

FOUNDATIONS

Newsletter of the Geo2YC division of the National Association of Geoscience Teachers
Volume IV, Issue 1: February 2015

Honor for Geo2YC Inaugural President

by **Tom Whittaker**

*University of New Mexico Valencia Campus,
Los Lunas, NM*

NAGT birthed the Geo2YC division in 2011 and installed at the helm was David Voorhees of Waubensee Community College. David directed the new division for its first year and has remained a staunch supporter since his term ended in 2012. For



Inaugural Geo2YC president David Voorhees “out standing in his field”

this work and for work in education David was recognized in Fall 2014 by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). And, I might add, for being outstanding in his field if I may borrow this image from the very first Foundations newsletter.

On behalf of the rapidly expanding Geo2YC

membership, a huge “Congratulations!” to David on this well-deserved honor.

For the full story and quotes from David please visit: <http://www.aaas.org/news/new-aaas-fellows-recognized-their-contributions-advancing-science>



President’s Column

by **Ben Wolfe**

*Kansas University Edwards Campus,
Overland Park, KS*

Two-year colleges (2YCs) have been front and center in the news as of late. President Obama’s proposal during the State of the Union address to widen access to higher education through free community college for some students has certainly elevated the role of 2YCs on the national stage and invited vigorous debate (see <http://chronicle.com/article/Obama-Presses-for-Free/151319/> or <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/01/21/obama-pitches-free-community-college-higher-education-tax-credits-state-union>). The important role of 2YCs is nothing new to those of us in the trenches daily teaching and supporting 2YC students, nor is the critical role we play in the education and training of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. Nearly half of undergraduate college students – including 57% of undergraduate Hispanic students, 52% of undergraduate African American students, and 61% of undergraduate Native American students – are enrolled in two-year colleges and 41% of first time freshman use 2YCs as an entry point to a four-year degree (American Association of Community Colleges Fast Facts, 2015).

We know a number of factors draw our student populations to 2YCs, including open access policies and low tuition rates. Of course, these factors (which are so important in providing a pathway to higher education for first generation, lower income, and/or underrepresented students) also bring the challenge of students entering college underprepared and in need of developmental

coursework. This can be particularly challenging for those of us teaching in STEM disciplines, who work hard to give students the tools and knowledge (such as math, reading, and writing) necessary to be successful in their college career.

Because of these challenges, 2YC educators dedicate themselves to the craft of teaching. They are frequently looking for new ways to engage students in the course content and innovative teaching methods to help students be successful. It is important for us to recognize this dedication of our colleagues and celebrate their successes. If you know of someone who should be recognized for their innovative teaching, I encourage you to nominate him or her for educator awards. For example, our own division offers the Outstanding Adjunct Faculty Award, and this issue contains a contribution from award coordinator Karen Layou. Also deserving of recognition is Past-President David Voorhees' American Association for the Advancement of Science Fellow award. Part of our mission as the Geo2YC division is to create a community of 2YC educators. If you know of other ways we as a division can recognize and celebrate our colleagues, please do not hesitate to contact me or the other division officers.

A few other items of note: the division officers are exploring ways in which we can better utilize social media to reach our members. If you are social media savvy and are interested in being part of that discussion, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. Additionally, the 2015 first annual Earth Educators' Rendezvous abstract deadline is March 1st. More information regarding the Rendezvous can be found at http://serc.carleton.edu/earth_rendezvous/2015/index.html.

Of course if you have any other questions, ideas, or concerns – particularly those that might lead to contributions to this newsletter – please let me or any of the other division officers know. Keep up the great work and I wish all of you a successful remainder of the semester!

-Ben Wolfe 

Congratulations to Dr. L. Cameron Mosher, Outstanding Adjunct Faculty Quarterly Honoree!

by Karen M. Layou
Reynolds Community College

The OAFA Committee is pleased to recognize Dr. L. Cameron Mosher as this quarter's Outstanding Adjunct Faculty Honoree. Cameron teaches courses in introductory geology and natural disasters at Salt Lake Community College. Cameron was nominated for this recognition by Maura Hahnenberger.

Maura writes, "Cameron started at Salt Lake Community College in developmental math after he was encouraged to become a college instructor by a student he was tutoring. He joined the Geosciences department as an adjunct in 2013. Since joining the department, he has shown a strong commitment to student learning and engagement not only in his courses, but throughout the department. Cam spearheaded a reorganization of the geology lab into learning "pods" that would facilitate group activities and interaction. All instructors in the lab have had a positive impact from this change, indicating that it is more conducive to student-centered learning and an engaging classroom environment. Cam has also created an extensive library of online lecture videos and quizzes. These videos are used to "flip the classroom" or to enhance student learning outside of class. The commitment and time Cam put toward these video learning aids has not been matched by any of our other adjunct instructors. Finally, Cam brings his career of empowerment training to the classroom and helps students explore what their place is in the world--not just in the world of geology, but also how we fit into the complex universe around us. This broad perspective, combined with student-centered learning, has made Cam invaluable to the Geosciences department."



