

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Todd Carter, NABT President-2008



April is the month we focus our celebrations on the Earth and it is also a good time to reflect on how our teaching reveals what is happening on the planet. It's not about cramming more information and another concept into the curriculum; it's about modifying the approach to engage students in the very real and messy venue of science. Teaching with the planet in mind offers biology teachers a unique opportunity to involve students in learning experiences that include the process of science, collaboration with civic and interfaith groups, and the unifying principles of biology.

Traditional Earth-focused concepts in biology are under the heading Ecology, but the real world interdisciplinary vehicle today is sustainability. The term has been around for several years with different definitions and it is becoming a lens for evaluating how we interact with the planet. It has global significance and local applicability plus it brings together diverse societal groups in a venue that promotes decision making. The decision-making process involves a grounding in the unifying principles of biology; understanding and valuing the scientific process; exploring the social, ethical, and political constructs; and evaluating the appropriate use of technology. What a great opportunity!

NABT supports the integration of sustainability and stewardship into curricula and we will feature this approach in Memphis as we gear up for the Year of Science in 2009. Currently NABT is involved with the US Partnership-

Decade of Education for Sustainable Development—United Nations Decade (2005-2014). The US Partnership consists of individuals, organizations, and institutions in the United States dedicated to education for sustainable development. The K-12 Sector Team of the Partnership has released Version 1 of the National Sustainability Education Standards. As a member of the Disciplinary Associations Network for Sustainability (DANS), we will be working with other professional organizations in the development of curriculum, professional development, standards, and cross-disciplinary projects. More and more resources are becoming available for higher education sustainability projects which include service learning, syllabi and course revision, online learning, sustainability research, and interfaith collaborations with science.

Does your teaching reflect what is happening on the planet? Are your students involved in decision-making processes that reveal the difficulty and messiness of issues on terra firma? Sustainability and stewardship require internal and external reflection, even for organizations like NABT. We will have resources available at www.nabt.org and opportunities in Memphis next October to continue the exploration and conversation with other teacher-leaders. Come join us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Carter".

Todd Carter
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