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Chair, Education Committee

The Education Committee's main ongoing focus continues to be a workshop for K-12 teachers and informal educators, which we will undertake this year on Saturday morning, April 22nd, from 8:00am-12:00pm. As with last year, the workshop will focus on what teachers have told us they are most interested in: classroom ready-resources. Committee members that will be presenting resources at the conference include Kate McGrath ("Object-Based Classroom Activities"), Karol Chandler-Ezell ("Ethnicity vs. Race"), and Benjamin Z. Freed ("Primate Behavior: The Popcorn Lab"). Before introducing these activities, committee members Amanda Glaze, John Mead, and I will be leading a roundtable discussion regarding current practice, comfort level, and confidence in teaching evolution at the middle and high school level in areas where there is some sensitivity about the topic, and a colleague from Maryland will be presenting resources and classroom-ready activities to help create a comfortable classroom environment for teaching evolution. We will again survey the teachers to find out what resources they think will be most useful for their classrooms and suggestions they have for any new resources we could develop. In 2016, a local educator connection, Kania Greer of the Institute for Interdisciplinary STEM Education at Georgia Southern University, was able to arrange for teachers to receive professional development credits for attending the workshop last year (as she is doing for this year) and she did a lot of recruiting, including at the Georgia State Science Teachers Association earlier in the year. The teachers from both classrooms visited by AAPA members (see next section) were among the 13 that attended the 2016 workshop. We received an email immediately following the workshop from one teacher who said *"Thank you. This is the most effective PD I have attended in quite some time!"*

This will also be the second year of a new initiative from the Education Committee: visits to local classrooms during the AAPA meeting to demonstrate some of the activities that will be presented at the educator workshop. As with last year, the teachers will be able to choose from four activities depending on which they think will be most engaging to their students. In 2016, committee members Kate McGrath and Caitlin Schrein (former AAPA member) created new activities for grades 6-12 designed specifically around the casts that belong to the AAPA and travel from state to state with each conference that teachers can borrow from the local organizing committee – and aligned these activities with the Georgia State Science Standards. A main emphasis of the activities, which are flexible enough that they can either be followed fairly strictly or used as jumping off points depending on the students, is how different lines of evidence are used to collect scientific information. In the 2016 classroom visits, Kate and Caitlin were joined on Wednesday by David Patterson to visit life sciences and biology classes for about 55 middle and high school students at Hillside Inc. (a residential psychiatric school), and on Thursday by John Mitani to visit two forensic classes for about another 55 students at Hillgrove High School in Powder Springs (a public high school). We received a wonderful email from one of the teachers overflowing with thanks to Caitlin, Kate, and David for the Wednesday visit. She said *"Thank you so much for coming out to our school. It was wonderful in so many ways. Each of the other teachers present came up to me later and said how interesting the presentation was. I agree completely. It was a wonderful prep for my Biology class who are about to take their end of course test. I'm excited that the kids got to meet people that have jobs in STEM and that they were so interested and asking questions. I don't know if you remember the boy in front who*

asked a lot of questions but didn't make a lot of sense. I was thrilled that afterwards a couple kids saw him later on campus and thanked for his questions. I was really glad to see them have empathy and give support to one another. You guys were very relatable, you had great energy and you brought the information down to their level. I was very impressed with the teaching and the science. Thank you so much for taking time out of your conference to come visit us and share your knowledge. It was a wonderful experience for the kids and me. Can't wait for the conference tomorrow." For 2017, Education Committee members Karol Chandler-Ezell, Kate McGrath, John Mead, John Mitani, and Angela Pena have all volunteered to participate in school visits, which are being finalized. We have visits to four separate Advanced Placement Biology classes at Ben Franklin High School scheduled for Friday, April 21st, and are working on scheduling visits to another school on Thursday as well.

We will hold our open Committee meeting on Friday from 5-6pm, allowing for a discussion of the school visits as well as final preparation for the workshop the next morning.

We have decided not to continue the Outreach Lecture, which we held for the first time last year. It occurred on Tuesday, April 12th, at Emory University, and was done in conjunction with the Emory University Anthropology Department as part of their colloquium series, who donated the space and AV support. It was co-sponsored by the Leakey Foundation who provided advertisement. Dr. Zeray Alemseged was the speaker. The total audience was about 55 people, about half of whom (based on a show of hands) were "general public" – not affiliated with AAPA, the Paleoanthropology Society, or Emory. While we were happy with the turnout, we decided that the time and effort involved and drawing AAPA members away from the meeting was not worth the return, and that we'd rather keep our focus on the workshop and school visits.