



museum of
science+industry
chicago

Contacts:

Lisa Miner, Museum of Science and Industry, (773) 947-6005
Julie Parente, Museum of Science and Industry, (773) 753-6249

MUSEUM EDUCATOR TRAVELS TO ANTARCTICA WITH POLAR SCIENCE RESEARCHERS

MSI tests plans to link area students with Antarctic field researchers via videoconference

CHICAGO— A Museum of Science and Industry educator traveled to Antarctica in January 2010 to learn about current polar science research and test videoconferencing capabilities that would connect Chicago-area students with researchers in extreme environments.

Lindsay Bartholomew was invited to the King George, Bellingshausen Field School by the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists. She joined 15 scientists from Russia, Germany, Chile and the United States in an expedition that aimed to develop international and interdisciplinary collaborations on understanding the rapidly changing polar regions.

Bartholomew began her trip by flying to Chile on Jan. 9. She and other participants met for several days before flying on Jan. 15 to the Russian scientific base called Bellingshausen, located on the Antarctic peninsula in the planet's most rapidly warming region. The group returned to Chile on Jan. 26, where they met for several days.

Bartholomew was the only museum educator in the world participating in the expedition. She was asked to present a workshop for participants on ways to make their research science accessible to the general public. The other participants presented their polar science research, such as the effect of climate change on penguin populations and the microbiology of Antarctic ice and water.

While in Antarctica, Bartholomew tested capabilities of interactive videoconferencing which will inform the Museum's plans to incorporate more distance learning into its educational programming. These types of programs would allow students to talk with real polar scientists about their work and about life in Antarctica and other extreme environments. The Museum has not yet determined a date to begin offering such programs to school groups.

"We hope to get students excited about science by letting them talk directly with researchers working in Antarctica and other amazing places around the world," said Bryan Wunar, Director of Teaching and Learning for the Museum's Center for the Advancement of Science Education. "This expedition to Antarctica is also an exciting opportunity for the Museum to better understand the work of polar scientists and build relationships with researchers from around the world."

Bartholomew blogged about her trip and the Museum kept people updated about her experiences via Facebook and Twitter. Bartholomew holds a master's degree in physics and astronomy from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She has worked at the Museum since 2006.

"Going to Antarctica has been a lifelong dream of mine," Bartholomew said. "This trip is an amazing opportunity to observe polar science research in action, see what it's like to live and work on 'The Ice,' and test live connections between Antarctica and students."

The expedition was organized by the Obukhov Institute for Atmospheric Physics of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the International Arctic Research Center at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, and the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists.

The Museum of Science and Industry (MSI), Chicago offers thousands of fun and interactive exhibits and one-of-a-kind, world-class experiences to inspire the inventive genius in everyone. Through its Center for the Advancement of Science Education, MSI also aspires to a larger vision: to inspire and motivate children to achieve their full potential in science, technology, medicine and engineering. Come visit and find *your* inspiration! MSI is open every day except December 25, and regular hours are 9:30 to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. The Museum is supported in part through the generosity of the people of Chicago through the Chicago Park District. For more information, find MSI online at msichicago.org or call (773) 684-1414 or (800) GO-TO-MSI outside of the Chicago area.

#