

AAG Newsletter of the Association of American Geographers

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Supporting Geography at a Critical Time

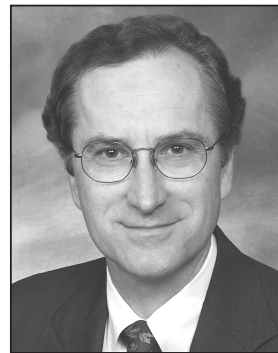
It is a great time to be a geographer. Interest in our field is growing, and the need for geographic knowledge and expertise is increasing. The insight and tools that geography offers are increasingly crucial to understanding and effectively addressing the social and environmental needs of our society and the world today. Never has the discipline been confronted with so many *potential* opportunities; opportunities that will demand vision, leadership and commitment to realize. Geography's ability to seize these opportunities today will shape the future of the discipline and the roles geography and geographers play, for decades to come.

The Association of American Geographers is now leading the effort to maximize these opportunities, to meet the growing needs of the discipline, to strengthen geographic education, and to create new horizons for geography and geographers. As part of its 2004 centennial celebration, the AAG is initiating a major capital campaign to move the organization and geography forward. "Advancing Geography in Partnership with You: The AAG's Centennial and Beyond" campaign seeks to raise \$2 million to establish a long-term endowed funding base from which to advance geography broadly in the years ahead, and additional funds to help meet immediate challenges facing the discipline and to support some of the Association's most important current initiatives.

During the next few weeks, you will receive in the mail information about this Centennial Campaign, and a request to support the critical needs of the Association of American Geographers as we mark our Centennial Anniversary, and as we

plan for the next century. I hope that every member can participate in this effort with a contribution at some level.

Your contribution to this campaign will help the AAG and the discipline to develop and disseminate new geographic knowledge, strengthen geographic education,



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build a constituency of geographers in government and industry, increase the involvement and raise the visibility of geography in science and policy making settings, and increase geographic understanding around the world. Your contributions will also strengthen the foundation of academic geography, enhance diversity in the discipline, provide leadership development and support to geography departments, and provide the means for capitalizing on the "window of opportunity" that now exists to further the discipline and our Association.

Your gift can be designated to support those initiatives that you personally feel are most important. You also may make a pledge to be paid over a period of up to five years. For example, a pledge at the Scholar's Circle level of \$500 can be made over five years at only \$100 per year.

We have already received approximately \$250,000 in pledges as several of our colleagues have stepped forward with generous leadership pledges to kick off the campaign. In addition, several other members have made bequests to the Centennial Fund. If you would like to include the AAG Centennial Fund as part of your estate planning, we can provide experienced professional support to assist with the process.

We have set substantial goals, as the discipline's needs are pressing. We hope that we can count on you to be part of this special Advancing Geography

Centennial Campaign. Your pledge will help ensure that the AAG and geography will continue to provide opportunities for professional development, growth, and leadership, and that geography will be well-positioned for the future. We have all benefited from our careers in geography, and from the support of the AAG in helping to sustain the institutions and viability of the discipline. It is important that we now pass on this gift so that future generations of geographers share the same benefits and traditions of support that we have enjoyed.

So join with us in celebrating the AAG's Centennial, and helping to ensure that geography remains a vital force in meeting the challenges of our nation, our youth, and our world during the next century. Thank you for making a difference by being a geographer, and for making a difference for geography's future by joining us in supporting the AAG's Advancing Geography Centennial Fund.

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