islands National Park, and so much more. We plan to do it again July 2006.



A third exchange program in Puerto Rico will be offered June 2006. If you know a teacher interested in participating please contact us at [GET@uwsp.edu](mailto:GET@uwsp.edu) or 715-346-4150.

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Teaching is the highest form of understanding.

~Aristotle~



## Letter from Susan



Welcome to the Global Environmental Teachings (GET) Program's first bi-annual newsletter. We have had an exciting and very productive year advancing environmental education on a global scale through sharing ideas, building friendships, and learning across borders. Our journeys abroad have exposed us to wonderful places, amazing people, and devoted organizations working very hard to sustain the natural resources on this earth and educate people of all ages. The GET Program has been made possible through a collaborative effort between the Global Environmental Management (GEM) Education Center and the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education (WCEE) located in the College of Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

The GET staff was trying to decide how we can share all the information gained in the past year, expose others to what we have accomplished, and inform people what we offer in the coming year. Then an idea came to us. We need to get the news out! That was it...GET the News! We will be offering *GET the News* free of charge twice a year.

This edition of *GET the News* will introduce you to some of the "movers and shakers" of GET. You will gain classroom ideas to help bring global environmental topics to the classroom. We will share stories from some of the teachers who have participated in GET this year. Finally you will learn about some upcoming activities planned for 2006. We invite you all to "get" involved.

If you know an educator, organization, or anyone who might be interested in GET, please feel free to spread the news. We would be happy to send a newsletter and brochure to those interested.



From left: Susan Ermer, Jia Feng, and Marilyn Beach at the Center for Environmental Education & Communications office in Beijing, China.

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## A GOLD Piece from Mai



The availability and wealth of information on the web has revolutionized the way we deliver and teach our courses. It was barely five years ago that the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education (WCEE) launched its first online course on Biodiversity and Conservation Biology ([www.uwsp.edu/cnr/wcee/biodiversity](http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/wcee/biodiversity)). The idea of teaching a natural resources course on the internet was so new at the time that our course was featured in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (<http://chronicle.com/free/2000/11/2000111401u.htm>). Now there are hundreds of courses and even degrees that can be accomplished online in natural resources and almost any other field of study. Since then we have developed a variety of online courses, e.g. 'Wisconsin Environmental Studies' ([www.uwsp.edu/natres/nres600/index.htm](http://www.uwsp.edu/natres/nres600/index.htm)) and 'Plant Resources and Humans' (<http://www.uwsp.edu/natres/nres715/index.htm>). By combining the power of online learning with face-to-face study abroad courses for teachers, we launched an island ecology course on Puerto Rico last summer 2004 ([www.uwsp.edu/natres/nres679pr](http://www.uwsp.edu/natres/nres679pr)).



Besides study abroad courses, GET has started online certification courses for teachers. This new set of certification courses will be promoted as a new program that offers courses long-distance online known as the Global Online Long Distance (GOLD) Program. As our instructor and primary online course coordinator of the GOLD program, I find it extremely exciting to be working creatively to utilize the ever-growing and dynamic Internet environment for expanded teaching and learning. The old adage of "the sky is the limit" seems to no longer be applicable here because there seems to be no limit to cyber space.

## GREENING OUR SCHOOL! GET's Global Photo Contest

Last winter, GET traveled to China, South Africa, Tanzania, and Kenya. While visiting schools across the world, program coordinator Susan Ermer was inspired. The creativity displayed by students in their school environmental projects gave Susan the idea to celebrate World Environmental Day 2006. GET started the Greening Our School Photo Contest, which highlights school environmental projects that students are doing domestically as well as internationally. Through a generous grant from the Target Corporation, winning photos will be used in a poster designed for World Environmental Day June 5, 2006. Posters will be distributed to participating schools throughout the world.

Show the world what your student group or class has done to make your school a more environmentally friendly place and share the experiences with students from other schools in Wisconsin and worldwide.

Photos must involve some component of your school building or grounds. When you submit your photo, please also send a half page description of what your project is and the people involved.

