

Attention Middle School Teachers!

The Montana Geographic Alliance seeks 4 tech-savvy Montana middle school teachers to participate in the “GooWi Explorers” project in the 2012 school year.



What is GooWi Explorers? GooWi Explorers is an educational research project being conducted by the University of Montana with funding from National Science Foundation. The purpose of this project is to test an online framework through which teachers can engage their classes in place-based, collaborative learning activities across a range of geographically centered disciplines. A goal of the project is to introduce students to a specific suite of transferrable 21st century workforce skills as early as possible in their academic careers. Specifically, students will learn to use cyber-based tools to conduct scholarly research, collaborate effectively with peers, and communicate professionally with their intended audience. Tools to be employed include Google Earth, Wikis, and other online resources.

What types of projects will students work on? Teachers and students will select a topic of interest to them – one with relevance to their own communities and/or local landscapes. However, all projects must relate to cultural and/or environmental change in Montana over the past several centuries, using initial European contact as a temporal baseline. Several explorations, including the Verendryes (1742-1744), Lewis and Clark (1804-1806), Hunt/Astor Party (1810-1812), and Bonneville (1831-1833), brought Europeans into contact with Montana’s Native American tribes and landscapes. In addition to written accounts that survive today, paleoecological and archeological records, together with Native American oral histories, can be used to develop a rich picture of past conditions. Using these data, students can develop deep and robust understandings of natural and human induced changes over historic time, in places of importance to them.

Are there other benefits to participating? Yes! Besides exposing your students to exciting cyber-based tools, interesting and relevant topics, and the amazing process of scholarly research, teachers will receive **16 OPI renewal units** or **1 graduate credit** for participating in the 2-day orientation workshop and a **\$1000 stipend** for collaborating on the GooWi Explorers project!

Want more details? Go to <http://www.cas.umt.edu/geography/alliance/> for information and application materials.

We want YOUR students to become GooWi Explorers!