Education & Outreach

Geothermal Academy

Through GTO funding, the National Geothermal Academy operates an 8-week intensive summer course, created to educate the next generation of geothermal scientists, engineers, plant operators, technicians, and policy makers in practical, detailed geothermal science and technology. Now in its second year, the course has successfully graduated over 98 students. This advanced, technical program is offered at the undergraduate or graduate level, with individual weeks available for professional development. Geothermal experts from across the nation and the world serve as instructors, each responsible for developing curricula. Fourteen instructors from various universities and the private sector collaborate to craft a challenging, up-to-the-minute course about all things geothermal. The Academy is currently planning for an even better summer 2013 program.

GTO in the Schools

Fourth-graders at Hyde Addison Elementary School were surprised by a visit from the Geothermal Technologies Office during their science lab in November 2011. Greg Stillman, a physical scientist within GTO, focused his talk around the basics of subsurface science and geothermal energy. Students learned about the heat of the earth's crust and how it can be harnessed to meet our energy needs. The lesson finished with a hands-on rock characterization activity where students formed small groups and 'characterized' rock samples based on their observations.

In March 2012, Stillman addressed a group of high school students visiting DOE headquarters as part of a Washington DC seminar to gain firsthand knowledge about the US Government and its processes. This specific group was interested in geothermal energy and how this renewable source can be used to meet our country's energy needs. During the 90-minute presentation, Stillman discussed the basics of geothermal energy use, opportunities and challenges faced by this sector, and how geothermal energy fits into the bigger integrated picture of energy supply and demand in the US.

Idaho State Wins National Student Competition

Students at Idaho State University display their poster at the annual meeting of the Geothermal Resources Council in Reno, Nevada this year, as one of 3 top finalists in the National Geothermal Student Competition hosted by the Energy Department's Geothermal Technologies Office. The group won the competition with their study on *Development of an Integrated, Testable Conceptual Model of Blind Geothermal Resources in the Eastern Snake River Plain: Application to the Newdale Geothermal Prospect*.

Student teams from Boise State University and Southern Methodist University Geothermal Laboratory were also featured at the conference and finished second and third in the competition. The NGSC challenges students nationwide to conduct cutting-edge research in geology, geoscience, chemical and bio-molecular energy and engineering that could lead to breakthroughs in geothermal energy development.

Pictured *from left* are Adam Koster, Holly Young, Michael Ginsbach, and Rebecca Ohly. Dr. Desmond Stubbs, from the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education, who coordinated the competition for DOE, stands to the left of Dr. Michael McCurry, the team's mentor at Idaho State, *far right*.