### Get Involved!

**What:** The Greening Our School Photo Contest

**Who:** Any school students between the age of thirteen to eighteen are eligible to submit a photo.

**Where:** Any school internationally!

**When:** Photos sent to the GET office must be postmarked by January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

**How:** Visit our website at [www.uwsp.edu/get](http://www.uwsp.edu/get), or email GET ([GET@uwsp.edu](mailto:GET@uwsp.edu)) to receive a Greening Our School information packet.

# Quick Classroom Activities



## Flags, Maps and More!

Use these lessons as a way to introduce a new unit or to add international components to existing history, science, or social studies curriculum!

### Grade Level: 9-12

**Goal:** To broaden students' understanding of geography, natural resources harvested internationally, flag symbolism and geographic locations of countries.

#### Materials:

- Paper and black marker
- Information about specific countries, maps and flags (can be derived from the CIA World Factbook at [www.cia.gov/publications/factbook/](http://www.cia.gov/publications/factbook/))

#### Prep Work:

- I. Make outlines of ten different countries on 8 ½ x 11 pieces of paper with a black marker.
- II. Print or color copy the flags for each country.
- III. Find the natural resources harvested by each country.
- IV. On the back of the outlined country, write or type the natural resources found in that country. Laminate if possible.
- V. Laminate and cut out the corresponding flags for each country with the name of the country on the back.

#### Activity:

- I. Distribute the ten outlines of countries and flags to students.
- II. Describe to them that the objective of this exercise is to match the flag to the outline of the country. They can use the natural resources listed on the back of the country outline to give them clues. For example, diamonds and gold are prevalent in West Africa, oil in the Middle East etc.
- III. Let the students start to talk with one another about what resources they have, if they recognize the flag etc. Walk around the class with the students and facilitate the conversations. Help them make the connections between geography, natural resources, international markets and economies.
- IV. Once the class has matched all of their flags and country outlines, make sure they have paired them up correctly. Describe the symbolism of each flag (a lot of flags symbolize natural components through the colors) and the connections between natural resources and geography.

### Grade Level: 5-8

**Goal:** To broaden students understanding of different countries, flags, geography identification, natural resources, important historical events and other information relevant to subject matter.

#### Materials:

- Sidewalk chalk
- Flags and maps for specified countries (can be derived from the CIA World Factbook)
- Information related to those countries based on subject matter, i.e. natural resources common to that country, important people or events in history
- World map or globe

#### Activity:

- I. Choose five countries in which you choose to examine. Collect information for the lesson at : [www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/](http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/)
- II. Split the class into five different groups. Give each group a map of a different country, flag, list of events in history, customs, natural resources, or any other information based on subject matter.
- III. Bring students outside to the school sidewalks. Have each group draw their country flag, the outline of their country, important people in history, natural resources etc. Also have students draw where their country is in proximity to the rest of the world (either within the context of a continent or by drawing a globe next to it with the country highlighted)
- IV. Have each group present their drawings and information with the rest of the class. Students must describe what their country is, where it is located, what their flag looks like (and symbolizes if possible), natural resources provided by that country etc. This allows students to establish a sense of place in the world, respect for other countries, peoples and cultures, as well as make the connection between natural resources they use in daily life and their origins.

### We want to hear from you!

Do you have a great global environmental activity to share? Send it to us via email at [GET@uwsp.edu](mailto:GET@uwsp.edu) and we'll consider it for the next newsletter.

Below is a letter from one of our participants. She reflects on her experience during a teacher exchange in Wisconsin.

*The Wisconsin-Puerto Rico Teachers Interchange was so amazing. I got the opportunity to gain a lot of knowledge. Last year I improved my watershed classes.*

*I had the opportunity to share activities with Wisconsin teachers and compare with those activities that I do in my classroom.*

*During this summer the opportunity to be in Wisconsin was gorgeous. Now I know it, but the program gave me the chance to be more conscious about:*

*“Think globally and act locally.”*

*To be in those beautiful ecosystems and try to see from my island point of view what are so important, no matter where they are.*

*Aldo Leopold’s quote, “When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.” Now I feel better from the bottom of my heart that nature in Wisconsin belongs to me also, I am an important part.*

*We need to listen what nature tells us, understand the beauties that nature gives us everyday.*

*Thanks all of you,  
Myriam*



## Meet Jill!

Jill Weiss joined our staff as a Program Assistant in June 2005. Jill graduated from Central College (Pella, IA) in 2000 with degrees in Economics and German. Jill went on to serve in the Peace Corps from 2002 – 2004 as a Municipal/NGO Support Volunteer in the Republic of Macedonia. In May 2005, she completed her Masters at Illinois State University in Applied Economics, with a focus on Community and Economic Development.

