

# The Clay Minerals Society

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## THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



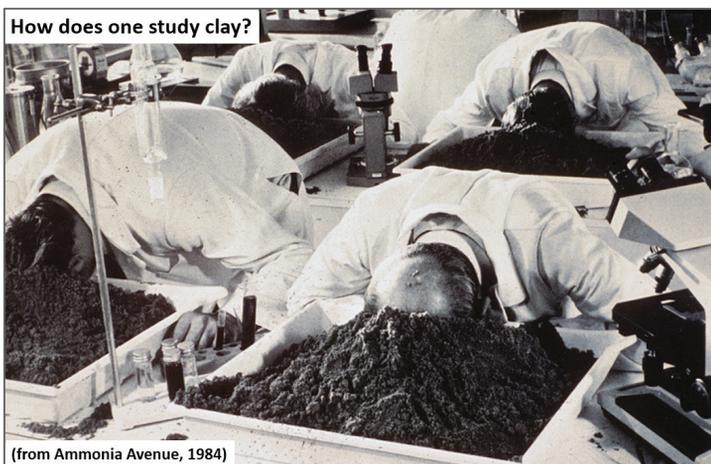
Lynda B. Williams

It is the time of year for the Clay Minerals Society (CMS) passing of the gavel. If you are a committed reader of this CMS society news page in *Elements*, you may recognize that this is my first incarnation as President. I have been a CMS member since 1984, when I received an MS from Dartmouth College (New Hampshire, USA), supervised by Robert Reynolds who is one of the pioneers of clay science and a CMS Past President (1991). I worked with Ray Ferrell (also a

CMS Past President) at the Louisiana State University Basin Research Institute (USA) and then received my PhD in 2000, supervised by Ian Hutcheon at the University of Calgary (Alberta, Canada). I have been a Research Professor at Arizona State University (USA) since 2003, studying clay chemistry and stable isotopes.

I would like to thank our Past President Douglas McCarty, who has been a fearless leader for the last year, drawing attention of the society to our needs and opportunities as a community interested in all things relating to clay. By the time you read this, we will have just enjoyed our 55<sup>th</sup> annual meeting at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign—the type location of the CMS (and of illite). We thank all of the organizers for their time and dedication to making the conference great (again)!

Looking back through recent *Elements* society news items, a common theme expressed by past presidents of many geological societies has been to rally the troops to engage new members, build new connections, and broaden the base for a sustainable future. But we're all busy doing the best we can to achieve that perfect work/life balance. So, how can you help? You can contribute your membership fees, attend meetings, encourage your students and colleagues to join, even (on occasion) read this news page!



Early studies of clay were limited to visual recognition of clay morphology and physical properties (geoengineers still use these methods!). But technology has improved exponentially, leading the clay scientist in diverse directions with unlimited avenues for research in materials science, Earth and planetary science, nanotechnology, pharmacology, medicine, environmental protection, nuclear waste, and finding new energy resources!

What makes us a community you should care about? Why do we give our time and resources to show up at the annual meeting, volunteer to serve on committees, pass down our experiences and knowledge to student members, vote for CMS awards and grants? Annually, we convene (and fund) a stimulating conference, with educational

workshops, fun field trips, and exciting theme sessions. And we enjoy a banquet so that we meet new collaborators, celebrate our life's work, and share our scientific successes.

We are the **Clay Minerals Society**, a name purposely chosen to be inclusive of the international community of clay scientists. A name which draws puzzled looks from some. I'm not sure how many of us chose this field of study, or if it chose us. We are first and foremost scientists. Normally, it is our innate curiosity that leads our science, and if you are curious about Earth processes and processes on other worlds, clay science is still at the forefront of discovery. In my career (not quite as long as CMS has existed), I have seen the ebb and flow of members, just as any community has. But, the core of our community is strong because **we love what we do!**

It is not (only) about clay. It's about discovery. It's not that we are lovers of minutia, it is that we recognize the cosmic dominance of nanoparticles. We are curious about the physical and chemical processes that nanoparticles effect; the kinetic and thermodynamic nuances; the electrical exchanges and isotopic markers hidden in mineral structures waiting to be read by those clever enough to find the secret decoder.

We live in interesting times, which is both a blessing and a curse. As an international community committed to the pursuit of knowledge, we are the leaders who need to drive successful advances for our world. Together, we have strength in collaboration, and we will share discoveries that improve our lives. Divided, we wallow in the mud.

If you are not already a CMS member, please join and contribute to the forefront of science and innovation in clay science. Student membership (only \$35 per year) includes a subscription to *Elements* magazine and on-line access to **Clays and Clay Minerals**.

Visit [www.clays.org](http://www.clays.org)

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## 2018 CMS ANNUAL MEETING

The 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Clay Minerals Society, entitled "New Visions in Clay Science", was held 11–14 June 2018 at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (USA). At this meeting, there were 239 clay scientists in attendance, more than 240 abstracts were submitted, and 52 students had the opportunity to present their research. During the meeting, Dr. Douglas K. McCarty, the 2017 CMS President, passed the gavel to Dr. Lynda B. Williams, the 2018 CMS President. New councilors were also elected: Drs. Anke Neumann, Janice Bishop, Nikolla Qafoku, and Erwan Paineau, as well as new Vice President Elect, Dr. Bruno Lanson (2018–2019).

## CMS Awards

During the meeting, several awards were conferred by the CMS.

- Bailey Distinguished Member Award: to Dr. G. Jock Churchman
- Brindley Lecture Award: to Dr. Cliff T. Johnston
- Jackson Mid-Career Clay Scientist Award: to Dr. Stephen J. Hillier
- Pioneer in Clay Science Award: to Dr. Jan Śródoń
- Citation of Special Recognition: to Dr. Duane M. Moore.

Seven students were awarded 2018 CMS Research Grants and 19 students received 2018 CMS Travel Award Grants. We will feature the winners in future CMS society news pages.