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## **Texas Science Teachers Learn How Industrial Minerals Contribute to the Quality of our Modern-day Lives**

**AUSTIN, Texas [July 27, 2021]** – How do industrial minerals enhance our daily lives and how are they mined in Texas? This month, 14 Texas science teachers learned the answers at an intensive industrial minerals mining workshop jointly sponsored by the Texas Aggregates & Concrete Association (TACA) and the Texas Mining and Reclamation Association (TMRA).

During the week-long teacher training, which took place from July 18 - 23 in San Antonio, teachers learned science-based information on the availability, importance and development of industrial minerals, including aggregates like sand, gravel and crushed stone. Texas is a top producer of industrial minerals, which play a key role in our modern lifestyle by providing the materials necessary to build essential infrastructure, including vital highways, roads, schools, hospitals and other commercial, residential and industrial facilities.

“Once again, we are extremely honored to partner with TMRA on the very important work of educating Texas science teachers on the importance of industrial minerals and how they enhance our modern lifestyle,” said Josh Leftwich, president and CEO of TACA.

The workshop included classroom sessions and hands-on labs on such things as plate tectonics, mining exploration and extraction techniques, brick, asphalt and concrete construction and post-mining land use. Teachers also toured a quarry, a cement plant and other industrial minerals mining facilities. In addition, the program highlights vocational and professional career choices in earth sciences and related fields, supporting the economic value of Texas mining.

Taught by scientists, academics and accredited industry professionals, another aspect of the workshops is that each teacher receives approximately 40-45 hours of professional development. The program is aligned with state requirements, meeting the majority of new education standards for earth science through all grade levels, providing a vehicle for teachers to receive firsthand knowledge of how natural resources are developed and used. Teacher Workshops augment education requirements, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the corresponding State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR).

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“Professional development for educators is extremely valuable and contributes to the growth of personal content knowledge,” said Cheryl Allison, TMRA’s education director. “TMRA/TACA workshops combine field work with industry experts and hands-on activities to provide educators with a content-rich, rigorous experience.”

Workshop participants leave with curriculum, e-logs and cross sections, instructional and informative PowerPoints and activity equipment – all of which can be used in their classrooms. Most importantly, teachers return to their classrooms with earth science facts and real-world, problem-solving activities that encourage students to use critical thinking skills.

In 2019, because of the associations’ overlapping goals, TACA and TMRA decided to partner on the industrial minerals workshop, which is one of TMRA’s three mining industry workshops, including lignite and uranium. TACA will continue to augment the industrial minerals segment of the summer workshops by updating and expanding the curriculum to provide more relevant and accurate information on the work of TACA members.

For more information about how to apply for future workshops, please visit the Teacher Workshop [application page](#).

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### **About TACA**

The Texas Aggregates & Concrete Association (TACA) is the main resource for the aggregate, concrete, cement and other associated industries in Texas. The association represents its member companies by providing industry information to the public, media, policymakers and regulators; advocating for industry issues; ensuring member companies commit to conducting business with integrity, respect, transparency and honest communication; and creating industry training courses and materials that help members effectively manage their businesses.