



Press Release

AGS Receives \$200,000 Henry Luce Foundation Grant for *Teen Maptivists: Building the Next Generation of Women in GeoSTEM* Program

December 2023: The American Geographical Society (AGS) has received a \$200,000 Henry Luce Foundation Grant for the *TeenMaptivists* initiative. This project is set to start in January 2024 in five high schools around the country, with a focus on introducing girls to GeoSTEM technologies and data through OpenStreetMap (OSM) based activism. This initiative builds on established findings that young women are more inclined to get involved in geospatial data and technology when they contribute to open-source humanitarian mapping projects or projects with an explicit activism component.

TeenMaptivists' goal is to introduce high school students, especially young women, to OpenStreetMap and learn how OSM and the humanitarian community collaborate in serving local and remote localities around the world. High school students will learn how thinking spatially and creating geospatial data and maps can help solve diverse problems from making cities safer and cleaner, to responding to localities in crisis after natural disasters. The AGS team will build on its previous success with YouthMappers, its sister initiative Everywhere She Maps, and the Society's international network of women in GeoSTEM.

TeenMaptivists was originally instigated by AGS Geography Teacher Fellows (and APHG teachers) Celeste Reynolds and Greg Hill, who have brought AGS's OSM instructional partnership with TeachOSM (<https://teachosm.org/>) into their classrooms. Their initial *TeenMaptivists* chapters will serve as the core of this prototype, along with three new chapters in other high schools, for a total of five high schools across the country participating in the pilot program. During this initial phase, *TeenMaptivists* chapters, their activities, their GeoSTEM learning pathways, and the resources required for their success will be prototyped, with the intent of working with the 3,000-strong APHG teacher community to scale this concept nationally during subsequent phases.

The AGS Team is excited to undertake this initiative to provide further programmatic support to the APHG community that we have long served, while also helping to transform the GeoSTEM pipeline in a way that our many sponsors and members from government, industry, academe, and the nonprofit sector have long desired. This transformation requires not only increasing the sheer numbers of GeoSTEM qualified individuals, but also improving the gender balance. As we build a community of young mappers, we envision these students not only as contributors to the present but as the leaders shaping the future. Through their mapping endeavors, they will play a pivotal role in addressing societal challenges, fostering resilience, and creating positive change.