

# Educators Are Going Global



## ISSUE ORIENTED

By Anita McAnear

*Anita McAnear is L&L's acquisitions editor and national program chair for NECC. A former middle school math and language arts teacher, McAnear has been with ISTE since 1983.*

This year for the first time at NECC, global initiatives and collaborations made it into the list of hottest topics. With all the attention in the media around global issues and challenges as well as the press around Thomas Friedman's *The World is Flat*, it is hard *not* to think of it as a hot topic. The collaborative aspect is equally important, as the global workforce will require dynamic, multicultural teams. And it is going to take a lot of collaboration among teams rich in diversity to solve global challenges such as climate change and related issues.

Web 2.0 tools have made global collaborations easier than ever. Students and teachers are using blogs, wikis, nings, Twitter, Skype, text messaging, and audio and video chats to plan and communicate, and creating and publishing products using some of these tools as well as podcasts and YouTube tools for digital video. Nings are one of the latest tools that allow you to create your own social networks, organize around groups and forums, and include some of the other Web 2.0 tools such as blogs. For Global Education, check out the Global Education Collaborative (<http://gloaleducation.ning.com>). For Web 2.0 in the classroom, check out Classroom 2.0 (<http://www.classroom20.com>).

Projects and sites that connect teachers abound and have been well covered in *L&L*. These include Global Schoolnet, Taking IT Global, iEARN, GLOBE, and Global Nomads. Projects that connect students with or without teachers include Thinkquest and the Global Challenge—solving global problems together (see p. 12).

Using social networks, teachers are finding each other and doing some incredible projects

à la Julie Lindsay and Victoria Davis's Flat Classroom and Project Horizon. (See pp. 28–30 in the August 2007 issue.)

Teachers and students interested in service learning or connecting some type of “doing good for the world” with curriculum should check out some of the social entrepreneurship sites. Social entrepreneurship is a way of using technology to leverage little things that make a difference to make a huge improvement. For example, a very small amount of money can make a difference in the life of a herder who can now buy a goat. Use a Web site to connect anyone who wants to help with anyone needing help and add a system such as PayPal to handle the money distribution and you can have a huge effect in Third World countries and by helping people help themselves. Kiva (<http://www.kiva.org>) does exactly that. For other examples, check out Be Hands On (<http://www.behandson.org>) and Global Voices Online (<http://www.globalvoicesonline.org>). For more information on social entrepreneurship, check out the Skoll Foundation (<http://www.skollfoundation.org>) and Social Edge (<http://www.socialedge.org>).

Also note in this issue how Eastview Middle School in New York partnered with Rotary International (p. 27) to alleviate water shortage problems and how Wendy Drexler's third grade class in Florida worked with UNICEF (p. 32) to raise relief funds for Darfur.

NetDay's Project Tomorrow asked students what projects they would like to do with students from another country. See page 34 for some great project ideas. Tools, resources, and great project examples abound for going global! ■