



The President's Paragraph: Notes from HASTI's President

HASTI's Preservice Teacher Scholarship: An Opportunity for Inspiration, Excitement, and Professional Development

Stacy Hootman

In each issue of The Hoosier Science Teacher, we invite the president to share some thoughts as an introduction. In this issue, HASTI's current President Stacy Hootman shares information about support for preservice teachers attending the HASTI Conference and feedback from preservice teachers about the annual conference.



2022-23 HASTI President
Stacy Hootman

In the late-1990s, while an undergraduate science education major at Indiana University, my science methods professor insisted that all of us in the class attend the annual HASTI conference. I'll be honest that I wasn't particularly excited to attend. I had demanding courses and mounds of coursework to complete that I was sure would be more important than this required task. I begrudgingly attended (I'm not typically a rule-breaker and letting my professor down would have devastated me), but I ended up leaving the conference with feelings of inspiration, excitement, and acceptance into a professional community of those who were like-minded.

My professor knew what he was doing, as 20+ years later I'm still attending the annual HASTI conference and now am serving as President of the organization. As a preservice teacher, I couldn't have recognized the impact that attending this one conference would make on my professional career. For that reason, it is my opinion that it is imperative for us who have gained from HASTI to share this wonderful organization with the next generation of science teachers.

When I began planning to teach my own science methods course, I followed the lead of my former science methods professor and asked my preservice teachers to engage in some type of professional

development focused on science education. My preservice teachers were expected to complete 10 hours of this professional development on their own time and submit written reflections about each one that would together comprise 10% of their overall course grade. As I first taught this science methods course during the pandemic, I brought in guest speakers on Zoom as well as sent my preservice teachers to NSTA's free online webinars to complete their hours. My preservice teachers were given choice on the topics they attended so that they could personalize it toward whatever they were most interested in learning about. However, it was always my goal to bring my preservice teachers to HASTI just like my science methods professor had done for me years ago.

As Vice President of HASTI, I worked with the board members to make our Preservice Teacher Scholarship a reality. Thanks to this generous gift to future educators from HASTI, any Indiana preservice teacher can attend the annual HASTI conference completely free of charge.

In the spring of 2022, I had my science methods preservice teachers attend the annual HASTI conference for the first time. I watched the same begrudging attitude that I had as a preservice teacher



prior to the conference turn to glee and amazement during just their first few hours of attendance. Like the previous assignment where preservice teachers completed 10 hours of professional development focused on science education, my preservice teachers were given a choice to attend sessions that interested them. Each 45-minute session required a short reflection and counted as one hour toward their professional development assignment. Most of my preservice teachers attended on Sunday as it fit most easily into their schedule, but they could attend at any time during the three days of the conference. My preservice teachers were told that they had to attend at least one session at HASTI, but then additional hours could be completed using NSTA online webinars the same as before. Most of the preservice teachers completed all their professional development hours at the HASTI Conference, and feedback was tremendously wonderful.

The day that we returned to class after attending the HASTI Conference, my preservice teachers were given five questions to respond to on chart paper that had been placed throughout the room. My goal was to give them an opportunity to share honest feedback about their experience. The questions I asked them to respond to were:

- What did you learn at HASTI?
- What did you enjoy the most?
- How was this helpful to your future career?
- What would you have liked to see/do and/or any suggestions?
- Anything else you want me to know?

Below are their responses to each individual prompt.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN AT HASTI?

- New science standards coming out
- Ideas on integration
- How to use cooperative quizzing in a classroom
- How to gamify in my classroom to make quizzes/worksheets/etc. more fun
- How to handle and debunk teacher frustrations
- Science standards
- Ways to incorporate aspects of science into lessons
- New ways to teach science
- How to include STEM
- How to make lessons involving the outdoors
- Where to get free lesson plans for different grades

- How to get kinders [kindergarteners] started with STEM
- How to make notes more engaging
- How to seek resources out for myself
- How other universities are teaching science and future teachers
- New ways to make teaching fun and engaging
- How to get assessments in ways that are not too long or boring
- New ways to teach science to students in a more engaging and motivating way
- I learned different ways to make science more engaging for my students.
- I learned how to make science more engaging while also adding in other disciplines. I learned about interactive experiments to do in my classroom.
- I learned more fun ways to incorporate science into my future classroom.
- I learned about tinker kits and other activities to give my students when there is extra time, or they finish early with work.
- I learned how to incorporate science into my classroom even if I am not teaching science.
- I learned what gamification means in education.
- I learned different types of language/words to use when teaching science.
- I learned about some different strategies I could use like gamification. I also loved learning about flying classrooms.
- I learned to explore then explain. Allowing students to find it interesting before them just sitting and listening.
- I learn a lot of engagement and STEM design strategies.

WHAT DID YOU ENJOY THE MOST?

