



NEA's Sponsorship of the Gateway to 21st Century Skills Brings Relevant Resources to Educators

The Gateway to 21st Century Skills website features over 49,000 learning resources for educators and is a project of The GEM Exchange, a partnership of the University of Washington, Syracuse University and the non profit, JES & Co. Administration of the portal is provided by JES & Co. (www.JESandCo.org), located in Tucson, Arizona.

Tucson, AZ, January 18, 2008 --(PR.com)-- "If I only had a nickel for every time..."

\$750,000. Did that get your attention? It should because it is a lot of money. You've all used the expression, "If I only had a nickel for every time..." Now, what if I told you that \$750,000 equals 15 million nickels and every nickel represented one lesson plan or other learning resource offered to educators visiting the Gateway (<http://www.thegateway.org>) since NEA started sponsoring just a year and a half ago.

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Chief Technologist Don Blake of NEA asked JES & Co. try to convey just what numbers are important to understanding how much the Gateway has done in providing its services to educators. And, as the true educator that he is, he asked that numbers be conveyed in a relevant way to the readers of this update.

As any educator knows, conveying the size and meaning of large numbers is always a challenging task and when discussing technical matters such as web traffic the problem is compounded.

To that end, we at JES & Co. offer the following very brief and limited explanation of what those web traffic numbers really mean in terms of the value of the Gateway's contribution.

There are many ways of calculating web traffic including hits, page views, bandwidth, visits, unique visits and a multitude of other statistic that experts refer to in measuring the utilization of a website. And, as any expert will tell you they all have their degree of accuracy and inaccuracies.

Let's focus on the number of page views. A page view is when someone looks at a page, pure and simple. This happened 2,907,924 times starting in July of 2006. Let's round this figure to 3 million for the purpose of this discussion.

Three million pages were viewed. The first page view would be counted when landing on the Gateway homepage. In a typical visit, the next page view would be counted with the return of a search result. Each search return page displays 10 items that meet the visitors search criteria. If the visitor clicks on a record link and visits the resource, they leave the Gateway and the subsequent activity is no longer counted in



page views.

Extrapolating that 3 million page views could result in 1.5 million potential searches with 10 results per search means that 15 million resource records were presented to educators for their consideration.

In this “Google” age we are somewhat jaded about big numbers and the World Wide Web. After all, a Google search for the word volcano produces 1,090,000 returns, as of January 4th, 2008.

Now think about the nature of what is cataloged on the Gateway for searching compared to Google.

Let's use volcanoes. Google returns anything with the word 'volcano' in it. It could be a lesson plan but, more likely, it could be a product, an ad for Hawaii or it could be a blog mentioning volcano as a euphemism for who knows what. In other words, it could be anything and presents a huge problem to try to sift it down to a more educationally useful subset.

With a search on the Gateway, the word volcano returns 278 items but, every one of those items is already identified as some form of learning resource and with a click or two we can narrow down the return to be just volcano lesson plans useful in the fourth grade, and in fact we find 14.

The Gateway to 21st Century Skills has provided 2,907,924 page views of learning resources to educators in the last year and a half, been visited 739,830 times and created 29,968,675 hits on the site since it became sponsored by NEA.

The real impact of NEA sponsorship

The bottom line is that the Gateway has provided a very specific return of potentially 15 million learning resources since July 2006. That is where 15 million nickels come in and a nickel for every learning resource offered to educators in the timeframe would equal our \$750,000.

The hard part is to quantify the value of the time it saved visiting educators in successfully finding the right resources. We do know that in the month of December 2007, 63.3 % of visits came from bookmarks of the Gateway. One must conclude that the results were helpful enough to justify that 2/3 of all visitors go to the trouble of adding it to their favorites.

Therein lays the real impact and the huge contribution that NEA has made in sponsoring and supporting the Gateway to 21st Century Skills.

The Gateway to 21st Century Skills receives thousands of visits a month from dedicated educators all over the world. Monday and Tuesday were the busiest days for the Gateway in the month of December. In fact, the Gateway is such a valuable and powerful tool that over 42% of the visitors added the Gateway to their browser Favorites or Bookmarks. In the last month, over 63% of the traffic came from people who have already bookmarked the Gateway to 21st Century Skills.

Hawaii, Maryland, Colorado, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Washington, North Carolina, New York, New



Jersey, Vermont, South Dakota and Tennessee have created versions of the Gateway that display the state affiliate logos.

December 2007 page views up 19%

December 2007 set another new record for traffic to the Gateway with over 1,379,163 hits. In the month of December 2007, adjusted measures of traffic showed that 39837 visitors and visited 138177 pages.

These figures illustrate the growth of the Gateway traffic over the last year. December 2007 results showed a 17% increase in visitors, a 19% increase in page views and a 16% increase in hits over December 2006.

Who's Joining the Gateway?

Educators who love to teach. That's who is joining the Gateway. And, just to show you what we at JES & Co. have noticed, we did some research for the word "love" in the biographies written by new members applying for Gateway membership.

Here are some excerpts. Members show their support for the Gateway by joining and it is Free. Membership allows you to make notes and comment about the resources you find on the Gateway. You can share those observations with your peers or make comments that are only for your use. It's like your own personal Gateway to almost 50,000 quality learning resources.

K.L.G. - Kentucky

I am a school social worker working in a Child Guidance position. I am presently working with K-5 students. I love what I do.

P.C. - Texas

I am a retired teacher who substitutes and tutors students in elementary math and reading. I love to learn and teach students.

V.B. - Tennessee

This is my fourth year to teach 8th grade English at Mount Juliet Middle School. I returned to college to earn my Bachelor of Arts and my teaching degree after my only child finished high school. After years in the business world, I can honestly say that have found my place in life. For the first time, I can declare that I love my job. However, I still need guidance and resources, so I am looking forward to using this site.

V.D. - Ohio

I am a Licensed/Certified K-12 educator in the fields of Health & Physical Education. I have had teaching assignments K-12 in the last 20 years. I am also a Nationally Certified Athletic Trainer and Licensed by the state of Ohio. I concentrate my studies in exercise science, exercise physiology, health appraisal & enhancement, fitness, nutrition, and sports medicine. I believe myself to be more of a mentor and facilitator of learning than a direct methods teacher. I love to bring the outside world into the classroom



and use currently technology.

E.F. - Texas

I am a second-year fourth grade bilingual teacher in urban Houston. This is my second year, and I love it. At least on my good days.

C.G. - California

Science educator, grades 1-8. Beginning 25th year of teaching in Catholic Schools system. Also teach at Youth Science Center (public) in the summers. Have taken educator courses through Space Camp Alabama, Woods Hole Marine Institute, Smithsonian, JPL and the Hughes Medical Foundation. Served as educational consultant to Metropolitan Water District in development of curriculum materials. Love teaching.

About JES & Co.: With proven success, JES & Co. continues to fulfill its mission of assisting companies and agencies in their efforts to improve education through philanthropic endeavors. For more information on how you can join JES & Co. in our efforts, visit us at www.JESandCo.org or e-mail Bruce Walker at BruceW@JESandCo.org .

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