



## Garden State Distance Learning News

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### Distance Learning Projects at Passaic Valley

Colin L. Powell in a speech on International Education Week 2002 stated, "As we work to end the scourge of terrorism, let us also work to increase peace, prosperity and democracy. We can do this through international programs that promote the exchange of ideas and the sharing of experiences. These programs give us insight into other languages and cultures and in the process build long lasting relationships among peoples based on mutual understanding, respect and trust."

Passaic Valley Regional High School's "Contemporary Issues through Videoconferencing" CITVC is that kind of course. The goal is to promote global awareness and understanding through a combination of videoconferencing, on-line learning projects, e-mail, on-line chats, and other classroom experiences. The diverse objectives include: To have students become effective and responsible contributors to problem-solving

and decision-making processes at the individual, community, national, and international levels; and To promote a global awareness that increases student knowledge of the interrelationship of various cultures, societies, and nations.

CITVC brings together teachers and students from many different countries in collaborative projects that help us better understand each other and the world in which we live. Students and teachers exchange ideas and information about their schools, community, daily life, and other topics of interest through videoconferencing and the CITVC website <http://citvc.org/>. Educational technology offers countless possibilities for learning, including videoconferencing, interactive virtual field trips, formal instruction, and dialogue with students, educators, and



experts from around the country and the world. This class meets five days a week with a major focus on preparation and participation in videoconferences. It is a Media and Social Studies elective open to juniors and seniors with the drive to become citizens of the world. The highlight of the course is a 24-hour, around the clock and around the world series of videoconferences. Students from Passaic Valley (PV) stay in school overnight to accomplish this task.

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**WELCOME to the Garden State Distance Learning News.** This newsletter will highlight what is happening across New Jersey in your classrooms using distance learning technologies. Please let us know if you have a special teacher or distance learning program that you would like to recognize in a future edition of this newsletter. We will need a brief description of the distance learning activity and a bio of the teacher with a few photos if possible. We will also be recognizing our partners who provide us with valuable videoconferencing programming. If you would like to nominate a content provider please send us your nominations along with a brief article for publication.

#### We'd like to hear from you!

- What is happening in your district with distance learning?
- Who in your district deserves to be recognized for his/her contribution to distance learning?
- What new technologies are you using in the area of distance learning?
- What resources do you need to enhance distance learning activities in your district?

All correspondence can be emailed to:  
[Rick.Warren@Stockton.edu](mailto:Rick.Warren@Stockton.edu)

### Access New Jersey Portal offers Elluminate Live!

Verizon Access New Jersey is happy to offer Elluminate Live! to our members, the NEXT STEP in multipoint interactive webconferencing. [Elluminate Live!](#) provides a rich, education-oriented virtual environment that features high-quality audio, multi-point video, polling, quizzes, whiteboard, application sharing, file sharing, rich media plus recording that supports multiple platforms and low-bandwidth connectivity over the Internet. Verizon Access New Jersey's hosted Elluminate Live! offers

excellent documentation, training, and support for all of our members. Users simply need to install a Java client on their computer to participate. An inexpensive webcam and PC headset is highly recommended.

Elluminate Live! is a virtual environment optimized for learning. Featuring high-quality voice over the Internet, robust interactive functionality, and supports multiple platforms and low-bandwidth connectivity.



If you would like more information on this product or on becoming a member of ANJ please contact the Video Portal Staff at (973) 497-9765

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## Global Education Motivators (GEM) Chestnut Hill College Philadelphia, PA

*"An important part of 21st Century Learning will be real world, real time experience using communication technologies to bring the world into the classroom."* This comment was continually made by Wayne Jacoby, Director of Global Education Motivators (GEM), since the development of videoconferencing for distant learning in schools in the 1990s. A "retired" high school social studies teacher, Wayne is a firm believer that communication technologies provide an essential classroom tool to help young people be better prepared for the real, interdependent world they will be facing everyday. It can be used in every grade across the curriculum.

GEM was founded in 1981 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization to help schools meet the complex challenges of living in a global society. GEM currently operates as a public foundation. GEM is a non-governmental-organization

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(NGO) working in close association with the United Nations Department of Public Information. Emphasizing human rights and human responsibility, GEM uses videoconferencing and Internet based applications to educate a second generation to global awareness and responsibility in an interdependent world. GEM was founded on the premise that, using new communicating technology, student to student communication exchanges could become a part of a

school's curriculum. Working from the lower elementary grades through the college and university level, GEM moved from video tape exchanges called "Video Pals" to today's real world, real time videoconferencing.

GEM has been headquartered at Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia, PA since 1989. Working closely with the United Nations, many educational opportunities have been developed for students and teachers. GEM co-sponsors two international student conferences. One is the annual UN Student Conference on Human Rights. A second is the new student leadership conference on development which looks for student commitments to fight poverty and help achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).



Currently GEM has 14 structured videoconferences on topics such as business, the environment, poverty, nuclear weapons awareness, globalization and more.

GEM has been part of GSDLC for many years and is very happy to work through them to bring the world into classrooms in New Jersey.

Visit GEM at [www.gem-ngo.org](http://www.gem-ngo.org) for more information or contact Wayne Jacoby at [gem@chc.edu](mailto:gem@chc.edu). The GEM phone number is 215-248-1150.

## Program of the Month continued from page 1

This allows for students in schools in all different time zones around the world to meet with PV students during the normal course of their day. PV Social Studies teacher, Ms. Kathleen Menake, prepares the students for the videoconferences by assigning student "ambassadors" for each country. Each PV ambassador is required to research their assigned country for historical, cultural, and current information, and share that information with their classmates. The "ambassadors" also moderate and facilitate the videoconference with their assigned country. PV students interact with students from each individual country for approximately one hour at a time. Each school prepares

some form of presentation for the videoconference that will help others learn more about them. Some students create videos about their country or a typical day at their school. Participants also prepare at least five questions to ask about the other school. The individual videoconferences also cover a wide range of subjects or current events depending on the requests of the teachers and students in each country. In addition, each videoconference is streamed on the Internet. This permits parents, community members, and students from other schools in the US and around the world to view each event as it happens.

By Matthew Conforth, Director of Educational Technology, Passaic Valley Regional High School

## Is your school district a member of the Garden State Distance Learning Consortium?

### Why Become a Member?

Through the GSDLC you will gain access to and form partnerships with educators from over 100 school districts throughout New Jersey who have years of experience with Distance Learning. The GSDLC members will help you build your program. Here are some of the ways the GSDLC meets our mission:

### Leadership & Advocacy:

To promote and foster interstate cooperation, economic application and research of distance learning technologies for education and training.

**Partnerships:** To promote and foster the formation of partnerships between member schools and private business to further the effective use of distance learning education programs.

### Support & Representation:

To review and support standards in distance learning technology and methodology. Provide representatives before government regulatory bodies.

### Information & Resources:

To provide a forum for sharing information with all members through various publications.

**Recognition:** To provide recognition of outstanding achievements in DL programs through annual awards.

**Visit the website at:**  
[www.ettc.net/GSDLC](http://www.ettc.net/GSDLC)  
**Or contact**

[Rick.warren@stockton.edu](mailto:Rick.warren@stockton.edu)

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