

## **NAGT - Central Section**

### **President's Report**

**May 2020**

It has been a chaotic year for the Central Section of NAGT. Following some confusing changeovers in leadership, a failure to replace executive board positions, and a general lack of communication amongst the e-board, the Central Section has not made significant progress in its goals. Thanks to the diligence of Susan Wolf (who actually isn't even on the e-board), one area that we have been consistent in is selecting OEST award participants. Below is the report of last year's (2019) recipients with descriptions.

Although we've had a rocky few years, I plan to make an effort to restore some focus and direction to the central section, as well as fill out our executive board. One of my agenda items will be to build on a recent opportunity I had to attend the SAGE 2YC Conference hosted by Waubonsee College last fall. There I presented on Augustana College and had the opportunity to brainstorm ideas to recruit transfer students. I plan to continue to build these relationships and will make this a focus of my efforts in the coming year.

Sincerely,



Kelsey M. Arkle  
President,  
Central Section, NAGT

## **OEST REPORT - 2019**

**Your section name: Central Section**

**Number of individual nominations submitted: 5 nominations were submitted**

**Number of teachers who submitted applications to be considered for the award after being nominated: 5 (Central Section requires both a nomination and an application)**

Of the 5 nominations for 2019 Outstanding Earth Science Teacher for the Central Section, two were self-nominations, one nomination was from a former student, one nomination was from a fellow teacher, and one nomination was from an administrator. Of the five nominations, five teachers followed up with applications to be considered for the NAGT award, and from those five, the Central committee chose one Section Awardee and four State Awardees.

**Name of awardee(s) for the awards made (Section or State ):**

**Dr. Michael J. Smith --NAGT's Central Section OEST 2019 winner (from Ohio)**

**Michael Koenig--NAGT's Ohio State OEST 2019 winner**

**Jill Holz--NAGT's Minnesota State OEST 2019 winner**

**Sarah Geborkoff -- NAGT's Michigan State OEST 2019 winner**

**John Hesser -- NAGT's Indiana State OEST 2019 winner**

I emailed with each principal, sent press releases to state science teacher associations and superintendents, and worked with each principal to get these outstanding teachers recognized through school board meetings, local newspapers, school and district websites and Facebook pages. All plaques are ordered. Mike Wolf issued checks for \$500 for the section winner and \$100 for each state winner and these have been mailed to the awardees. I will follow-up with each award recipient to remind them to send in bios and photos by the NAGT June 1 deadline.

**Details about each winner:**

The Central OEST committee chose Michael J. Smith, ( [msmith@us.edu](mailto:msmith@us.edu) ) high school science teacher at The University School in Hunting Valley, Ohio, as the **NAGT Central Section OEST 2019 winner**. The Central Section Committee of the National Association of Geoscience Teachers was particularly impressed with Dr. Smith's commitment to hands-on, inquiry based learning including data interpretation within his geoscience courses, and his ability to get students into the field on campus, on local field trips and on his upcoming week-long summer field course. In addition, the multiple testimonials by former students gave the committee a clear picture of his passion for earth science teaching and his dedication to his students and the profession.

The Central OEST committee chose:

**Michael Koenig**

([MKOENIG@gcswave.com](mailto:MKOENIG@gcswave.com)) is an earth science teacher at Greenville Senior High School, in Greenville, Ohio as the **NAGT Ohio OEST state winner for 2019**. The Central Section Committee of the National Association of Geoscience Teachers was particularly impressed with Mr. Koenig's development of rigorous hands-on earth science labs which enable students to understand challenging geologic processes by building working models, and his commitment to getting his students out into the field to experience earth science, firsthand.

The Central OEST committee chose **Jill Holz** ([jill.holz@wayzataschools.org](mailto:jill.holz@wayzataschools.org)), science teacher at Wazata High School in Plymouth, Minnesota as the **NAGT Minnesota OEST state winner for 2019**. The Central Section Committee of the National Association of Geoscience Teachers was particularly impressed with Ms. Holz's development of rigorous inquiry-based earth science labs, enabling high schoolers to tackle challenging college-level geologic questions, and her commitment to getting her students out into the field and exposing them to the business side of geology.

The Central OEST committee chose **Sarah Geborkoff** ([sgeborkoff@houghton.k12.mi.us](mailto:sgeborkoff@houghton.k12.mi.us)), earth and general science teacher at Houghton Middle School, Houghton, Michigan as the **NAGT Michigan OEST state winner for 2019**. The Central Section Committee of the National Association of Geoscience Teachers was particularly impressed with Ms. Geborkoff's year-long, themed, place-based earth science project, her incorporation of student fieldwork and student service, and her ability to network, partner and collaborate with local universities, scientists and organizations.

The Central OEST committee chose **John Hesser** ([hesserj@myips.org](mailto:hesserj@myips.org)), science teacher at Harshman Magnet Middle School, in Indianapolis, Indiana as the **NAGT Indiana OEST state winner for 2019**. The Central Section Committee of the National Association of Geoscience Teachers was particularly impressed with Mr. Hesser's innovative instructional strategies incorporating movement and choice into his earth science teaching.