

# The COPUS Clarion

A Monthly Newsletter of the COPUS Coalition Volume 1 Issue 1 September 2007

*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, 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.*

## Regional HUBS of activity

A COPUS hub is a locally-based community of COPUS participants and science stakeholders that work together within a designated geographic region to promote the public understanding of science. Its members are self-determined and can include scientists, universities, K-16 educators, informal science education centers, business leaders, and other professionals who work together to develop or coordinate activities that engage community members in science.

The first five hubs have been initiated in: Tampa Bay, FL; the San Francisco Bay Area, CA; Cambridge, MA; Seattle, WA; and Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, NC.

### What you can do:

- Initiate a Hub of activity in your community.
- Encourage members of your organization or your peers to participate in Hubs in their area.
- Sponsor the development of a Hub by providing financial or in-kind resources.

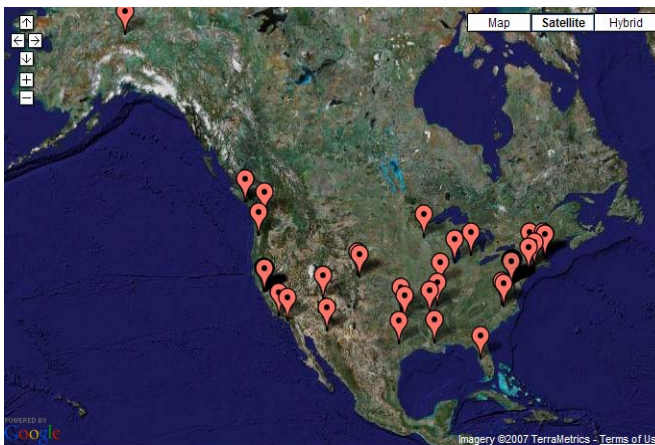
## Understanding Science Web site



The University of California Museum of Paleontology, in concert with several partners, is preparing to launch this freely accessible resource in 2008. Its purpose is to provide an accurate portrayal of science – what it is and how it works - as well as tools for teaching associated concepts. Several features are being developed in support of the COPUS effort including a Gallery of Scientists and an Amateur Hall of Fame, both of which highlight how science is conducted.

### What you can do:

- Contact Judy Scotchmoor (jscotch@berkeley.edu) to identify ways to support the development of this resource.



*Events and programs that Coalition members have submitted to the COPUS database are taking place across the country.*

## Welcome to the COPUS Network!

I hope you enjoy this first edition of the *COPUS Clarion*, promoting communication of the resources and programs of the Coalition and its participants. It is exciting to see how the network has already begun embracing opportunities to share and work together- developing resources and teaming up for community based action. National collaborations are being nurtured to coordinate new programs that will reach the general public in non-traditional avenues; and programs are being developed to share resources on framing and communicating science. Your organization is invited to participate in these and many other endeavors. Check the COPUS activities page ([copusproject.org/activities.php](http://copusproject.org/activities.php)) often to identify opportunities to collaborate. If you have an idea that you would like to develop with the COPUS network, share it! I look forward to hearing from you! Sheri Potter, COPUS Network Project Manager  
spotter@copusproject.org; 941-923-6320

## Science Café Web site Launched

COPUS is delighted to share the news that the WGBH Educational Foundation, in association with the scientific research society Sigma Xi, has launched a Web site at [www.sciencecafes.org](http://www.sciencecafes.org) to promote the growing Science Café movement in the U.S.

At Science Cafés, scientists and engineers share their expertise with the general public in a relaxed, friendly setting; discussions are typically held at local restaurants, coffee shops, or pubs. Topics have been wide-ranging, from bird flu, human space flight, chaos, and global warming, to the Irish Potato famine, green building, the ivory-billed woodpecker, honeybees and dark energy/dark matter.

### What you can do:

- Start a Science Café in your community.
- Visit or participate in your local Science Café.
- Register your Café in the COPUS Activities Database.
- Sign up to speak at a Café when you are traveling.

