

Pilot program to let U.S. high-school students experience Antarctic science at a Chilean station

<http://www.polartrec.com/expeditions/joint-antarctic-school-expedition-2014>

Three high-school students and a teacher from Wisconsin will participate in a joint pilot program of the U.S. and Chilean Antarctic programs that will send them to a Chilean research station this February for hands-on experience with Antarctic environments and ecosystems research.

The U.S. students and teacher, from the Monona Grove, Wisc., school district, will join their Chilean peers--winners of Chile's Antarctic School Fair--in the first Joint Antarctic School Expedition (JASE). The joint program is designed to strengthen the collaborative relationship between national Antarctic programs in the United States and the Republic of Chile.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Arctic Research Consortium of the United States (ARCUS) jointly selected the students from a pool of competitive applicants. They also selected a polar-experienced teacher to take part in the Antarctic School Expedition (Expedición Antártica Escolar 2014) to King George Island, Antarctica.

The U.S. JASE student participants are:

Anna Caldwell-Overdier, grade 11;
Claire Hacker, grade 12; and
Luke Maillefer, grade 11.

Monona Grove High School science teacher Juan Botella will accompany the students. This will be Botella's second Antarctic expedition, as he is also an alumnus of the NSF-sponsored Polar Teachers and Researchers Exploring and Collaborating program administered by ARCUS.

Botella speaks fluent English and Spanish and his skills will be indispensable in the planned bilingual JASE outreach efforts. Lynn Foshee Reed, a mathematics teacher at Maggie L. Walker Governor's School in Richmond, Va., and the NSF Division of Polar Programs' current Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellow, will round out the U.S. contingent.

The Chilean National Antarctic Institute will host the U.S. and Chilean students and teachers, who will spend about a week at Profesor Julio Escudero Station learning about Antarctic scientific research and exchanging cultural information.

The joint program will offer the U.S. and Chilean students the opportunity to work with Antarctic scientists and learn about subjects ranging from glaciology to

ecology. The students also will give presentations about their own research, practice their language skills and visit research stations run by other countries on King George Island.

The U.S. participants will share their Antarctic expedition experiences as well as their research with their classmates in Wisconsin and other schoolchildren nationwide. Plans are also being made for the group to speak with U.S. Embassy staff and students at an international school in Santiago, Chile as they make their way home to the USA.

This is the 10th anniversary of the Chilean National Antarctic Institute's Antarctic School Fair and Expedition. The contest and expedition promote awareness and appreciation of Antarctica and scientific research in young people throughout Chile.

The JASE program follows on the success of NSF's Joint Science Education Project (JSEP) held in Greenland during the boreal summer. Each year, JSEP brings together high school students and teachers from Denmark, Greenland and the United States for a three-week, science-education and cultural-exchange program.

NSF's Division of Polar Programs manages the U.S. Antarctic Program, through which it coordinates all U.S. research on the southernmost continent and aboard ships in the Southern Ocean as well as the logistics needed to support this science.

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