

Students in Grades 7-9 Will Learn and Use GIS and Other Tech Skills in New Program at WC

CHESTERTOWN, MD—Funded by a grant from the Verizon Foundation, Washington College's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Program is launching a new learning project for area students in grades 7, 8, and 9. The program is called the METS Guild of Chestertown, with METS representing Mathematics, Engineering, Technology, and Science.

The aim, says the College's GIS Program Coordinator Stewart Bruce, is to give young people the opportunity to work with and learn about GIS and other digital technology. "Our goal is to turn STEM education around by providing an innovative, out-of-class environment where students learn by working on real-world projects," he adds.

The METS Guild will partner with the Upper Shore Regional Council, which will allow students to work with local organizations in the region. The Upper Shore Regional Council also will provide a cash match funding to provide small stipends to participants.

The participants will be selected from local schools in a competitive process. Once chosen, they will be placed in one of three tracks: Web Design, 3D Visualization and Gaming, and GIS. The METS Guild will be led by student Journeymen in Washington College's GIS Guild and will have access to Washington College's computer labs and technology.

Interested students need to submit an application (found on the College's [GIS Web site](#); go to www.washcoll.edu and search for "METS Guild"), along with a letter about why they want to join the METS Guild and why they want to work in their chosen track. They also should send a recommendation from a teacher. These materials can be mailed to WC GIS, 151 Dixon Drive, Suite 3, Chestertown, MD, 21620, and should be postmarked by Wednesday, September 23rd or hand delivered no later than Friday, September 25th at 4:30 pm.

Participation in the METS Guild requires a 16-week commitment: Students will go through an eight-week training program in the fall, and then begin working on real projects for another eight weeks in the spring. Students will work within their technology track as Junior Apprentices and will receive a small stipend for successfully completing their guild assignment. The METS program will meet on weekends starting October 3.

More information about the program and how to register is available on the Washington College GIS website at <http://gis.washcoll.edu>.