

GIS Education Takes Flight as Global Geospatial Institute Offers Louisiana Students GIS Opportunities of a Lifetime

Global Geospatial Institute (GGI) teaches K-12 students technology to pursue a career in GIS technology and offers the only GIS Industry based certification.



GLOBAL GEOSPATIAL INSTITUTE

GGI provides students with opportunities to learn about GIS Technology and solve real world problems.

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2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Students in St. John the Baptist Parish's Jump Start Summers Program took their newly-acquired Geographic Information Systems (GIS) knowledge to the open-ended sky on an interactive field trip to the Executive Regional Airport in Reserve this



We know that by offering a GIS Industry Based Certification, we can develop students into lifelong learners who will be able to live, compete, and successfully function in a global society."

Fran Harvey

summer. After learning about practical applications of GIS technology through the Baton Rouge-based [Global Geospatial Institute](#) (GGI), the trip gave the students hands-on experience in the growing field as pilots guided them through a pre-flight briefing and offered them the experience of a lifetime behind the wheel of an aircraft.

Due to GGI's extensive and successful outreach, GIS educational opportunities are on the rise in Louisiana. The non-profit's initiatives teach students to capture, store, manipulate, analyze, manage and display spatial or geographical data. St. John's Jump Start Summers program

is the latest partnership in a long list of GGI's educational opportunities. In the past, GGI has partnered with the Louisiana Geographic Educators Alliance, the City of Baton Rouge, Mighty Maps Institute, and area high school and middle schools to immerse students in the world and technology of GIS.

A trailblazer in GIS education, GGI offers the only accredited program approved by the [Louisiana Workforce Investment Council](#) to teach students GIS technology in an industry-based certification program. Students who complete a one-semester course in GIS can earn an industry-based certification and can work as GIS Assistants or Technicians. Further GIS experience can lead to jobs in fields ranging from criminal justice to disaster management to travel and tourism.

GGI works directly with K-12 students at their schools to demonstrate the real-world applications of GIS technology and Remote Sensing (RS) science. Working with approximately 42 Louisiana school districts and their students, teachers, and educators to foster GIS opportunities, GGI participates in numerous high school career nights. Some of these career nights, such as the one at Lamar Dixon, where over 1000 students attended and learned about GIS IBCs, reveal the tremendous interest in this technology. GGI participates annually at Southeastern Louisiana University's STEM Fest. In addition, GGI participated in STEM Day at River Parishes Community College, an event co-sponsored by Girl Scouts Louisiana East. At this event, 54 girl scouts experienced a college environment and participated in hands-on activities featuring Esri StoryMaps, science, technology, engineering, and math. Activities included virtual welding, environmental science, and geographic information system technology.

GGI understands that high school programs succeed best when GIS has been introduced at an early age. "Middle school is an ideal time to incorporate a robust GIS program to help young minds develop critical thinking, project-based learning and service learning, all strong components of spatial thinking and the multidisciplinary aspects that GIS has to offer," GGI Founder and Director Fran Harvey said. One of GGI's popular middle school projects is with the Mighty Maps Institute, a core foundational professional development service that teaches educators how to utilize the ArcGIS technology platform and begins with lesson plans for 3rd graders. Recently, GGI partnered with Esri, a global leader in location intelligence, so that students could explore a range of other subjects using ArcGIS Storymap technology. Esri supports GGI's educational initiatives by holding the ArcGIS Online Competition for US High Schools and Middle schools. This year, Louisiana's middle school entry, Maya Trutschi, Caddo Middle School, was the national winner in the middle school category. States that participated were awarded \$100 to the five best high schools and five best middle schools in their respective



Students in St. John the Baptist Parish's Jump Start Summers Program took their newly acquired Geographic Information Systems (GIS) knowledge to the open-ended sky on an interactive field trip (photo by L'Observateur).



GGI provides students with hands-on GIS technology so that they can compete in a global society and become world citizens (photo by L'Observateur).

states.

Students who have completed the GIS Entry Level Course from GGI can take the GIS Entry Level Technician Certification exam online. Agriculture Education Services and Technology, Inc., through Florida Farm Bureau, administers the exam. "We know that by offering a GIS Industry Based Certification, we can develop students into lifelong learners who will be able to live, compete and successfully function in a global society," Harvey said.

As part of GGI's industry partner relationship, the institute helps students earn internship opportunities

with their industry partners. The internships are in several WIC-approved high-demand industry sectors such as Information Technology, Transportation, and Logistics. According to the Louisiana Department of Education's "Louisiana Believes" website, these internships are identified as Career Development Fund (CDF) Qualifying Internships.

Harvey said students get hands-on experience and career training through this program that isn't available elsewhere: "We really like the model for several reasons. It's intensive, but they are in a lab environment, which is what's best for learning and improving GIS skills. They end up offering peer support to each other, which is really valuable and what we like to see," Harvey said. "The field trip to Port of South airport is one example of how the program tries to immerse students in an interactive environment with plenty of peer support. A special thank you to the GIS Jump Start Program Coordinator, Shannon Magee, and Facilitator, Beverly Reed, who were instrumental in setting up and organizing this field trip."

Parental involvement had positively influenced the program's success over the years. Because the program has high standards, including a prerequisite GPA of 3.0 or higher and a strict attendance policy, the student makes a commitment to succeed. "Students must arrive at the lab on time or risk being kicked out of the program. Our students want to be in class, they are serious about learning, and it shows," Harvey said. "Ms. Magee goes to great lengths to attract students to the program and to clearly communicate the expectations of the program to the interested students and their parents. This level of involvement from a district coordinator makes all the difference in the summer program being a success."

About GGI



GIS technology is used in business and everyday life, including in mapping, telecom and network services, accident analysis, urban and transportation planning, environmental impact analysis, agriculture, and disaster management and mitigation.

GGI performs educational outreach as the only accredited entity approved by Louisiana Workforce Investment Council to educate Louisiana students for an Industry-Based Certification program in Geographic Information Systems (GIS). GGI's education initiatives include partnerships with the Louisiana Geographic Educators Alliance, the city of Baton Rouge, and the Mighty Maps Institute. The organization's goal is to place GIS and Remote Sensing (RS) technology in the hands of as many students as possible.

Fran Harvey

Global Geospatial Institute

+1 225-939-3907

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