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## Introducing Dr. Aaron W. Johnson, Associate Editor of The Compass

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## Introducing

**Dr. Aaron W. Johnson**  
Associate Editor of *The Compass*



**Dr. Aaron W. Johnson** is Associate Professor of Geology and Director of the Honors Program at Northwest Missouri State University. Dr. Johnson received a B.S. in geology with emphases in mathematics and chemistry from Missouri State University in 1997, and earned a Ph.D. in Geology at the University of Missouri with a focus in economic geology and low temperature geochemistry in 2003.

Dr. Johnson was initiated into the Delta Omega Chapter of the society of SGE in 1994. He has served as the faculty advisor to Epsilon Theta Chapter since 2009. Dr. Johnson currently is working with Jim Walters and Larry Davis to make back issues of *The Compass* available in digital format. He is grateful for the opportunity to serve the Society at the national level and hopes to continue the Society's tradition of excellent leadership from its national officers.

From 2003 to 2007, Dr. Johnson was Assistant Professor of Geology and Coordinator for Environmental Science at the University of Virginia's College at Wise (UVa-Wise), a small public liberal arts college in the mountains of far southwestern Virginia. At UVa-Wise he led a comprehensive review and restructuring of the Environmental Science degree program, modernizing and updating the curriculum. He also worked with the Appalachian Math and Science Partnership to provide science education training and materials to K-6 teachers in southwest Virginia, southeast Kentucky, east Tennessee, and western North Carolina. In 2005, he served as visiting assistant professor of geology at the Oklahoma State University Les Huston Geology Field Camp in Canon City, Colorado. In 2007 he moved to Maryville, Missouri to take a position as Assistant Professor of Geology at Northwest Missouri State University. During the Summer of 2011, Dr. Johnson served as visiting professor of geology at the E.B. Branson Field Laboratory in Lander, Wyoming.

Dr. Johnson is a stable isotope geochemist and economic geologist specializing in the chemistry and movement of shallow crustal fluids. He teaches courses in General and Historical Geology, Geochemistry, and Structural and Economic Geology. With his colleague, Dr. Renee Rohs, he teaches a 17-day field course that studies classic geology in portions of Scotland, Northern Ireland, and the Republic of Ireland. His research includes the sources and pathways of metal-bearing fluids related to the lead zinc metallogenic province in Ireland, the geochemistry of hydrothermal fluids in the Mississippi Valley Type deposits of the Viburnum (MO) Trend, the movement and accumulation of metals in subterranean settings, and the petrology and field relationships between various plutons in the southeast Missouri granite-rhyolite terrane. He also pursues research related to continued efforts to introduce various forms of intelligent design arguments into science classrooms.

Dr. Johnson's recent research focuses on linking metal content of sediments to the health of subterranean ecosystems. His teaching methods include the infusion of real-world data into teaching both at the introductory and advanced levels. His experiences with fluid flow and metal transport in structurally complex terranes provided content and context for courses in geochemistry and structural geology. Dr. Johnson has published papers in Geology, Economic Geology, Sedimentology, Mineralogy and Petrology, and The Forum on Public Policy, in addition to numerous abstracts for presentations at international, national, and regional conferences.

"I wasn't always the best student. My first attempt at college ended in a miserable failure and for six years, I worked in factories often under less than desirable conditions. When the opportunity to return to college presented itself, I happened to sit in on an introductory physical geology course. In 50 minutes, I was hooked. The elegance of the relationships between various physical phenomena was fascinating. The next fall I enrolled in Introduction to Physical Geology and attended a three-day field trip to the St. Francois Mountains of southeastern Missouri. Seeing rocks 'in the wild' was the final piece of my educational puzzle. I knew then that I wanted to be a geologist. Since then, I've worked diligently to introduce new students to

geology and earth sciences. My philosophy is that the best geologists are the ones that see the most rocks. To that end, I work to provide the maximum amount of time in the field to all of my students. That approach has allowed me to work with students on field-based research projects, and provides a tremendous diversity in my work. I can honestly say that in the ten years during which I have been a college professor, I can only think of a single day when I did not want to go to work.”

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