



Teaching in the Tropics: US Science Teachers Invited to Apply for 2014 ECO Classroom

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Northrop Grumman Foundation and Conservation International program enters its third year

FALLS CHURCH, Va., Feb. 5, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- In their continuing effort to help teachers develop the next generation of scientists, Northrop Grumman Foundation and Conservation International (CI) announced that applications for the 2014 ECO Classroom experience are now being accepted through March 31. Four teams of four teachers will be selected for an all-expenses-paid trip from July 7-20 to join scientists in Costa Rica conducting fieldwork in a tropical forest.

(Logo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prmh/20121024/LA985631.IMG>)

To learn more about the program or apply visit: <http://www.northropgrumman.com/CorporateResponsibility/CorporateCitizenship/Education/ECOCClassroom/Pages/HowToApply.aspx>

ECO Classroom, in its third year of implementation, is a unique and innovative nationwide professional development program designed for public school science teachers from grades 6 through 12. It was created by the Northrop Grumman Foundation in collaboration with CI. ECO Classroom offers teachers supplemental tools and real-world experiences to inspire students to pursue science and technical careers.

"We have received excellent feedback from the teachers who have participated in ECO Classroom," said Sandra Evers-Manly, president of the Northrop Grumman Foundation and vice president of Northrop Grumman Global Corporate Responsibility. "Surveys of teachers who have participated have shown that more of their students are doing fieldwork, learning about land-use issues and climate change. This is our goal – to give teachers tools and experiences that help them to get their students excited about science, technology, engineering and math."

The ECO Classroom program brings groups of public school teachers from across the United States to CI's [Tropical Ecology Assessment and Monitoring \(TEAM\) Network](#) Volcan Barva site in La Selva Biological Station and Braulio Carrillo National Park in Costa Rica. They participate in field data collection on plant and animal biodiversity, climate and land use using TEAM scientific protocols.

"Through the ECO Classroom program, the TEAM Network has reached more than 8,500 students in the last two years. These students learned about biodiversity, land use and carbon sequestration in tropical forests by using geographic information systems and field techniques their teachers learned during ECO Classroom at the TEAM Volcan Barva site in Costa Rica," said Sandy Andelman, Senior Vice President and Chief Scientist of Conservation International. "I'm thrilled to see the next cohort of 16 teachers headed to Costa Rica and I look forward to working with the Northrop Grumman Foundation to continue and expand this program."

It is widely acknowledged among educators and policymakers that insufficient numbers of students are entering into science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. A method to address this issue and emphasize environmental stewardship is to motivate educators to engage students in the sciences and to bring unique learning opportunities into their classrooms with real-world curricula and hands-on experiences such as ECO Classroom.

During the 2013 two-week expedition, 16 ECO Classroom teachers from across the U.S. conducted group projects in the field and created lessons based on their projects dealing with land use, forest carbon sequestration and natural resource management using TEAM scientific protocols. They returned to their schools with an in-depth understanding of the interrelationship between biodiversity, climate change and human activities, and were better equipped with new techniques and resources to enhance their classroom teaching.

About Conservation International

Building upon a strong foundation of science, partnership and field demonstration, CI empowers societies to responsibly and sustainably care for nature, our global biodiversity, for the long term well-being of people. Founded in 1987, CI is headquartered in the Washington, D.C., area and employs more than 800 staff in more than 30 countries on four continents and works with more than 1,000 partners around the world. For more information, please see www.conservation.org, or visit us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

Northrop Grumman and the Northrop Grumman Foundation are committed to expanding and enhancing the pipeline of diverse, talented STEM students globally. They provide funding to STEM programs that span from preschool to high school and through collegiate levels, with a major emphasis on middle school students and teachers. Northrop Grumman employees actively volunteer in support of many STEM organizations in their communities and internationally. In 2013, Northrop Grumman and the Northrop Grumman Foundation continued outreach efforts by contributing approximately \$23 million to diverse STEM-related groups such as the Air Force Association (CyberPatriot), Conservation International (ECO Classroom), the REC Foundation (VEX Robotics) and the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering.

The Northrop Grumman Foundation supports diverse and sustainable programs for students and teachers. These programs create innovative education experiences in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. For more information, please visit www.northropgrumman.com/foundation.

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Mark Root, Northrop Grumman Corporation, 703-280-2739 (office), 571-425-2132 (cell), mark.root@ngc.com; or Kevin Connor, Conservation International, 703-341-2405, kconnor@conservation.org