



2015 Annual Report

Overview of the Organization

This report is a general overview of the activities of the Pennsylvania Earth Science Teachers Association (PAESTA) for 2015. More detailed reports on Membership and the eNewsletters are available in separate documents archived on the PAESTA website: <http://www.paesta.psu.edu/archives-annual-reports>.

Notable accomplishments

Highlights of the important advancements made by officers and members of the PAESTA organization in 2015 are listed below.

Leadership

- PAESTA welcomed its third K-12 teacher, David Curry, as PAESTA President-Elect in the June 2015 election. Middle grades teacher Kathy Tait began her term as PAESTA President July 1st. Kathy is PAESTA's second K-12 teacher serving in the leadership role as President.
- The organization presented the fourth PAESTA Award for Teaching Excellence to 12th and Marion Elementary School (Reading, PA) teacher Judy Treichler. Judy is the first teacher from the elementary grades to receive this honor.
- PAESTA held its 4th Annual Conference as part of the Regional National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) Conference held in Philadelphia, PA, on November 14th. PAESTA had six invited speakers (PAESTA members) present as part of the NSTA Conference in the morning, and the afternoon session was a teacher leadership workshop.
- PAESTA formed an ad-hoc committee for Earth Science Week and promoted statewide activities for this national celebration that took place in October (11-17, 2015). PAESTA provided online resources for each themed day of the week, created a speaker board, and hosted an essay contest on "Why Earth Science Matters in Pennsylvania." Essays were judged by university faculty and winning essays were posted on the PAESTA website and in a special issues of News and Notes.
- The organization continued the awarding of its PAESTAR (Pennsylvania Earth Science Teacher Achievement Recognition).

- PAESTA President Kathy Tait has begun a podcast collection titled “You Asked, We Answered!” to assist teachers needed a short refresher or instruction on Earth and space science content with supplementary resources.
- One oral presentation on PAESTA titled “You Asked, We Answered! A Podcasting Series by Scientists for K-12 Teachers Through the Pennsylvania Earth Science Teachers Association (PAESTA)” was given at the American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting (San Francisco, CA, December 18).
- PAESTA collaborated with NESTA, NJESTA and NYESTA to successfully propose a session for the Northeastern Geological Society of America (NEGSA) Conference to be held in Albany, New York, in March 2016. The theme session is titled, “Connecting K–12 and Higher Education: What Teachers Need, What Faculty Can Offer.”

Connections

- PAESTA membership increased with 110 new members in 2015, ending the year with a total of 635 members from 27 states and 5 countries.
- A PAESTA information table was set up at The Franklin Institute Educators’ Night Out (Philadelphia, October 14), PA STEMathon (Camp Hill, July 29-30), and the Regional NSTA Conference (Philadelphia, November 12-14).
- PAESTA continued to expand the frequency of postings on PAESTA’s social media sites Facebook (221 likes in 2014 to 894 likes in 2015) and Twitter (@paesta, 172 followers in 2014 to 226 followers in 2015).

Organization Resources

- The organization continued with PAESTA News and Notes as a monthly eNewsletter and established the quarterly eNewsletter Elementary News and Notes.
- The organization kept PAESTA membership free since its establishment in 2011, with continuing free membership into 2016.

Report submitted by Laura Guertin