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International Association of Geoanalysts

REPORT FROM COLOGNE

The 2007 Goldschmidt conference was held August 19–24 at the University of Cologne. This event was attended by some 2300 delegates from around the globe, and again this year the International Association of Geoanalysts sponsored high-profile events related to the society's core activities. In 2007 the IAG organized its first ever Goldschmidt workshop devoted to geochemical metrology. Equally noteworthy, the IAG sponsored its second annual Early Career Award, recognizing excellence in geoanalytical technique development or reference material characterization.

Workshop on Quality Assurance

A major focus of the IAG is the dissemination of knowledge about best practice in analytical geochemistry, thereby encouraging individual laboratories to test for and assure high data quality. In order to help keep analysts up-to-date about the latest trends in chemical metrology, the IAG organized a one-day workshop devoted to quality assurance in geochemical analyses. This workshop, also held at the University of Cologne, took place just before the Goldschmidt conference. Led by Thomas Meisel, chairman of the IAG's Reference Material Certification Committee, the workshop addressed eight major themes: measurement uncertainty, data traceability, sample preparation, sampling, method validation, production of reference materials, proper use of reference materials, and proficiency testing. Thomas was assisted in this endeavour by Michael Wiedenbeck, president of the IAG, and Rainer Schramm of Fluxana Corporation.



Participants at the IAG-sponsored Workshop on Quality Assurance which was held in advance of the Cologne Goldschmidt conference

The workshop was attended by 25 participants from 15 countries. The format was kept informal, thereby encouraging interaction between participants and organizers and exchanges of experience among the many participants. One of the more interesting aspects of the workshop was the spontaneous discussions that developed among analysts from across a very wide spectrum of geochemical disciplines, including environmental dust characterization, isotope analysis, waste disposal, classical igneous petrology, and energy resource assessment. Lunch at the nearby student cafeteria, sponsored by Fluxana, gave everyone a chance to exchange ideas in a more relaxed and informal setting. In view of the high level of interest in metrology and the positive feedback received from participants, this workshop will become a routine event in future years. IAG is already looking forward to sponsoring another successful workshop on metrology at Goldschmidt 2008 in Vancouver where all will be welcome.

Second Annual IAG Early Career Award

Initiated at the 2006 Melbourne Goldschmidt conference, the IAG Early Career Award seeks to promote the careers of young geoanalysts. Established by the IAG Council, the recipient must be either a research student or a scientist within five years of completion of their final academic degree. Furthermore, in order to be considered for this award, an individual must personally present his or her original research at the Goldschmidt conference. Selection is based on the abstracts submitted for either talks or posters, and the award judges identify those presentations that reflect the primary activities of the IAG:



Dr. Chmeleff (right) receiving the second annual Early Career Award from IAG President Michael Wiedenbeck.

analytical technique development, reference material characterization, and refinements in sampling and data assessment methods. This year the judging committee assessed 125 abstracts which had been submitted to the Goldschmidt conference.

Dr. Jérôme Chmeleff of the Leibniz Universität in Hannover was selected for IAG's 2007 Early Career Award based on his abstract "UV-Femtosecond Laser Ablation MC-ICP-MS for In Situ Analyses of Si Isotopes." The award committee found Jérôme's contribution to be highly innovative for its design of a fully new analytical approach and for the documentation of his efforts to validate the method's reliability. Furthermore, he then went on to report the detection of significant isotopic heterogeneity in an internationally distributed reference material at the 50 μm sampling scale. His work was seen as closely reflecting some of the core interests of the International Association of Geoanalysts. We congratulate Jérôme on his research and wish him ongoing success in his future geoanalytical endeavors.

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Drakensberg Region, South Africa

CALL FOR IMA MEDAL NOMINATIONS

You are reminded that there is a new and prestigious IMA medal for excellence in mineralogical research, as represented primarily by scientific publications of outstanding original research in mineralogy (see the October issue of *Elements* for full details). The deadline for nominations is 1 April 2008, so there is still time to take part and nominate a scientist from an IMA member country. If you would like to receive more information or make a nomination, please contact Joel Grice, Chairman IMA Medal Committee (jgrice@mus-nature.ca).