

Time for Maine GIS Educators

Blue Marble Geographics participated in the Third Annual Conference of GIS educators in Maine, USA, at the Augusta Civic Center. Blue Marble hosted a hands-on workshop for higher education educators titled "Details that Matter: How Coordinate Systems Affect Measurements in GIS." The conference featured tracks for K-12 educators and those who work in higher education, along with large plenary sessions for educators of all levels.

The programme included hands-on workshops, presentations and roundtables, as well as a poster session where attendees share projects programs and resources. Sam Knight, Blue Marble Desktop Product Manager hosted a workshop on one of the basic foundations of a mapping project. Knight spoke on how the selection of a coordinate system is a key decision that affects the geometry of the map itself as well as many measurements that are made from it. Looking at examples of different measurements within the same area, Knight's presentation illuminated the significance of geodetically based coordinate reference systems and how an improper selection can negatively impact the results, especially when the data is taken into the real world. Workshop attendees explored various distortions between different base horizontal datums and grid projections and concepts such as scale factor and convergence, as well as the significance of changing or transforming those models within the GIS project. The exercises were completed with ArcGIS (Windows platform) Blue Marble extension, and public data sourced from the Maine GeoLibrary. This conference was funded, in part, by the National Science Foundation as a component of a three-year project designed to improve and promote geospatial technology education in Maine. Additional support comes from the Maine GIS User Group, Maine Community College System, University of Maine System and Maine Geographic Alliance.

"This year Blue Marble made the decision to make a concerted effort to help promote geodesy education throughout Maine at the high school, secondary, and professional level," stated Blue Marble President Patrick Cunningham. "We feel an obligation to assist our GIS cohort in Maine and to encourage technology careers amongst our young people. We intend to continue this effort well into the future. This talk is an example of that program at work. We hope other Maine based educators and organisations will contact us as they see a need for our particular expertise."

Blue Marble's geospatial data manipulation and conversion solutions are used worldwide by thousands of GIS analysts at software companies, universities, oil and gas companies, civil engineering, surveying, technology, enterprise GIS groups, government and military organisations.

<https://www.gim-international.com/content/news/time-for-maine-gis-educators>
