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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The fall term represents a time of change in so many ways. The leaves change. The temperatures change. But even more than the environment around us, our students are going through changes. For some, it's their first year away from home with almost every aspect of life in flux. For others, it's the looming change on the horizon associated with graduation and the search for what is next. In either case, it can be a challenge but where there are challenges, there are always opportunities! As teachers, we have the purpose of using these opportunities to bring about the fullest in our students. We want to equip our students with knowledge that will benefit them, skills that will help them to be marketable, and resilience to adapt and learn beyond the classroom. Knowing that our students look to us not only for knowledge but also for direction, our actions and interactions are designed to be purposeful. As the term works through to the end, we see the fruits of our planning and implementation. Some things worked very well...thank goodness. But over the years, I've found that some well-intended (and well-planned) class exercises, or labs, or field exercises just did not accomplish the intended purpose. The outcomes weren't bad and didn't completely miss the mark, but I knew the potential had not been realized. So now the challenge shifts to us as teachers and that challenge is to embrace and in some cases instigate change. Take that fresh knowledge and put it to work, not only for ourselves, but also for our students. Even better, if we can interact with other earth science teachers, we can sharpen one another. So snatch the opportunity and seek out the information that will result in continued improvement: Do a reconnaissance trip to check out a new field site. Reach out to other teachers that you haven't met yet. Attend a conference that sparks your passion for

teaching. Our students are counting on us to be agents of change in their lives.

Hope to have you join me at our NAGT sessions, luncheon, or over a cup of coffee at the NC-GSA meeting on the campus of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in April 2016.

Until then, all the best!

C. Renee Sparks

UPCOMING EVENTS!

GSA North-Central Section

50th Annual Meeting

Champaign, Illinois

April 18 & 19, 2016

The Central NAGT section will pay the cost of the section NAGT business luncheon to K-14 professionals (members and non-members) who a) cannot afford the cost themselves, and b) make a presentation on any topic at the NC GSA conference that year. **Application forms are at the end of this newsletter.**

Please consider contributing to the following sessions at North-Central GSA

Abstract Deadline is January 26, 2016

S1.Janis Treworgy Memorial Symposium

There will be a session in memory of the distinguished career of Janis Treworgy at Principia College and the Illinois State Geological Survey at the 2016 Geological Society of America, North Central Section, in Champaign, IL. Friends, colleagues, and former students are invited to submit abstracts related to her significant contributions to geoscience education and geologic research. Please go to <http://www.geosociety.org/Sections/nc/2016mtg/> for more information about the meeting or contact David Voorhees (dvoorhees@waubonsee.edu) or Katie Lewandowski (kjlewandowski@eiu.edu) for more information about the session.

T26. Women and Geology: Who Are We, Where Have We Come From, and Where Are We Going? Beth A. Johnson, Univ. of Wisconsin-Fox Valley, beth.a.johnson@uwv.edu.

In order to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of the North-Central Section, the session "Women in Geology: Who are we, where have we come from, and where are we going?" is meant to explore and celebrate women's contributions to geology. Women have been part of geology almost from the very beginning, but their contributions went largely unnoticed or uncredited. Participants in this oral session can talk about perceptions of women in the field, the contributions of specific individuals, or some of the challenges we face in this still male-dominated science. Please contact Beth Johnson with questions.

Mastodont Dig in Your Classroom!

Need a new idea for your geology lab or class? Want to have your students do real science? Then you need to take advantage of the Aurora Mastodont Project-Matrix Analysis Project. We will send to you enough sample free (you pay postage when you return it to have your entire class process screenwash from the 2004 Mastodont dig. After sorting through the screenwash additional paleoenvironmental interpretations can be included as part of the lab. For more information, contact David Voorhees, dvoorhees@waubonsee.edu or go to <http://www.waubonsee.edu/faculty/dvoorhees/MastodontMatrix/index.html>

Coursera Online Class

Coursera is now offering "Planet Earth . . . And You" from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. It includes dozens of downloadable ~5-minute videos explaining geological concepts that may be of use as supplementary material for students. The course is free and will be offered periodically. Access is through: <https://www.coursera.org/course/earth>

Central Section NAGT Luncheon:

We will meet for lunch from 12-1:30pm on Monday, April 18, 2016 at the I-Hotel and Conference Center and have our business meeting, as we always do at the North Central GSA meeting.

Central Section NAGT: Call for Service

Please consider serving as an officer or state representative. We need a 2nd Vice President to serve beginning this spring. First VP will become President in 2017. Second VP becomes 1st VP the next year and then President in the 3rd year.

