



# NAGT-Rocky Mountain Section News

July 15, 2025

## Congratulations, Outstanding Earth Science Teacher, Heidi Bankoff!

### **Meet NAGT Rocky Mountain Section 2025 OEST Awardee**

We are pleased to announce our 2025 OEST Awardee! Heidi Bankoff is a high school science teacher at Arvada West High School, within the Jefferson County School District in Colorado. This large school district (enrollment is over 75,000) serves a diverse population in the Front Range of Colorado. With over a decade of experience in the classroom and a strong background in Environmental Sciences, Heidi leverages her considerable skill set to create dynamic and engaging experiential learning opportunities for her students. Heidi is recognized for establishing robust community networks that facilitate and enhance student learning. Students in her classes take regular field trips throughout the Denver Metro area, meet with professionals from various fields, and learn how to observe, explore, and build everything from solar cars to windmills. Her 2025 KidWind team made it to the highest levels of the most recent competition, designing and building a functional wind turbine. Many of Heidi's courses focus on energy, the environment, and resource use. Over the past five years, Heidi has built a two-year Energy CTE pathway from the ground up, allowing students to take meaningful steps toward future careers in this field. Heidi additionally teaches Earth Science, building in engaging hands-on labs and demonstrations that capture the interest of all of her students.



Heidi is a leader in her PLC and department, collaborating with other teachers, disseminating materials, and promoting opportunities for her colleagues to grow as professionals. She builds positive mentoring relationships with her students, who are always excited to talk about their classroom experiences and

amazing field trips. Heidi is a recent recipient of a JeffCo Talented Teacher Award for providing Extraordinary Student Experiences, a reflection of her exceptional contributions to her students' education and her ability to serve as a role model for students and other teachers in the building. As is always the case with the best teachers, she is a lifelong learner who attends national-level CTE conferences and returns with cutting-edge instructional techniques for her classrooms. Thank you, Heidi, for promoting excellent education in the Earth Sciences!

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## We had a blast at the Rocky Mountain Section GSA Meeting

NAGT-RMS met with other Geoscience Educators in Provo, Utah

Thank you for stopping by our booth, attending our presentation, and supporting Geoscience Education throughout the Rocky Mountain Section! We look forward to seeing you all again at the [GSA-RMS meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico](#). If you have ideas or suggestions about how we can celebrate Geoscience Education at next year's section meeting, please reach out to Cheryl Manning at [clbmanning@gmail.com](mailto:clbmanning@gmail.com)

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## Become a Section Leader

There are many leadership opportunities at the Section level. Because NAGT-RMS is new, we are looking to engage enthusiastic members to join the leadership team. Specifically, we need nominees for the following positions:

- President
- 2nd Vice President
- State Representatives

Learn more about these positions at [https://nagt.org/nagt/get\\_involved/lead.html#secdiv](https://nagt.org/nagt/get_involved/lead.html#secdiv) or email [mary.kosloski@gmail.com](mailto:mary.kosloski@gmail.com)

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## **Are you a State or Provincial Geologist?**

We celebrate the work that happens at the local level by hardworking state and provincial geologists! NAGT-RMS would like to connect with state and provincial geologists to create more opportunities for K-12 and college educators. If you are interested in partnering with us, we would love to hear from you! Email Emily Ward at [emily.ward-1@colorado.edu](mailto:emily.ward-1@colorado.edu).

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## Contribute to our Newsletter

As the NAGT-Rocky Mountain Section picks up steam, we will be creating a website with a calendar, generating a quarterly newsletter, and maintaining a Facebook group. [\*\*Help us create a lively collaborative community by sharing events, resources, awards, stories, and photos.\*\*](#)

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We would love to get to know you - [\*\*please consider taking our short survey!\*\*](#)

Find us online at

- Website: <https://nagt.org/nagt/sections/rockymountain/index.html>
- Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/8907970179246450>