

# The COPUS Clarion

A monthly newsletter of the COPUS network Volume 2 Issue 10 October 2008

*The Coalition on the Public Understanding of Science (COPUS) is a grassroots effort linking universities, scientific societies, science centers and museums, advocacy groups, media, educators, government agencies, businesses, and industry in a peer network having as its goal a greater public understanding of the nature of science and its value to society.*

## The regional hubs of the COPUS network grow and prosper as we approach YoS09. Here we offer a quick glimpse into some of their initiatives:

★ **ANN ARBOR** - The Michigan hub is excited to catapult the celebration of Year of Science 2009 into their communities combining celebrations of the International Year of Astronomy and seminal events of YoS 2009 like the 200th birthday of Charles Darwin. As a novel program during YoS, the hub is organizing a "Reverse Science Fair," where 150 seventh graders will learn about the scientific process while judging scientific research presentations made by graduate students. The goal is to teach students how to evaluate the validity of someone's research and engage them in asking questions about how science is conducted. The seventh graders will submit an essay on why they voted for their chosen presentation. Contact: Kira Berman at [kiberman@umich.edu](mailto:kiberman@umich.edu)



★ **COLORADO** - The Colorado hub will be convening its first meeting in the near future to lay the groundwork for community collaboration. They are looking forward to the enthusiastic engagement of partnering institutions and individuals in the Denver and Boulder area. Contact: Chris McLelland at [CMcLelland@geosociety.org](mailto:CMcLelland@geosociety.org)

★ **CAMBRIDGE** - The Boston COPUS hub is growing in strength and numbers, as it evolves according to the needs of its partners. The hub, which started with two people chatting over lunch, recently engaged more than 200 people at an event hosted by the MIT Museum. They are promoting networking and communication among science outreach professionals in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine, and New Hampshire. Notable among the YoS plans for this hub is their key role in the launch of the YoS (on January 3rd in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Society for Comparative and Integrative Biology). Also, the hub participated in the Cambridge Science Festival, which attracted nearly 30,000 people to its April '08 festivities. Contacts: Natalie Kuldell at [nkuldell@mit.edu](mailto:nkuldell@mit.edu) or Ben Wiehe at [ben\\_wiehe@wgbh.org](mailto:ben_wiehe@wgbh.org)

★ **CHICAGO** - The Chicago hub is aburst with activity as Chicago's own year of science celebration, an ambitious collaborative public education initiative titled Science Chicago: Life's a Lab revs up to offer science programming for the community on an unparalleled scale. More than 100 of the area's leading academic, scientific, corporate and non-profit institutions have already joined forces to plan and execute thousands of programs that will provide hands-on learning; spur thoughtful debate; and generate enthusiasm for the continued pursuit of cutting-edge science. One of the anchor programs of this initiative is "Junior Science Cafés". This exciting twist on the Science Café model brings young scientists together with middle and high school students to discuss their experiences in science, technology, and engineering. During these conversations, students explore scientific ideas and discoveries; challenge their own scientific curiosity; and find out what it is really like to be a scientist, all in an informal setting such as libraries, restaurants, and universities throughout the Chicago region. Contacts: Jean Westrick at [jean.westrick@msichicago.org](mailto:jean.westrick@msichicago.org) or Erin Dragotto at [erindragotto@gmail.com](mailto:erindragotto@gmail.com)

★ **JACKSON** - A newly-formed hub in Jackson will focus on magnifying the breadth of influence of current programs to increase public understanding of the impact of science and research on society. Currently, the University of Mississippi Medical Center is involved in a biomedical research mentorship program called Base Pair. This program enables public high school students to publish, in professional scientific forums, and pursue undergraduate, graduate, and career science training. Base Pair has trained teachers in grant-writing, stimulated a new high school curriculum (Student Oriented Academic Research, SOAR), facilitated education outreach through a Rural Biomedical Initiative, and introduced student-delivered science presentations to the general public via a Community Science Forum. Contact: Rob Rockhold at [rockhold@pharmacology.umsmed.edu](mailto:rockhold@pharmacology.umsmed.edu)

★ **NORTH CAROLINA** - North Carolina Regional Hub members have been hard at work, gearing up for the Year of Science 2009. On February 12th, they will launch a year-long lecture series to commemorate Charles Darwin, hosted at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences. The Museum has also been selected to host a series of promotional events to support the upcoming PBS series, "The Human Spark," which examines what makes us human. Events include a Distinguished Panel Discussion televised by UNC-TV, a "Human Spark" themed Science Café, and a theatrical production dramatizing the correspondence between Charles Darwin and Asa Gray that will be held at the North Carolina State University. Other collaborative efforts include a Triangle Science and Engineering Festival, scheduled for November 2009. Contact: Kim Kandros at [kimberly.kandros@ncmail.net](mailto:kimberly.kandros@ncmail.net)

★ **PHILADELPHIA** - hub partners met last month to talk through top-line goals and set up a wiki page to record thoughts and encourage suggestions from other Philly-area organizations. Initial contacts were made with: IgnitePhilly, MakePhilly, Wondergy, and the Franklin Institute. Plans are underway to work with the Convention and Tourism Bureau to talk about the possibility of re-branding some of the big Philadelphia 2009 events as YoS events and to set-up a web site to optimize collaborations. Contact: Darlene Cavalier at [darcav1@aol.com](mailto:darcav1@aol.com)

