



The Clay Minerals Society

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THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear CMS community,



The 2025 Annual Meeting of our Society will be convened jointly with the quadrennial International Clay Conference (ICC) of the Association Internationale pour l'Etude des Argiles (AIPEA), which will take place July 13–18 in Dublin, Ireland. This will be the final ICC, as AIPEA will hereafter combine the ICC and the EuroClay conferences into a single biennial 'CLAY conference', the first of which will take place in Madrid in June 2027. At the upcoming CMS annual meeting, I shall pass the gavel of President to our current Vice-President, Youjun Deng of Texas A&M, USA.

The Executive Committee of the Society is preparing recommendations on several actions associated with major activities of the Society. One of these is an effort to find a new home for the Source Clays Repository (SCR) as requested by Cliff Johnston, who has hosted the repository at Purdue University since 2004. The second is a proposed revision on the Society's Bylaws governing the Editor-in-Chief (EIC) of *Clays and Clay Minerals*.

In closing, I would like to thank the Society for the chance to serve as its President for the past year. It has been a privilege to witness the dedication of the members who serve on CMS committees, the Council, and the Executive Committee; who run the SCR, the business office, and CMS communications; and last but not least the teams that organized the 2024 Annual Meeting in Honolulu (led by Yuji Arai), the 2024 Reynolds Cup (led by Steve Hillier), and the upcoming 2025 Annual Meeting (also led by Steve Hillier).

Warm regards,

Ian C. Bourg, CMS President

CMS PROFESSIONAL AWARDS

Warren Huff Clay Science Pathway Award

The Warren Huff Clay Science Pathway Award is a newly endowed award of The Clay Minerals Society, intended to support the development of the next generation of clay scientists.

The inaugural award 2024 goes to **Dr. Xiaojin Zheng**, Princeton University, USA.



Dr. Xiaojin Zheng is currently an Associate Research Scholar in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Princeton University, USA. From 2021 to 2024, he was a Postdoctoral Research Associate in the same department. He earned his PhD in petroleum and geosystems engineering from The University of Texas at Austin, USA in 2021. His research focuses on studying clay across multiple length scales, with applications in sustainable energy geotechnics, including carbon sequestration and radioactive waste isolation.

Dr. Zheng serves as an associate editor or guest editor for six journals and as a reviewer for 18 journals. He has been recognized with the Outstanding Academic Editor Award by Deep Underground Science and Engineering (2024), the Cockrell Engineering Fellowship from UT Austin (2021), and the Wang Tao Talented Scholars Scholarship from the China Petroleum Education Society (2017).

Marilyn and Sturges W. Bailey Award



Hailiang Dong receives the 2025 Marilyn and Sturges W. Bailey Distinguished Member Award. He is recognized for scientific eminence as represented by publication of outstanding original research in clay science. Dr. Dong is a professor of clay mineralogy and geomicrobiology at China University of Geosciences-Beijing. He holds a PhD in clay mineralogy and isotope geochemistry from the University of Michigan, USA. His postdoctoral studies at Princeton University (USA) were about geomicrobiology and environmental geochemistry.

Dr. Dong's current research areas include clay mineral–microbe interactions, environmental applications of clay–microbe interactions (heavy metals and organics), medical applications of clay–microbe interactions, and resource recovery (critical minerals). He has been recognized through multiple honors and awards, including the Marion L. and Chrystie M. Jackson Mid-Career Clay Scientist Award of the CMS (2008), Fellow of the Geological Society of America (2018), Fellow of Durham University of United Kingdom (2019), Fellow of the Geochemical Society and the European Association of Geochemistry (2023), and Medal of Excellence of the International Mineralogical Association. Dr. Dong has served the CMS in various capacities, including Associate Editor for *Clays & Clay Minerals*, the Awards Committee, and Council member. He served as co-Editor-in-Chief for *Chemical Geology* (2017–2024). He is the Executive Editor of *Geochimica et Cosmochimica Acta* and President of the Geomicrobiology Society of China.

Dr. Dong will present his research at the International Clay Conference in Ireland, 2025.

Marion L. and Chrystie M. Jackson Mid-Career Award



Dr. Yuanzhi Tang receives the 2025 Marion L. and Chrystie M. Jackson Mid-Career Clay Scientist Award. She is recognized for her excellence in the contribution of new knowledge to clay minerals science through original and scholarly research. She is a professor at the School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences and School of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology (USA), also serving as the director of Center for Critical Mineral Solutions and associate co-director of interdisciplinary

research of Brook Byers Institute for Sustainable Systems. She received her bachelor's degrees in geology and economics from Peking University (China) in 2003 and PhD in geosciences from Stony Brook University (USA) in 2008. She completed her postdoctoral research in environmental chemistry and microbial geochemistry at Harvard University (USA) before joining Georgia Institute of Technology. Her research focuses on the fundamentals and applications of molecular scale interfacial reactions in natural and engineered systems, as well as the development and applications of advanced synchrotron X-ray techniques. She also leads research on the biogeochemical cycling of critical nutrients and metals in natural environments and resource recovery from waste streams. She serves as the co-editor-in-chief of *Chemical Geology* and associate editor of *Geochimica et Cosmochimica Acta*.