

## Students spend day learning at Lake Superior Water Festival

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Haydn Henderson, a graduate student at Michigan Technological University, describes the risks excessive nutrients can pose to a body of water to students from Wakefield-Marenisco High School during the Lake Superior Water Festival.

Garrett Neese/Daily Mining Gazette

**HOUGHTON** — High school students from five Upper Peninsula counties learned more about the Great Lakes and the research being done on them at the sixth annual Lake Superior Water Festival Wednesday.

The goal is to get students thinking about Lake Superior in an interdisciplinary way, said Joan Chadde, director of the Center for Science and Environmental Outreach at Michigan Technological University.

Held at Tech's Great Lakes Research Center, the day included 15 sessions led by Tech researchers, students and staff as well as members of organizations such as the Keweenaw Land Trust and U.S. Coast Guard.

*"It exposes them to potential career paths, and just different ways they can look at valuing Lake Superior and all the resources that depend upon Lake Superior," she said. "The goal is to increase their sense of stewardship in the lake. The more we understand something and appreciate it, hopefully the more effort we'll make to take care of it."*

It alternates each year between fourth through eighth grades and ninth through 12th. About 400 students attend the high school session, Chadde said.

Students from the Wakefield-Marenisco High School had learned about topics such as the carrying capacity of an ecosystem, or the amount of life it can sustain, and another with an activity in which they learned about the nutrients a tree needs to grow.

Alyssa Lamaire, a ninth-grader at Wakefield-Marinesco, said the biggest thing that had jumped out to her was *“the water, and how little things can affect it.”*

For their final class of the day, they learned about how a change in the balance of nutrients in Lake Superior can lead to algae blooms, in turn creating more harmful bacteria.

Cheryl Jacisin, a teacher at Luther L. Wright High School in Ironwood, said students get an interesting look at research going on at Tech, and also learn how to apply classroom knowledge to real-world situations.

*“It’s a more experiential type of learning,”* she said.

Bruce Reimer, a teacher at the Nah Tah Wahsh Public School Academy in Wilson, said it was a chance to expose students to a different environment.

*“It’s nice for them to get a chance to get out and get away from their community and see the rest of the U.P. and the rest of the world,”* he said.