

## **American Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing**

Education Initiatives of ASPRS: The Imaging and Geospatial Information Society

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(by Tim Foresman)

Education has been a cornerstone of the American Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing since its founding in 1934. Through workshops, conferences, and special publications, ASPRS has maintained a leadership role in fostering and disseminating information and educational support materials for the remote sensing and GIS community. Major reference materials produced by ASPRS, such as the Manual of Remote Sensing, are important components of the educational infrastructure. In addition, ASPRS has supported a number of focused educational initiatives over the past two decades in order to enhance the status of remote sensing education. In particular, ASPRS and the educational community have defined core, or foundation, topics necessary for academic enrichment and professional retooling in the spatial sciences. These education-centered activities have been facilitated by ASPRS members, and communicated within the remote sensing community through the ASPRS journal and national conferences.

The ASPRS Education Committee has been active in marshalling these education-oriented topics and organizing this information for the greatest benefit. The result of these combined actions is a proactive service organization serving a large segment of the remote sensing and GIS community.

In March of 1998, at the Annual Conference, held in Tampa, Florida, ASPRS announced a new consolidated educational initiative for the Society called the Remote Sensing Core Curriculum (RSCC). This education initiative is an archetype ASPRS activity in its evolutionary development. The RSCC originated as a result of the ASPRS leadership investigating the conditions of remote sensing education in the mid-1980s. Industry as well as academic members worked together in the early 1990s to define the needs of the community for advancing remote sensing through education programs.

ASPRS members have continued to work with the National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis (NCGIA) throughout this decade to explore appropriate methods for generating and managing curriculum support materials as an extension of the NCGIA GIS Core Curriculum operations. A host of workshops and conference sessions have been conducted to engage the spatial sciences community into conversations regarding how to improve the pedagogic performance and Web networking capabilities of the RSCC.

With support from NASA, industry, and academic partners, the RSCC has become a premier resource for academic as well as industry educators tasked with providing state-of-the-practice knowledge and methods into an active learning experience. Feedback from a national and international community regarding the Internet performance of the ASPRS core curriculum program indicates that the RSCC is well positioned to address the education challenges of the next 15 years, coincident with NASA EOS and Earth Enterprise missions.

The RSCC was originally conceived to serve the requirements of the post-secondary community. However, with the advent of Web-based distribution technology and linkages with active

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members of the K-12 community, ASPRS has adjusted its strategy to include this important component of the educational community. Archive and distribution agreements have been encouraged with ASPRS partners and members to stimulate greater participation by industry with the K-12 community. Participation and consultation with programs such as the Mississippi Space Commercialization Initiative have been established to support regional systemic education initiatives regarding spatial and Earth science topics.

ASPRS is working in close partnership with NASA's K-12 education program and will co-host the Conference on Remote Sensing Education (CORSE) next summer in Boulder, Colorado. CORSE will bring together hundreds of K-12 educators to upgrade their skills in using remote sensing technology and applications and to engage in thoughtful communications with remote sensing professionals. The goal is to define and develop improved strategies for spatial science education for the future.

For more information please visit the ASPRS Web sites at [www.asprs.com](http://www.asprs.com) or [www.umbc.edu/rscc](http://www.umbc.edu/rscc).