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FROM THE PRESIDENT

The International Nature of Geochemistry



The closing plenaries at the Montreal Goldschmidt Conference presented by Lawrence Cathles and Patrice Christmann were marvelous discussions of the issues that must be addressed in order to ensure the continued availability of the natural resources needed to sustain and improve the human condition on Earth. For those of you who did not attend Goldschmidt, videos of the plenaries are available on the Web at <http://webcasts.welcome2theshow.com/goldschmidt2012>.

Geochemistry, of course, is intrinsic to any discussion of natural resources: from the basic processes that lead to ore-grade concentrations of critical elements and compounds (one example of which forms the subject of this issue of *Elements*) and the means by which they can be found and extracted from the Earth, to the ways in which environmental degradation resulting from resource extraction can be monitored and ameliorated. Many issues of this magazine have highlighted this aspect of geochemistry, including international problems created by local natural events such as those leading up to the Fukushima Daiichi disaster (June 2012), broader concerns such as the availability of clean water (June 2011), and how to deal with the wastes produced by resource extraction (December 2011). The Geochemical Society owes a debt of gratitude to Pierrette Tremblay, who has served as the managing editor of *Elements* since its inception; her major contribution to journal operations has allowed *Elements* to become the forum for such presentations.

Given the strong links between geochemistry and natural resources, the expanding reliance of an increasing proportion of the world's population on resource consumption at levels previously enjoyed by only a few demands that modern methods of geochemical investigation expand across the international arena. Recognizing this need, the Geochemical Society Board took several actions during its meetings at the Goldschmidt Conference to expand its international impact. First, bylaw changes were enacted that will require the leadership of the Society to better reflect the regional distribution of its membership. Perhaps the most important step in this direction is the requirement that candidates for vice-president not be from the same region as the current vice-president. In the 56 years of its existence, the Geochemical Society has had only one president whose principal place of employment was outside the United States. This statistic will change in the near future. These steps towards internationalization of the GS leadership reflect the realization of the goals originally envisioned by Past-President Sam Mukasa. Another move in this direction was the acceptance of the gracious proposal from the Geochemical Society of Japan to host the 2016 Goldschmidt Conference. We hope that this meeting can serve as a "Pan-Asian" experience that will bring together the large community of geochemists from throughout the region and allow western participants to experience the remarkable growth of geochemistry throughout Asia. The Geochemical Society looks forward to the opportunity for regular rotation of the Goldschmidt Conferences that it organizes outside of North America to parts of the world where a Goldschmidt has yet to be held, for example, China, Africa, and South America. The Society will soon advertise a procedure for local groups to submit proposals to host a Goldschmidt Conference so that site selection can be performed in an open and fair manner. The Society has already assumed responsibility for many aspects of the fiscal and logistical burden of Goldschmidt organization so that local organizing groups can focus

on bringing local flavor and input into the science topics covered at the meeting without having to commit the huge time and personal resources needed to organize a meeting the size of Goldschmidt.

Another effort in this direction is the launch last year of an outreach program in collaboration with the European Association of Geochemistry. The first activities of this program will include sponsorship of lecture tours by prominent western geochemists to many sites in Africa (in year 1). In this way, we will endeavor to make connections with geoscientists who may not be able to regularly attend international geochemistry meetings but would benefit from exposure to advanced geochemical methods and who, in turn, can enlighten international audiences on the geochemical concerns and opportunities in Africa. Future years will see this program expand to other regions. In order to further foster international development of geochemistry, the Development Committee of the Geochemical Society will be starting a fund to be used to sponsor membership in the Society for geochemists and students from disadvantaged countries; as the fund grows, it will be used to bring these people to the Goldschmidt Conference. When you renew your membership in the Geochemical Society this year, please consider contributing to this goal. One hundred percent of your donations to this fund will be used to enable broader participation in the benefits and activities sponsored by the Geochemical Society and thereby expand the geochemical community to those who, arguably, stand to benefit most from the solutions that geochemistry can provide. Many aspects of geochemistry touch on issues of an international nature and interest, so improved communication across regional boundaries can only help accelerate the growth of geochemistry and its application to addressing many human needs.

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GEOCHEMICAL SOCIETY AWARD NOMINATIONS

While at the Montreal Goldschmidt, did you see a presentation by a young geochemist indicating a great future for that person? Did one of the presentations confirm to you that the presenter has been doing great geochemistry for a long time, but without adequate recognition? Do something about it. **Nominate them for a Geochemical Society Award.** Awards not only provide recognition of quality work for the award winner, but they also help to advance the field of geochemistry by letting research institutions know that the work of one of their faculty is highly regarded by the researcher's peers. Many outstanding geochemists have not received the recognition that their excellent work deserves. The list of past award winners does not adequately reflect the diversity of the Geochemical Society's membership. Why? A major reason is that too few take the time to nominate worthy candidates for Society recognition. Break the trend. **Nominations are easy** and the nomination deadline is October 15.

Visit <http://www.geochemsoc.org/awards/makeanomination.htm> for more information.

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