

Message from the NABT Board of Directors

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) recently issued a travel advisory against the state of Missouri effective through August 28, 2017. This action was taken in part to bring national attention to new state legislation and you will find the full statement from the NAACP [here](#). The National Association of Biology Teachers commends the NAACP for using their platform to shed light on a very important issue and we stand with them to advocate for equal rights and protections for all Americans.

NABT must use our platform to shed light on another important issue: access to quality resources for teachers. Our mission is to empower educators to provide the best possible biology and life science education for all students. Professional development designed to help teachers face a myriad of challenges is an invaluable resource and one that they should not be denied.

We understand the importance of time, location, cost, and safety play when considering participation in any conference. We have changed event programming to occur more on the weekend days to eliminate some of the pressures posed by requesting classroom release time. We calculate our registration rates to make them as affordable as possible and work with a variety of partners to ensure that teachers can participate. Each year, we move the conference to a new location in the United States and Canada to ease the burden of travel expenses.

These factors and more are considered using a thorough vetting process for the cities that host our national conference. The decision to host the 2017 NABT Professional Development Conference in St. Louis should not be taken as the Association condoning the current climate faced by people of color in Missouri or elsewhere. Instead, it acknowledges our commitment to providing area teachers greater access to a supportive professional community.

It is in consideration of that community that the NABT Board of Directors has moved to reduce the price of Saturday registration to \$50 so that local teachers can more easily participate in the conference program and engage with their colleagues.

In a few months, NABT will convene a diverse group of biology teachers who are focused on improving the teaching and learning of biology. We hope you will join us in St. Louis as we welcome teachers from around the world and further the mission of NABT to empower educators to provide the best possible biology and life science education for all students.

Sincerely,

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