#### **AAG Newsletter**

#### of the **Association of American Geographers**

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USPS 987-380 ISSN 0275-3995

The AAG Newsletter ISSN 0275-3995 is published monthly with July/ August combined, by the Association of American Geographers, 1710 16th Street NW, Washington, DC 20009-3198. The cost of an annual subscription is \$25.00 The subscription price is included in the annual dues of the Association. Not available to nonmembers. Periodicals postage paid in Washington, DC. All news items and letters, including job listings, should be sent to the Editor at the address below or to newsletter@aag.org.

All Newsletter materials must arrive at the Association office by the 1st of the month preceding the month of the publication. This includes job listings. Material will be published on a space available basis and at the discretion of the editorial staff.

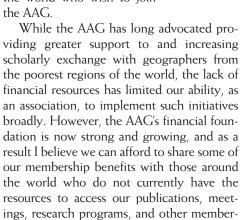
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## From Idea to Reality: The **AAG's Developing Regions Membership Program**

n 2006, I posed the question, "Is it Time for an AAG Developing Regions Membership Program?" in this column (AAG Newsletter, December 2006). Since that time, with the concurrence and support of AAG officers

and the Council, the AAG has worked hard to develop a conceptual approach and a workable process for how such a program might be structured, financed, and implemented. Today, I am pleased to be able to update that earlier column by transforming it from a speculative proposal to a concrete announcement of a new, subsidized AAG membership program for geographers from developing regions of the world who wish to join



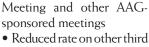
# broadly. However, the AAG's financial founship benefits. A summary of the new program, which is in effect now, follows below.

#### Summary of the Program

Geographers from and living in developing regions, and with an income of less than \$25,000 per year, are now eligible for AAG membership at the deeply discounted rate of \$20 per year. The AAG developing regions membership category includes all regular AAG member benefits, except that publications are provided only in digital format. The membership benefits include, among others, the following:

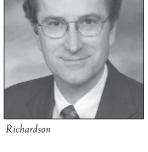
• Online access to AAG publications, the Annals of the Association of American Geographers, The Professional Geographer and AAG Newsletter

- Eligibility to participate in AAG research grants and awards programs
- Reduced registration fees (member rates) at the AAG Annual



- party geography journals offered by the AAG
- Reduced prices on AAG publications (according to normal individual membership benefits)
- Optional hard copy journals or newsletters, for small incremental fee to cover cost of shipping only
- Participation in AAG Specialty Groups and Listservs

Determining eligibility for participation in this new membership program, of course, requires a definition of which countries comprise "developing regions" and would therefore be eligible to participate. Several organizations, including the United Nations and the World Bank, generate economic data and national poverty rankings based on fairly widely accepted criteria, generally per capita income. These rankings form useful starting points, however imperfect, for beginning the program. The AAG has used World Bank gross national income (GNI) per capita data to arrive at a broad classification of developing regions. A listing of eligible countries based on these criteria is available on page 8 of this Newsletter, and also on the AAG Website. While it is important that we consider this question of classification carefully, we should not let the impossibility of arriving at the perfect definition of developing regions prevent us from moving forward at all.



#### **Everyone Benefits**

The AAG's Developing Region Membership Program will benefit not only those geographers from developing regions who wish to participate, but will also benefit our

Continued on page 7

## **Visiting Scholar at the AAG**

he AAG welcomes Anna Carrabetta, a visiting scholar from Italy, to the AAG for the Spring of 2008. Anna holds a PhD in human geography from the University of Pavia and Viterbo, with a focus on historical-cultural landscape studies.

During the last few years Anna has undertaken extensive research concerning park stewardship in Italy, and has identified several areas of need and opportunity for enhancing management of parklands. She currently is conducting research in both Europe and the United States, attempting to connect theoretical approaches to concrete actions for addressing pressing management needs for national parks. Thanks to the Del Monte Bank Foundation and its Ivano Becchi Professional Grant, she has



Dr. Anna Carrabetta, a visiting scholar from Italy, discusses ber research on national parks recently outside the AAG's Meridian Place Offices in Washington, DC.

received funding to collaborate with the AAG in Washington, DC this year.