Dr. L. Cameron Mosher in his favorite geological location – with his students surrounded by study materials

Congratulations again from the executive committee, and thank you, Cameron, for your efforts to create positive geoscience experiences for your students. Cameron will receive a one-year complimentary membership to the NAGT Geo2YC Division, and will be entered into the pool of quarterly honorees under consideration for the Annual Outstanding Faculty Award which is sponsored by a \$750 professional development stipend from Pearson Publishing.

If you are an adjunct faculty working to enhance your classrooms or department, or if you have adjunct colleagues who are doing great things the Geo2YC community should know about, please consider completing a nomination form available at: http://nagt.org/nagt/divisions/2yc/oafa_nomination.html. Your nominees may be recognized in future issues of *Foundations*! 🏔️

**Nominate your Outstanding
Teaching Assistants**

<http://nagt.org/nagt/students/ta.html>

Deadline is June 15th!

Meet Up At The Rendezvous!

by Tom Whittaker

University of New Mexico Valencia Campus,
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http://serc.carleton.edu/earth_rendezvous/2015/index.html

This event is shaping up to be one of the highlights of summer 2015. A kind of design-your-own-professional-development get-together with like-minded folks from around the country, the rendezvous will include workshops, oral and poster sessions, plenary talks, and working groups. Geo2YC faculty at all levels (adjunct, lecturer, etc.) are encouraged to attend and the Geo2YC division intends to have some 2YC-specific events.

The rendezvous is taking place at the University of Colorado, Boulder, from July 13th to 17th. As with many major conferences you can register for single days (\$100 for members of NAGT) or the whole 5 days (\$400) – quoted prices are for those registering by April 13th.


That said, you may be thinking “Gosh, I live a long way from Boulder, CO, and the cost of travel, registration, and room and board puts this incredibly exciting and life-changing event out of my reach.” If that sounds like you, and you have struck out requesting funds from your home institution, we took a look around for some opportunities where you might be able to tap into some financial support.

Here’s what we found:

- If you are not already an NAGT member, register and knock \$100 off your registration fee (don’t forget to join the Geo2YC Division!): <https://www.nagt.org/nagt/membership/index.html>
- The Rendezvous organizers include a \$20/day discount on your registration fee if you attend

with a colleague from your institution:

http://serc.carleton.edu/earth_rendezvous/2015/registration/index.html

- The Rendezvous organizers also have stipends available (up to \$500) to allay the costs of travel and rooms. Applications for stipends are due by March 30th:
<http://serc.carleton.edu/integrate/workshops/stipends.html>
- NAGT's Dorothy "Dottie" Stout Professional Development Grants offer up to \$750 for those looking to attend events like the Rendezvous. Applications must be received by April 15th:
<https://www.nagt.org/nagt/awards/stout.html#apply> 

EarthEd2YC is back for 2015!

*Suzanne Metlay, Western Governors University,
and Rusty Low, Higher Education Lead, NASA
SMD E/PO Earth Forum*

Earth Education Resources for Two-Year College Faculty (EarthEd2YC) is a monthly webinar series facilitated by NASA's Science Mission Directorate (SMD) Earth Science Education & Public Outreach Forum (SMD E/PO) and NAGT's Geosciences for Two-Year Colleges (Geo2YC) professional division. Part-time faculty are especially encouraged to participate and to present. EarthEd2YC brings community college faculty together to exchange classroom ideas and resources in an engaging, quick format that values your time and maximizes sharing between participants.

Each live webinar is on the **first Friday of the month at 1:00pm Eastern Time (10:00am Pacific Time)**. Each live 20 minute presentation is followed by 10 minutes of discussion, with real time chat throughout. All resources discussed in the webinar are made available online. The webinars are recorded and made available for later viewing. NASA Earth Forum is providing a Zoom (virtual conference) room and tech support so you


merely need a laptop with a decent microphone and webcam.

If you would like to be a presenter, please contact Amber Kumpf at Amber.Kumpf@muskegoncc.edu

How to Participate:

Visit <http://zoom.us> to download and install the app (this should take less than five minutes). A Zoom account is free. For technical help during EarthEd2YC webinars, please contact Cassie Soeffing at cassie_soeffing@strategies.org. On webinar day, go to <https://zoom.us/join> and enter meeting ID: **652-616-777#**

Upcoming Discussions:

- *March 6:* Special Place Project – Dean Moosavi, Rochester Community Technical College (MN)
- *April 3:* Urban Geology - Amber Kumpf, Muskegon Community College (MI)
- *May 1:* Climate Data in the Classroom – Sherry Oaks, Front Range Community College (CO)
- *June 5:* Geosciences of Dwarf Planets – Suzanne Metlay, Western Governors University (UT) 

Letter from the Editor

by Tom Whittaker

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Dear Colleagues,

It is an honor to be able to serve the Geo2YC community in this way and I look forward to bringing you exciting news and views in each quarterly issue of FOUNDATIONS. Many thanks to Callan Bentley, our previous editor, for three years of excellent newsletters and much help in passing on the baton.

Please get in touch if you have questions or comments about the content of FOUNDATIONS, or have suggestions for future newsletter items.

Thank you! 