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Nature Magazine Documents Growth of Geography and Jobs

On January 22, 2004, *Nature* Magazine published an article documenting the need for geography and the growth of jobs involving geotechnology entitled, "Mapping Opportunities." AAG Executive Director Doug Richardson worked closely with *Nature* to develop the article, which discusses the rapid growth of geospatial needs in the realms of government, the environment, and emergency management, to name a few.

"Science has discovered geography," says Richardson in the article. While the private sector has traditionally had few jobs to offer geographers, location-based services, mapping, and geographic management systems are now changing the field. Richardson stressed that employees in this field need a deep understanding of underlying geographic concepts. "It's a mistake to think that these technologies require only technician-oriented functions," he says in the article. Richardson sees a combination of technological skills and an understanding of

geographical concepts as important and adds that many of the NSF's multidisciplinary research programs now include a geospatial component.

The *Nature* article also cites the recent statement by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and Department of Education identifying geotechnology as one of the three most important emerging and evolving fields, along with biotechnology and nanotechnology. Citing the wide spectrum of jobs that now employ geospatial technologies, the joint statement notes that these technologies are "becoming the driving force for decision-making across the local to global continuum."

AAG staff have worked with the DOL for over a year to increase awareness of the growth of employment opportunities in geography. The DOL announcement can be found at www.careervoyages.gov/whatshot.cfm, and copies of the *Nature* article are available from the AAG. ■

Centennial Meeting Opening Ceremonies



Founding site of the AAG: College Hall at the University of Pennsylvania.

The AAG's Centennial Meeting will open on Sunday, March 14, with a pilgrimage to the Association's birthplace. Geographers will gather in the lobby of College Hall on the University of Pennsylvania campus for the unveiling of a commemorative plaque marking the site of the Association's December 29, 1904, founding meeting. The unveiling ceremony begins at 1:30 p.m. and will include brief remarks by distinguished geographers. College Hall can be reached by subway, taxi, or a thirty-minute walk from the Philadelphia Marriott.

Immediately following the unveiling ceremony, the Esther M. Klein Art Gallery will host an opening reception for *The Earth Exposed*, an exhibit by Salem State College geographer Stephen S. Young.

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