Anna stated that the main goal of her current research project is "to reach a

rather comprehensive idea of what is the state of the art in the application of GIS in U.S. National Parks. In this sense the AAG represents an outstanding example of commitment. The senior AAG staff and many of its members have been involved in this particular field of study for a long time, and I look forward to the opportunity to work together with Dr. Richardson and others at the AAG on this research."

The AAG is pleased to host Dr. Carrabetta, who also holds a Masters Degree in Cultural Geography Research from the Royal Holloway University of London, as a visiting scholar. Anna plans to attend the AAG Annual Meeting in Boston, and looks forward to discussing her ideas with geography colleagues from around the world.

From Idea to Reality from page 2 -

current membership. Greater international networking, information sharing, and interaction is becoming increasingly common—and necessary—in the work and lives of most geographers, both in so-called "developing regions" and in wealthier countries. As the AAG membership and the attendance at our annual meetings have grown in recent years, international geographers' participation in the activities of the AAG has grown at an even faster rate than that of domestic U.S.-based geographers. With over 6,000 attendees already registered for the AAG Annual Meeting to be held in Boston this April (2008), nearly 27% are from countries other than the U.S., up from approximately 20% a few years ago. Yet most of our current international membership and participation is still from the wealthier countries in Europe, Asia and North America.

The AAG developing world membership category recognizes the obvious: that vastly different financial resources are available in different parts of the world. This new category of membership, while recognizing the more extreme financial needs of geographers in the very lowest income countries, is not wholly inconsistent with the AAG's current general membership fee approach for the U.S. and other wealthier countries, which also recognizes income level differences among individual members in establishing membership fees.

And, of course, enabling greater participation of geographers from the "developing regions" of the world in activities and networks of the AAG also enriches the experience, research, and scholarship of the AAG and its current members in myriad ways, providing both personal and professional benefits to us far exceeding the financial subsidies we might extend to our colleagues in some of the poorest regions of the world.

#### How You Can Help

The implementation of a new program of this scale is a large and complicated undertaking, involving the development of new AAG infrastructure for international outreach, materials creation and distribution, language translation, website development, and communications. The AAG has established a tax-deductable Developing Regions Membership Fund, to help fund the infrastructure and staff needed to support the new program and also to provide financial grants for memberships for those developing regions geographers for whom even \$20 may not be affordable. A contribution for infrastructure or memberships to this Fund can have a far-reaching impact. A donation of only \$100, for example, would support five student members from Latin America for one year. A \$1,000 contribution could support AAG membership for ten geography faculty members from Africa for five years.

AAG members can also help by informing geographers in developing regions of the new program, and perhaps also by offering to sponsor memberships directly for colleagues, former students, research collaborators, and others who may be interested. AAG Specialty Groups, especially those with a regional focus on a developing region, can play an important role in helping to get the word out about the new program, and also perhaps by sponsoring colleagues from your region of interest.

The AAG already has developed brochures in four languages (Spanish, French, Portuguese, and English) describing the Developing Regions Membership Program, and plans more of these in many other languages, including Chinese and Arabic, as funds become available. A Specialty Group may wish to support additional flyers in these or other languages, and also might help with the translations. Copies of these flyers are available from the AAG in hard copy or as a digital .pdf file for members who wish to distribute them to colleagues and friends in developing regions.

For more information on this new program, or to join the AAG as a Developing Regions member, visit the AAG website at www.aag. org. I look forward to working with you to help build the AAG's new Developing Regions Membership Program in the years ahead.

Doug Richardson drichardson@aag.org

## **AAG Developing Regions Membership Program**

### **Eligible Countries\***

Serbia

Somalia

South Africa

Sri Lanka

St. Lucia

Sevchelles

Sierra Leone

Slovak Republic

Solomon Islands

St. Kitts and Nevis

St. Vincent and the

Afghanistan Ecuador Madagascar Albania Egypt, Arab Rep. Malawi Algeria FI Salvador Malavsia American Samoa Equatorial Guinea Maldives Angola Fritrea Mali Argentina Ethiopia Marshall Islands Armenia Fiji Mauritania Gabon Mauritius Azerbaiian Gambia, The Bangladesh Mayotte Belarus Georgia Mexico Belize Ghana Micronesia, Fed. Sts. Benin Grenada Moldova Bhutan