## COPUS Program and Resource Database

The dynamic and interactive COPUS activities database continues to grow as participating organizations contribute information about their programs and events in the public understanding of science. The database is a valuable resource for sharing your organization's activities with the network and promoting broader dissemination of information about successful programs.

### What you can do:

- Add your organization's programs and events to the database.
- Share the database with local schools and peers.
- Browse the database for exemplary programs that could benefit your community.

# Featured Program: Student Biotech Expo

## Northwest Association of Biomedical Research

[http://copusproject.org/participants.php?form\\_action=browse&page=N&search=&user\\_id=125](http://copusproject.org/participants.php?form_action=browse&page=N&search=&user_id=125)

*This exciting event represents a new type of 'science fair';* one that values the diversity of student talents and abilities and that promotes learning about biotechnology and biomedicine. Since its inception in 2001, the Expo has received numerous honors, including the 2002 Public Television Station KCTS Golden Apple Award and special recognition from the Metropolitan King County Council in 2005 for its outstanding contributions to science education. Each of the approximately 300 participating high school students from 14 schools has chosen a topic related to bioscience, such as detection and treatment of genetic disorders, the role of agricultural biotechnology, the bioethical impacts of new technology, or the research and development of biopharmaceuticals. Students have been matched with mentors from local businesses and scientific institutions who have provided resources, job shadows, internships and support. The resulting efforts represent a strong financial and intellectual commitment from the local research community towards science education.

Several Expo students have gone on to win awards at other regional and national science fairs, such as the Intel Science Talent Search. But what makes this Expo unique is that it encourages projects that use such diverse formats as fine arts, 3D molecular model building, drama, writing, web site design, teaching, career exploration and investigation of local businesses. Students interested in architecture, for example, have studied building design for biotechnology companies. Future communications specialists have created annual business reports for research organizations. Students have the opportunity to recognize the impact science will have on their lives and to make connections between biotechnology, biomedicine, and their own interests.

Gone are the restrictions to traditional research projects. The Expo represents the culmination of collaborative effort between students, teachers, mentors, judges, sponsors, and the program organizers. By engaging students in new, creative ways that value their individual strengths and talents, the Expo is helping to strengthen both future scientists and Seattle's bioscience community.

For additional information about this program please contact:

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[www.nwabr.org](http://www.nwabr.org)



**Taylor Wiesmann**

**Eastside Catholic High School**

**First Place, Music Category**

*The resulting efforts represent a strong financial and intellectual commitment from the local research community towards science education.*

*Ever since I was little, I have had a passion for the piano. So you can imagine that when I found out that our entire AP biology class had to do projects for the Expo, my first thought was to do something with music. I thought it would be awesome to somehow incorporate one of my talents and something I loved into a science project, though I wasn't quite sure how. However, I soon came to the conclusion that I wanted to find out how music affects the brain. I had heard*

*about the study called "The Mozart Effect" and wanted to see if there was any truth to it; I discovered that though that particular study was experimentally inaccurate, there are numerous ways in which music affects the brain. As for my actual project, I wrote a research paper on how music affects the brain, and I also wrote a song and highlighted the music with different colors to show where in the brain certain parts were supposed to activate. The highlighting corresponded with a picture of the brain on my poster, which made for an interesting and exciting visual. Learning about how something I do every day can give my brain an "intellectual boost" was a really exciting experience, and in fact, I have come to love the topic so much that I want to study psychology with an emphasis in cognitive neuroscience in college! The Expo was an awesome experience for me to learn how to research independently (as well as with additional help from a scientist advisor) and to focus on an area of biology that really interested me.*

## COPUS Steering Committee:

Lee Allison, Director, Arizona Geological Survey

Jack Hehn, Director of Education, American Institute of Physics

Jack Hess, Executive Director, Geological Society of America

Jay Labov, Senior Advisor for Education and Communications, National Academy of Sciences

Richard O'Grady, Executive Director, American Institute of Biological Sciences

Judy Scotchmoor, Assistant Director, University of California, Museum of Paleontology

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