

## Presence Examples

# EDUCATOR WILL TEACH A MILLION STUDENTS VIA SATELLITE

---

From the Statesman Journal in Salem, Oregon  
(<http://news.statesmanjournal.com/article.cfm?i=70570>)

Field trip takes Redmond teacher to Panama

A Vern Patrick Elementary educator will teach a million students via satellite.

The Associated Press  
November 10, 2003

REDMOND — Vern Patrick Elementary teacher Heather Renz is headed to Panama on a field trip, and her fourth-grade class will follow by satellite.

The teacher's two-week trip is sponsored by the JASON Project, an education program that seeks to spark student interest in science, math and technology.

Renz said she will learn about the rain-forest ecosystem, the Panama Canal and the country's history and culture alongside "world-class scientists."

"I've never been to a rain forest before," Renz said. "I love to travel. I think that's how people learn about the world."

Renz, seven other teachers and 24 students from around the world will relay their Panama experiences to students in several countries through real-time broadcasts via satellite and the Internet.

The JASON Project is a nonprofit, educational program that provides supplementary math and science programs for students in fourth through ninth grade, said Jennifer Walsh, a spokeswoman for the project.

Each year, the program sends students and teachers on a field trip, she said.

In turn, Walsh said, they become teachers for more than a million students around the world. The instruction is conducted through live broadcasts.

Previous expeditions have been to Hawaii to learn about volcanoes and to Alaska to study its environment, Walsh said.

The JASON Project was started in 1989 by Robert Ballard, a scientist and explorer, after he discovered the ship Titanic, Walsh said.

The program is named after Jason, one of the first great explorers, according to Greek mythology.

A committee selected Renz and seven other teachers from a pool of about 100 applicants, Walsh said.

Renz is the first teacher in Oregon to go on a JASON Project expedition, she said.

To keep up with Renz while she's gone, her class, along with the rest of the fourth - and fifth-graders at Vern Patrick, will take a field trip of their own to the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry in Portland.

There, they will watch Renz with the other teachers, students, researchers and scientists in a live broadcast from Panama. Students will be able to ask questions and immediately get answers.

"The whole live broadcast telepresence is really powerful," Renz said. "It's real science. Real learning. Real time."

Renz will be in five live broadcasts every day for two weeks.

---