

Educating people about minerals is a fundamental part of the museum's mission. While this part of the mission is principally carried out at the museum's complex on Michigan Tech's campus, the museum's audience is far larger. The new web site, unveiled earlier this year, has a worldwide reach. Exhibits at mineral shows, such as Tucson, Denver, and Detroit impact a mineral interested public. Satellite exhibits, the focus of this **Showcase**, are an important part of our outreach strategy.

There are Michigan Department of Transportation "Michigan Welcome Center" locations throughout the State. These gateways for travelers are ideal locations for satellite exhibits. Several years ago I volunteered, and subsequently installed, a satellite exhibit at the MDOT Marquette Welcome Center located on the shore of Lake Superior near Harvey. Rather than volunteer a satellite exhibit, the museum was asked by Mike Lilliquist, Manager, of the St. Ignace Michigan Welcome Center to provide one.

Greeting desk at the St. Ignace Michigan Welcome Center



St. Ignace satellite exhibit

The St. Ignace Michigan Welcome Center is located just north of the Mackinac Bridge, with entrance just past the north-bound traffic toll gates. This welcome center annually has about 470,000 visitors! Through this small exhibit, the museum gets a large exposure. The theme of our exhibit is "St. Ignace: Surrounded by Great Lakes and Great Minerals!"

The museum's oldest satellite exhibit is located at the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Eddy Discovery Center near Chelsea, Michigan.

The Michigan Mineral Alliance preserves the legacy of the University of Michigan's mineral collection. This agreement provides the museum a presence on the University of Michigan's Ann Arbor campus via a satellite exhibit in the C. C. Little Science Building. The inaugural and current satellite exhibit on the University of Michigan campus focuses on "Minerals of Michigan." The museum expects to expand our presence on the University of Michigan's campus in the near future.



MTRI satellite exhibit



University of Michigan satellite exhibit

The museum has another satellite in Ann Arbor at the Michigan Tech Research Institute (MTRI). MTRI staff member Colin Brooks, Environmental Science Lab Manager, asked if the museum could install an exhibit in the entrance lobby. Now in its 4th year, the existing exhibit was replaced with a new one focused on Variscite Nodules from Utah donated by George Robb, a 1913 graduate of Michigan Tech. This satellite provides a visually interesting entrance for MTRI and serves to connect MTRI back to Michigan Tech's main campus. To learn more about MTRI visit www.mtri.org.

Locally, tourists who visit the Keweenaw Peninsula can get a glimpse of the museum through our satellite exhibits at the Keweenaw Convention & Visitors Bureau public visitor center in Calumet and at the Copper Harbor Community Center. On campus our exhibit in Michigan Tech's library reaches out to students and encourages them, their friends, and their families to visit us. Our satellite exhibit at the Michigan Tech Fund provides exposure to university alumni and supporters.

Satellite exhibits enhance the museum's reputation and recognition while educating people about minerals. While the satellites require regular refreshing and maintenance, the effort is well worth the positive benefit.

Until next time, Ted Bornhorst, Executive Director