- Connecting with other teachers
- Meeting educators from all different levels, from all over the state
- Sharing the passion for teaching and science education
- Learning from people who know more than me and have more experiences
- Networking
- Having things to bring into my future classroom
- Learning about successful lessons from experienced educators



- I enjoyed listening to experienced teachers give their feedback on things that go well and don't when doing science
- I enjoyed seeing the different age ranges at the conference because you could tell who was just starting and who was a vet.
- Being around like-minded people
- The professional environment
- I enjoyed learning about the different science programs in Indiana
- Resource room
- Hearing all different stories
- The interactiveness of the sessions- ex: the CSI experiments
- Learning about how to add gamification in the classroom
- Getting the opportunity to experience hands-on activities that I can use in my future classroom. (LOVED the CSI)
- I enjoyed the virtual escape room and CSI techniques. They were very hands-on and I gained so much knowledge. I also enjoyed the non-fiction biology books conference where I got to see different non-fiction books I could use for different sections of science.
- I really enjoyed the interactive aspects.
- I enjoyed that they gave you some of their own lesson plans to make your own.
- I enjoyed learning how to gamify my classroom.
- The exhibit hall was great and had tons of information and resources.
- I really enjoyed being able to just be a part of the conference and experience. I really enjoyed the Amplify Conference where we did an egg drop.
- I enjoyed actually doing a hands-on experience during the meeting.
- Interaction with new people.

HOW WAS THIS HELPFUL TO YOUR FUTURE TEACHING CAREER?

- I was able to collect lots of free resources
- It gave me new ideas to incorporate in my teaching and classroom
- Ideas and new info I can change to fit whatever grade I teach
- This was the first time I was able to see and think of myself as a professional
- The resources and techniques I was able to gain from other teachers
- Learning strategies and techniques that I can utilize in my future classroom
- Gained resources, books, methodologies, and engaging ways to teach my students in a way they enjoy
- Finding resources and making connections with other educators
- New resources and how to use them
- Gave me new ideas for what I could use in my classroom
- Resources...not just free stuff but the lessons too
- HASTI taught me different ways to make teaching fun for not just me but for my students.
- Helped introduce me to lots of teaching resources.
- Taught me different hands-on experiences that I can use to make science and teaching more interactive and engaging.
- Helpful by allowing us to listen to the experience of other teachers and what works best for them and what does not.
- It taught me many different ways to engage my classes.
- Introduced me to more resources.
- Taught me many new activities and ways to get students engaged and interested in science.
- It taught me how I can keep my classroom engaging and fun. I loved the virtual escape room and CSI techniques.
- It helped me explore different ideas and different concepts about phenomenon.
- I was able to get some ideas for my classroom that integrated multiple disciplines.
- I learn ways to engage students and make learning fun.

WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE LIKED TO SEE/DO AND/OR ANY SUGGESTIONS?

- More technology
- Share-a-thons for classroom and STEM
- Opportunities for partners/communication between preservice/first year teacher and veteran teachers
- More opportunities for these types of conferences
- How to use science materials
- Labeling sessions based on age range
- More elementary stuff
- Different vendors each day
- A way for the pre-service teachers to connect
- Communication between us and presenters



- Group discussions
- Interactions with experienced teachers
- Encouraging open discussions as opposed to lectures
- More seminars focused on elementary education. I felt like a lot of it was high school/middle school focused.
- More info for pre-service teachers
- More seminars on special education
- More focus on what to do as first year teachers -> a lot of it was too hard to be applicable because we do not have a grade level
- Maybe some classroom management tips
- I would have like more seminars for El Ed
- More seminars that were hands-on/ had the educators physically do the activities that are being introduced
- More stuff geared to younger students
- Wish we would have learned a little more about the content than how the classes were taught
- Give some classroom tips

ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT ME TO KNOW?

- Board and committee members were so welcoming and fun.
- Everyone made the experience so exciting
- The free resources were amazing
- Everyone was so nice and welcoming
- The emails keep coming even though I unsubscribed. AHHH!
- Free resources, the emails get out of hand a little bit but nothing too bad
- Whova worked well but the notifications were frustrating when I only attended Sunday
- Loved the welcoming committee each day
- I wish I could have gone to more sessions or gone more days.
- I loved the opportunity and wish I could have gone all 3 days
- I really enjoyed my time and took so much away from this experience. 20/10

- It was so engaging to me because I built little robots. I really like it.
- If this would happen again, I would go.
- I really enjoyed going to the conference and had such a great experience.
- It was really fun overall.
- I really enjoyed the conference, but I wish I had an opportunity to go all three days. I also wish we had more time to network.
- I enjoyed the conference. I wish I could have gone more than one day.
- It was a really fun and educated/inspirational experience, and I would definitely go again.

Overwhelmingly, the preservice teachers' attendance at the HASTI conference was a very worthwhile endeavor. Most asked about returning to the conference in future years, demonstrating that by attending just one conference they already felt a connection to the organization and other like-minded educators.

At a time when so many beginning teachers are leaving the profession within the first few years, perhaps introducing them to a professional organization that relates to their chosen field can help them to build a professional identity, connect with dedicated educators, commit to ongoing professional development, and find a place full of people where they can find support. In fact, all teachers can gain in each of those positive qualities by attending our next annual conference! We look forward to seeing everyone at this year's HASTI/ICTM Conference, February 12-14, 2023, at the Indianapolis Marriott East. Join us!

Author

Stacy Hootman (president@hasti.org) is the Dean of the School of Arts, Sciences and Education and the School of Health Sciences at Ivy Tech, Hamilton County, Indiana, USA.