

National Association of Geoscience Teachers
Annual Report: Executive Director
September 25, 2022
Anne E. Egger

Goals for NAGT work over the past year

Over the past year, I set the following goals for my work as Executive Director:

- Develop and implement new funding strategies, including reviving the development committee to build our fundraising;
- Complete the update of the website and re-branding;
- Support the ad hoc committees in making progress towards supporting sections, attracting K-12 members, and attracting student members;
- Grow our offerings for graduate student members and faculty who teach and advise graduate students.

Progress towards goals

Develop and implement new funding strategies

- We designed and launched the NAGT Store through Spreadshop. This is a flexible platform that allows us to add designs and products easily and offer timely discounts. The shop is just getting off the ground and sales have mostly been internal, but could provide a small but steady source of income for the organization.
- We re-invigorated the development committee with Rachel Beane as chair and brought in the chair of the professional development committee (Karen Viskupic) as a new member. The committee tried a new campaign at the Earth Educators' Rendezvous based on a certain donation amount to receive an item from the NAGT Store, and we reached our (modest) goal for that campaign.
- **Next steps:** There is much work needed to accelerate our work to raise funds from outside our membership. With input from the Executive Committee, we hope to strategize to focus on one funding priority at a time.

Complete the website update and rebranding

- The new website launched in late June. I led the team that revised the website content and Mitchell led the reorganization into new menus and modules. We have gotten good feedback about the site, and it allows us to make some targeted efforts to build content in particular areas, such as for K-12 teachers and students.
- My focus on rebranding has been to create a consistent look across all of our materials: the new website, merchandise in the NAGT Store, the banners for the booth, and our membership rack card. I've also been focused on consistent content, so that lists of member benefits on the website match the rack card, for example, and that messaging is clear and straightforward. We also reduced printing costs by focusing on a single rack card (rather than a trifold brochure) and removing all paper membership forms.
- **Next steps:** The Earth Educators' Rendezvous was our first in-person opportunity to promote these new materials and sites, and the upcoming academic year will provide many more opportunities, including but not limited to GSA and AGU. With the website reorganization complete, we can focus on developing new content to support different member groups.

Support *ad hoc* committees in their work

- My support for these committees has primarily been in providing information as requested. I have not been as actively involved as I intended to be.
- To extend our reach into the K–12 community, I attended the UTeach STEM Educators Conference in Austin, TX, where we had a booth. This is a very small meeting, typically 300-400 attendees, and this year it was smaller than average (for reasons probably similar to the Rendezvous also being smaller than average). I got a better sense for the scale and scope of the meeting and made a few good connections. In the future, we should develop teacher-focused giveaways that we can offer at both USEA and NSTA meetings. I still feel there is a lot of unrealized potential here.
- **Next steps:** The sections committee has made substantial progress and I look forward to supporting them in implementing their recommendations. I would like to attend meetings of the K-12 committee to get a better sense for how that work is proceeding and what support I can offer.

Grow our offerings for graduate students and faculty who teach and advise them

- At the 2022 Rendezvous, Karen Viskupic and I co-led a workshop entitled *Creating a Graduate Program that Fosters the Success of All Students*. This was well-attended (~20 participants) including staff from AGU and AMS that are also interested in collaborating to support graduate student success. We relied heavily on the work of Michele Cooke and co-authors who have recently published papers in Nature Geoscience about their work to make the graduate admissions process more inclusive.
- I presented in a virtual workshop led by Beth Pratt-Sitaula and Becca Walker as part of their GETSI project that was for faculty and focused on supporting them in leading professional development for their graduate student teaching assistants, particularly in implementing course modules such as those produced by GETSI and InTeGrate. This was a very well-attended and well-run workshop that built a strong sense of community and awareness of the great things people are already doing to support graduate students.
- **Next steps:** The group that led the workshop along with others who are interested will be meeting at GSA to discuss next steps for that work. I continue to have on my radar the idea of submitting a proposal to develop a certificate for graduate students that would involve growing our offerings and recruiting for participation in NAGT professional development activities.

Progress towards goals: Additional efforts

Within NAGT, I work to stay involved in a wide spectrum of our activities. Some of that work falls outside of the scope of the goals I set for myself, though it still falls within the goals and offerings of the organization. This year, with Walt Robinson, I co-led a Traveling Workshop at West Virginia University in May, 2022. This was an excellent opportunity to support a department in the throes of a difficult transformation from a geology and geography department to a sustainability program. I learned a lot in our two days there and we helped the group make progress. Other departments that are currently making similar transitions have contacted me for discussions, and we have talked about developing new resources on the NAGT website that might help departments.

I continue to explore funding options for the National Geoscience Faculty Survey, and am currently exploring a Research-Practice Partnership grant through the Spencer Foundation. I presented work from the NGFS at the American Meteorological Society meeting in January, which was well-received and there is growing interest in seeing the survey expand.

Much of my work outside of my role as Executive Director is relevant to NAGT and our goals.

- Award nominations and support letters: One of our goals is “To support current and future geoscience educators throughout their careers.” One of the ways I do that is through award nominations and support letters, and I make a concerted effort to nominate people for awards and write letters for tenure or other reasons wherever possible. I am still waiting to hear the results of my most significant effort in the past year, but wrote letters and/or nominations for six individuals in the past year.
- Peer evaluations of teaching: I am heavily involved in conducting peer evaluations in my department and others across the university. Over the 2021-22 academic year, as department chair with a new faculty member and three new lecturers, I conducted four small-group evaluations and reviews for their teaching portfolios. I very much enjoy the opportunity to observe and give feedback on others’ teaching.
- Program review: I conducted a program review of the Geological Sciences program at Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction, CO, which was originally intended to be conducted in the spring of 2020. As with the Traveling Workshops Program, I enjoy the opportunity to learn about other colleges and programs, and this was no exception. They are a small but very robust program in a region with a lot of geoscience job opportunities.
- STEM Transfer Partnership grant: Along with the chair of the chemistry department at CWU and the director of the natural sciences division at a nearby two-year college, I am co-PI on a small grant from the Community College Research Initiatives from the University of Washington to strengthen the transfer pathways for students in STEM. This has been eye-opening in many ways: one of which is simply the difficulty of extracting good and reliable data from our institutions. Another is working across departments at CWU, which does not happen often enough. These are in addition to the actual goals of the project, which we have also made progress on just by getting all the people together in the same room who know bits and pieces of the picture but not the whole.

Goals for future work

My goals for the upcoming year are similar to last year’s goals:

- Increase the financial stability of the organization
- Increase the operational stability of the organization by documenting processes within the Executive Office and leadership
- Build membership through increased offerings and building a sense of loyalty to the community
- Support the implementation of recommendations from the sections and K-12 committees and the DEI committee as approved by the Executive Committee
- Secure funding for the National Geoscience Faculty Survey