OUTSTANDING EARTH SCIENCE TEACHER AWARD 2015 CENTRAL SECTION AWARD WINNER Michele Svoboda



Michele Svoboda has taught 8th grade science at Mill Creek Middle School in Comstock Park, Michigan for 23 years. She graduated with a BS in Group Science in 1992 from Grand Valley State University, and in 2012 with a

MA in Applied Science Education through Michigan Technological University. If you ask her to describe her philosophy of teaching, she will respond with a quote from Frederick W. Robertson. "The true aim of everyone who aspires to be a teacher should be, not to impart his own opinion, but to kindle minds." She has a passion for science and a love of science education that has prompted her to become a life-long learner. She has been a part of summer programs such as EPICenter and ENVISION through Purdue University, Teacher's Earth Science Institute through Michigan Technological University, and Leadership in the Biological Sciences through the University of Miami at Ohio. Each opportunity allows her to bring back one or two new ideas to incorporate in the classroom. She is part of MiQuakes, which is a K-14 educational seismograph network operated by the Michigan Earth Science Teachers Association as part of the Incorporated Research Institutions for Seismology. Her classroom is equipped with an AS-1 Seismometer to monitor and record earthquake events. With the addition of this marvelous tool, she can now teach about earthquakes all year long and immediately after an event occurs. Michele has received several awards and accolades for her efforts in the classroom including MSTA Middle Level Science Teacher of the Year in 2004, Paul DeHart Hurd Award for Middle Level Science Teaching and Leadership in 2005, the Vincent J. Marteka Award for Creative Science Teaching in 2007. In 2014, Michele was recognized as the MESTA Outstanding Earth Science Teacher. She presents at local, state, and national science conferences and is on the board of several organizations including MESTA, Michigan Science Olympiad, and the Advisory Board for Grand Valley Regional Math/Science Center.

Nominate an Outstanding Earth Science Teacher!



Sponsored by the National Association of Geoscience Teachers (NAGT), the Outstanding Earth Science Teacher (OEST) Awards are for "exceptional contributions to the stimulation of interest in the Earth Sciences at the pre-college level." Any teacher or other K-12 educator who covers a significant amount of earth science content with their students is eligible. Ten national finalists are selected, one from each NAGT regional section and many state winners are recognized too. Individuals may apply themselves or nominate a colleague for the award.

Nominate online at:

<http://nagt.org/nagt/awards/oest.html>

Read bios of inspirational OEST winners and nominate someone you know before May 1st:
<http://nagt.org/nagt/awards/oest/2015.html>

NAGT Central Section OEST State Award Winners 2015

Iowa- **Brandon Fritz**- Williamsburg Jr.-Sr.
High, Earth Science Teacher, Williamsburg, IA

Indiana- **Heather Hall** – Rensselaer Central
Middle School, 8th Grade Science Teacher,
Rensselaer, IN

Ohio- **Beth Holmes** – Etna Elementary School,
5th Grade Science Teacher, Pataskala, OH

Wisconsin- **Adam Keeton** – North High
School, High School Earth and Space Science
Teacher, Eau Claire, WI

Illinois- **Joe Schoen** – Geneva High School,
Earth Science, Astronomy, and Natural
Disasters Teacher, Geneva, IL

NAGT: New Memberships or Renewals

New or renewing members may find the application form at: <http://nagt.org/nagt/membership/index.html>

ANNOUNCING *Dorothy LaLonde Stout* NAGT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS



In honor of Dottie Stout's outstanding work and lifelong dedication to Earth Science Education, NAGT will award three grants in support of the following activities:

- Participation in Earth science classes or workshops
- Attendance at professional scientific or science education meetings
- Participation in Earth science field trips
- Purchase of Earth science materials for classroom use

One grant of \$500 will be awarded to a Community College Faculty

One grant of \$500 will be awarded to a Community College Student

One grant of \$500 will be awarded to a K-12 Educator

Eligibility: Community College Faculty and K-12 teachers who teach one or more Earth science courses and Community College students actively pursuing a career in the Earth sciences are encouraged to apply for these awards.

Application Process: Interested applicants are asked to submit a 1-2 page proposal describing how the grant will be used to support their professional growth in, or classroom teaching of Earth science. The application may be found at <http://nagt.org/nagt/programs/stout.html>

Applications must be received by April 1 with awards being made by April 15th.

Central Section NAGT Business Meeting Fee Application

(available to K-14 professionals)



The North-Central NAGT section may pay the cost of the section NAGT business luncheon to K-14 professionals (NAGT members and non-members) who

- a) cannot afford the cost themselves, and
- b) make a presentation on any topic at the NC GSA conference that year.

Name (*please print*) _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____ Country _____

Phone (____) _____ Fax (____) _____ E-mail _____

Check one: ☐ College Faculty at _____

☐ Teacher at _____

☐ Other at _____

Date of North-Central GSA meeting: _____

Name of presentation at meeting: _____

Description of presentation: _____

Mail to:

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