In addition to supporting the day-to-day administrative activities that keeps GET going, Jill assists in developing new programs and managing program logistics. She is interested in promoting sustainable development practices that lead to healthy, vibrant communities.

# Upcoming GET Programs



## Puerto Rico

During the summer of 2006 GET is offering another opportunity to experience the sights, sounds and habitat of this unique island. Explore subterranean caves, tropical forest ecosystems, marine ecosystems and the beautiful culture of Puerto Rico. Participate in workshops, cultural events, and outdoor excursions while exchanging teaching methods with educators.

**What:** A professional development opportunity of a lifetime! Travel with ten educators from the continental U.S. and meet ten educators from Puerto Rico, with whom you will travel for two weeks to discover diverse ecosystems. Participate in field excursions, workshops and develop teaching methods.

**Who:** Any K-12 Teacher (Primary or Secondary Education)

**When:** June 18 – July 2, 2006 (Tentative)

**How:** Go to the GET website at [www.uwsp.edu/get](http://www.uwsp.edu/get) and click *Puerto Rico*. Here you will find an application to download.

**Program Costs:** Valued at \$3,000 but offered to teachers for approximately **\$2,000** (Depending on current rates and airfares)\*



## South Africa

Travel to the horn of Africa with a group of fellow teachers to learn about their initiatives to engage students and teachers in environmental and sustainability education. You will gain first-hand experience with schools, non-profit organizations, and government programs devoted to the protection of the environment. Develop rich relationships with educators internationally and exchange teaching methods through excursions and workshops.



**What:** A professional development opportunity of a lifetime! Travel with ten US educators and meet ten educators from South Africa, with whom you will travel to discover unique wildlife, diverse ecosystems, and participate in enriching workshops. Network with educators from South Africa who are leaders in environmental and sustainability education!

**Who:** Any U.S. or South African educator

**When:** June 18 – July 9, 2006 (Tentative)

**How:** Go to the GET website at [www.uwsp.edu/get](http://www.uwsp.edu/get) and click *South Africa*. Here you will find an application to download.

**Program Costs:** Valued at \$6,000 but offered to teachers for approximately **\$4,000** (Depending on current rates and airfares)\*

**\*Program Costs for South Africa and Puerto Rico include:**

- **3 University Certified Graduate Credits**
  - **1 online prior to travel**
  - **2 while abroad**
- **Airfare**
- **Food**
- **Lodging**
- **Entrance fees**
- **Transportation**

**Apply Today!**



## Stacey Baker, China

In August Stacey (Puerto Rico '05) had the privilege of traveling to China for two weeks. It was sponsored by the International Crane Foundation. She learned so much about the environment and China in general. She said that the cultural differences are incredible, and she loved every minute of it! (Stacey-bottom row, far right.)



## Johanna Anderson, Puerto Rico

One of our first-year participants, Johanna Anderson (Puerto Rico, '04), had such an enriching experience in Puerto Rico that she decided to convince her husband to embrace a one year adventure there. Johanna and Rick Anderson are helping Miguel Rico with forestry management, organic gardening, and agroforestry for Hacienda Verde. They are volunteering from June 2005-06.

**The GET program is funded by the Global Environmental Management Education Center (GEM) and is a collaborative effort between GEM and the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education (WCEE) in the College of Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point.**

The Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education was established in 1990 to promote, develop, disseminate, implement and evaluate environmental education programs in Wisconsin. The WCEE works to improve environmental education throughout the state of Wisconsin.



### Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education

College of Natural Resources  
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The Global Environmental Management Education Center's purpose is to pioneer and apply practical learning methods and technology to solve natural resource problems by linking faculty, students and citizens worldwide.



### The Global Environmental Management Education Center

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### **GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL TEACHINGS**

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*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.*



*Puerto Rico 2005 Participants*