★ **TAMPA BAY AREA** - The Tampa Bay hub and the Tampa Bay Science Education Leadership Group (TBSELG) merged this summer to form the Tampa Bay Science Alliance – more than 50 organizations involved in science education representing state/federal agencies, city government, non-profit education and community organizations, nature parks and preserves, and academic institutions. Hub participants will kick off the Year with a workshop sharing the dynamic, new Understanding Science resource with educators in their communities and engaging them in a dialog about how the informal outreach community can best serve their classroom needs. Also in January, the hub will coordinate events with the NFL Environmental Program as the 2009 Super Bowl rolls into town. Throughout the year, science cafés will follow the YoS themes in informal settings in the area, and networking among members of the science community will be supported via in-person events and online. Contacts: Ali Hudon at [ahudon@marine.usf.edu](mailto:ahudon@marine.usf.edu) or Sheri Potter at [spotter@aibs.org](mailto:spotter@aibs.org)

★ **SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA** - Attendance at this hub's meetings continues to rise and conversations are moving toward more concrete programs. The current focus is on developing an effective web site and an easily accessible calendar system to capture the wealth of planned events, reaching out to others so that the hub is more inclusive, developing a marketing scheme, and focusing on a small number of coordinated activities. Activities include Darwin 2009, geographically dispersed science cafés aligned with the YoS themes, continued support of Wonderfest (a Bay Area Festival of Science), and Behind the Scenes Science Tours, involving university labs, research institutes, and local industry. Contacts: Rachel Winheld at [winheld@berkeley.edu](mailto:winheld@berkeley.edu) or Judy Scotchmoor at [jscotch@berkeley.edu](mailto:jscotch@berkeley.edu)

★ **SANTA FE** - This newly-formed COPUS hub is supporting a recent surge in K-12 math and science related activity in New Mexico. Numerous activities throughout the state will expose kids of all ages to the excitement and wonder of math and science. The Santa Fe Alliance For Science works with K-12 students and teachers to provide tutoring, mentoring, science fair project selection and judging, an evening discussion series (the Santa Fe Science Café for Young Thinkers), annual prizes for excellence in high school science, teaching science courses, and career and college advising. Other prominent activities include large-scale K-12 math and science education efforts at Los Alamos and Sandia national labs and major universities. The New Mexico Math and Science Advisory Council is also designing a comprehensive long range plan (New Mexico Project 2012) to implement transformational change in K-12 math and science education in our state. Contact: Bob Eisenstein at [r.eisenstein@comcast.net](mailto:r.eisenstein@comcast.net)

★ **SEATTLE** - Celebrating the YoS is just beginning in the Seattle area. Its first event will actually take place this month at the Northwest School in order to introduce COPUS, YoS09 and the new web site, Understanding Science, to faculty and alumni, as well as science education leaders from around the greater Seattle area. Several activities focusing on evolution are scheduled for February including an exhibit of Lucy at the Pacific Science Center and a Darwin birthday event at the Burke Museum. Additional events will take place in the spring. Contact: Mark Terry at [mark.terry@northwestschool.org](mailto:mark.terry@northwestschool.org)

★ The **SOUTH DAKOTA** hub is focusing on the development of online educational modules on the process of science and current issues in science for undergraduates - to be used in introductory science classes and general registration classes where the goal is to improve understanding of science. They are collaborating with art, theater, film and journalism groups on a new course on science journalism. The Water Resources Institute has designated YoS as its annual meeting theme. Efforts are underway to encourage other universities and tribal colleges to join COPUS and to expand hub participation to the South Dakota Academy of Science, local NGOs and state agencies. Contacts: Chuck Berry at [charles.berry@sdstate.edu](mailto:charles.berry@sdstate.edu) or Cathy Ezrailson at [Cathy.Ezrailson@usd.edu](mailto:Cathy.Ezrailson@usd.edu)

★ **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGION** - The San Diego hub will launch the San Diego Science Festival in March and April 2009. The festival has more than 500 separate activities scheduled, and 1000 major companies, universities, community colleges, professional science organizations, student clubs and elementary, middle and high schools participating. Phase I of the festival will take place in schools through a program called the Nifty Fifty (x2), in which 100 of San Diego's most inspiring scientists and engineers visit schools to inspire students to pursue exciting careers in science. Phase II of the festival brings students to the major science venues in the community such as research institutes, private companies, and universities, who will open their doors for students to explore the science workplace and meet scientists in their labs. Phase III will bring science and the public together in a large outdoor Expo in Balboa Park on Saturday, April 4th, 2009. For more information go to <http://www.sdsciencefestival.com/>. Contact: Larry Bock at [biobock@mac.com](mailto:biobock@mac.com)

Questions? Comments? Ideas? Contact Sheri Potter at [spotter@copusproject.org](mailto:spotter@copusproject.org).

*Support for COPUS planning workshops was provided by the National Science Foundation under grant numbers EAR-0606600 and EAR-0628790 to the University of California Museum of Paleontology. The cognizant fiduciary body for COPUS and the Year of Science 2009 project is the American Institute of Biological Sciences Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, which is providing staffing support, IT, and other resources. The Geological Society of America, the University of California Museum of Paleontology, and the National Science Teachers Association are also contributing funds for COPUS and the Year of Science 2009. The Steering Committee welcomes support from additional scientific organizations and is also pursuing funding from federal agencies and private foundations.*

