



## **News for Immediate Release**

**Jan. 24, 2012**

### **State Museum to Host National Geographic's Giant Traveling Map of North America**

**Harrisburg** – The State Museum of Pennsylvania, in partnership with the Pennsylvania Alliance for Geographic Education, will exhibit National Geographic's Giant Map of North America for an exclusive Pennsylvania engagement, Feb. 18 – March 15.

On this 26' x 35' map—half the size of a basketball court—students and visitors alike will have the opportunity to remove their shoes and traverse the continent from Alaska's Aleutian Islands to the Panama Canal and from Iceland to Baja—in their stocking feet.

The Giant North America Map is part of National Geographic's Giant Traveling Maps program, organized by National Geographic Live, the public programming division of the National Geographic Society. National Geographic's Giant Traveling Maps tour the nation's schools, bringing hands- and feet-on geography education to 300,000 students each year. Designed to promote geographic literacy by igniting interest in geography, the maps and accompanying activities incorporate physical movement and games to teach students place names, physical geography, cultural geography and map reading skills.

To complement the giant map and bring regional context to its presentation, The State Museum will also display large-scale reproductions of historic Pennsylvania maps drawn from the vast collections of the Pennsylvania State Archives.

#### **Special Opportunity for Harrisburg's 4<sup>th</sup> Graders**

For the past three years, Penn National Insurance, headquartered in Harrisburg, has provided grant support for transportation and program costs to bring Harrisburg School District elementary school students to The State Museum for special tour programs. This year's funding will bring all of Harrisburg School District 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes to the museum for an in-depth experience built on the National Geographic Traveling Map of North America.

#### **The Student Docent Program**

Also funded by Penn National Insurance, The State Museum is conducting an innovative map exhibition project with the Harrisburg School District's SciTech High, in which a group of students will become student docents who will lead tours and activities on Wednesdays during the run of the exhibition. The SciTech High

students are receiving specific lessons in geography at The State Museum over the course of January and February and also training in museum education and presentation.

### **Lesson Plans and Activities**

The State Museum will offer special guided tour experiences for school groups in grades 3–7 throughout the showing of the giant North America Map. Contact Diane Wynkoop at 717-772-6997 or [dwynkoop@pa.gov](mailto:dwynkoop@pa.gov) for more information and to schedule group tours on Wednesdays through Fridays, Feb. 22 – March 15. Program costs are \$6 per student which will include museum general admission and the guided tour experience. The program, which aligns with Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards, will feature an activity in which school students will be divided into teams and given instructions and clues to find features on the Giant North American Map.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> in the Burg—National Geographic Giant Map Preview**

On Friday, Feb. 17, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., Harrisburg SciTech High student docents, museum educators and volunteers will provide a sneak peek of the National Geographic Giant Traveling Map of North America at The State Museum for Harrisburg’s 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Burg. Free and open to the public.

The Pennsylvania Alliance for Geographic Education, headquartered at Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania, works in conjunction with the National Geographic Education Foundation to promote geographic literacy in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The State Museum of Pennsylvania, adjacent to the State Capitol in Harrisburg, is one of 25 historic sites and museums administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission as part of the Pennsylvania Trails of History®. The State Museum offers expansive collections interpreting Pennsylvania’s fascinating heritage. With exhibits examining the dawn of geologic time, the Native American experience, the colonial and revolutionary era, a pivotal Civil War battleground, and the state’s vast industrial age, The State Museum demonstrates that Pennsylvania’s story is America’s story. Museum hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$4 for children and senior citizens.

For more information, visit [www.statemuseumpa.org](http://www.statemuseumpa.org).

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