Benin Grenada Moldova Grenadines
Bhutan Guatemala Mongolia Sudan
Bolivia Guinea Montenegro Suriname
Bosnia and Herzegovina Guinea-Bissau Morocco Swaziland

Botswana Guvana Mozambique Syrian Arab Republic Brazil Haiti Myanmar **Tajikistan** Bulgaria Honduras Namibia Tanzania Burkina Faso Thailand Hungary Nepal Timor-Leste Burundi India Nicaragua Indonesia Niger Togo

Cambodia Cameroon Iran, Islamic Rep. Nigeria Tonga Northern Mariana Islands Tunisia Cape Verde Central African Republic Jamaica Oman Turkey Chad Jordan **Pakistan** Turkmenistan

Chile Kazakhstan Palau Uganda China Kenya Panama Ukraine Colombia Kiribati Papua New Guinea Uruguay Korea, Dem Rep. Uzbekistan Comoros Paraguay Kyrgyz Republic Congo. Dem. Rep Peru Vanuatu **Philippines** Lao PDR Venezuela, RB Congo, Rep. Costa Rica Latvia Poland Vietnam

Côte d'Ivoire Lebanon Romania West Bank and Gaza

Croatia Lesotho Russian Federation Yemen, Rep.
Cuba Liberia Rwanda Zambia
Djibouti Libya Samoa Zimbabwe

Dominica Lithuania São Tomé and Principe

Dominican Republic Macedonia, FYR Senegal

\*The AAG Developing Regions Membership Program is available to members living in these countries, and who have an annual income of less than \$25,000 (U.S. equivalent).

Interested geographers may obtain information and join the AAG online at www.aag.org. We look forward to working with you to support geography in the years ahead.





## AAG Developing Regions Membership Program

(See column on page 2 for more information)

#### Programa de Membresías de la AAG para Regiones en Desarrollo

La AAG (Asociación Americana de Geógrafos) ha establecido una nueva categoría de membresía para geógrafos que residen en regiones en desarrollo. Los geógrafos de y que viven en regiones en desarrollo, con ingresos anuales menores de \$25,000, son ahora elegibles para inscribirse en la AAG por una cuota de membresía bastante reducida de \$20 al año. La membresía en la categoría de Regiones en Desarrollo incluye todos los beneficios regulares de membresía de la AAG, excepto que las revistas y los boletines informativos se proporcionan en formato digital en línea. También existe la disponibilidad de copias impresas de las revistas pagando únicamente el costo de envío. Visite **www.aag.org/membership** para inscribirse.

#### Programme d'adhésion à l'AAG pour les régions en voie de développement

L'AAG (Association of American Geographers) a créé une nouvelle catégorie d'adhésion pour les géographes résidant dans les régions en voie de développement. En effet, les géographes de ces régions ou vivant dans ces régions et dont le salaire annuel est égal ou inférieur à 25 000 \$ peuvent dorénavant s'inscrire à l'AAG selon un tarif réduit de 20 \$ par an. La catégorie Régions en voie de développement comprend tous les avantages de l'adhésion normale à l'AAG, exception faite que les journaux et les bulletins sont fournis en ligne en format numérique. Les exemplaires en format imprimé sont également offerts en option pour un prix modique qui permet de couvrir les frais d'expédition. Pour devenir membre, consultez www.aag.org/membership.

#### Programa de Associação de Regiões em Desenvolvimento da AAG

A AAG estabeleceu uma nova categoria de associados para geógrafos que residam em regiões em desenvolvimento. Geógrafos originados ou que morem em regiões em desenvolvimento, com uma renda anual inferior a US\$25.000, agora qualificam-se para associar-se à AAG pagando a anuidade bastante reduzida de US\$20. A associação na categoria de Regiões em Desenvolvimento proporciona todos as vantagens que os associados normais da AAG recebem, com a exceção de que os periódicos e boletins informativos são fornecidos em formato digital on-line. Periódicos e boletins impressos podem ser obtidos mediante o pagamento do custo de envio. Visite **www.aag.org/membership** para associar-se.

