

Briana Pobiner
Chair, Education Committee

The Education Committee has been buzzing with activity this year! Our main ongoing focus for several years has been a workshop for K-12 teachers and informal educators, which we will also undertake this year on Saturday morning, April 16th, from 8:00am-12:00pm. For the first time we have been able to secure PLUs (Professional Learning Units - continuing education credits) for educators coming to the workshop, and we anticipate a record turnout for the workshop this year based on current registration. We have also received generous donations of casts of *Australopithecus sediba* and *Homo naledi* from Lee Berger and a molded life-size bust of *Australopithecus afarensis* from the Fernbank's Science Center exhibit designer, who will be attending the workshop. These will be raffled off to the educators who attend the workshop. The workshop will focus even more on classroom ready-resources for teachers, including new lessons for grades 6-12 that are based on the cast collection that travels to each conference city and remains there for the year until the next conference with the idea that teachers will be able to borrow the casts to use in their classrooms. Committee members that will be presenting physical anthropology and human evolution teaching resources at the conference include Caitlin Schrein, Kate McGrath, Pam Ashmore, Summer Arrigo-Nelson, and myself. I also have educator colleagues from Georgia, Alabama, and Texas who will be facilitating a roundtable discussion on teaching evolution in areas where there is some sensitivity about the topic and a colleague from Maryland who will be presenting resources and classroom-ready activities to help create a comfortable classroom environment for teaching evolution. We will 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.

The Committee is also undertaking two new initiatives this year. The first is a public outreach lecture, which will be given by Dr. Zeray Alemseged at Emory University (who are generously donating the space and AV support) in White Hall Room 208 on April 12th at 6:30pm. This lecture is also being co-billed with the Leakey Foundation, who will be helping with publicity via their email lists and online. The second is visits to several local middle and high school classrooms to demonstrate some of the activities that will be presented at the educator workshop. The teachers will be able to choose from four activities depending on which they think will be most engaging to their students. Education Committee members Caitlin Schrein and Kate McGrath, along with myself and others when possible, will be doing these classroom visits. We anticipate continuing both of these new activities in future meetings.