

## David Kanagy Introduction – MMSA Gold Medal Award

By Mark Jorgensen

Today we are here to honor one of the leaders in the mining industry, David Kanagy – Executive Director of the Society for Mining, Metallurgy and Exploration.

The first Gold Medal was awarded in 1914. The Gold Medal is awarded to individuals who have significant contributions to the mining industry and is awarded "for conspicuous professional or public service for the advancement of the science of Mining & Metallurgy, or of Economic Geology; for the betterment of conditions under which these industries are carried on, for the protection of mine investors, and especially for the better protection of the health and safety of workman in the Mines and Metallurgical establishments."

The criteria for achievement of this award is up to the discretion of the Gold Medal Award Committee. There are no set rules or guidelines other than the previous statement. There is no time of service. There is no economic threshold to meet.

The Gold Medal Committee bases its evaluation on the contribution of the nominee to the mining industry. These contributions are noted in letters of recommendation, which were received from a former MMSA Gold Medal Winner, MMSA members and other leaders in the industry.

One of the recommendations submitted by a former MMSA Gold Medal recipient read, "David has provided outstanding leadership to SME, focusing on the strategic issues of mining while bringing highly effective management practices to the organization. As the executive of SME, David has met the criteria for the MMSA Gold Medal. SME's conferences, publishing of technical treatises and webinars that support the science of mining have been vastly improved. His efforts to develop international standards for reporting ore reserve and exploration information is important to the protection of investors and is recognized in the industry."

To me this was a stunning recommendation by a Gold Medal recipient. I then made a real effort to find out about Dave and his accomplishments in the mining industry.

Upon completing his education he worked for the Fabricators and Manufacturers Association and then for the Aluminum Extruders Council. After that he worked seven years for the Iron and Steel Society. Dave described his transition from the I&SS to SME as “coming from darkness into the light.” The steel industry was dying in the US and it was a brutal time. But he had learned lessons there that would so very applicable to SME.

I first met Dave in October 2004, several months after he had made the transition to SME.. I was the Secretary for the Denver Section of the MMSA and was routinely charged with filling in speakers. I know that it seems hard to believe but sometimes we had trouble finding speakers for our monthly meetings. Dave offered to share his vision of the future of SME and what could be accomplished in the mining industry.

When he presented at our luncheon meeting he did have a vision for the future. He saw a different industry than I did. He articulated how we could win the hearts and minds of the mining industry and how we could win the hearts and minds of the general public. I was skeptical because if you will remember SME in 2004 it was a tired worn organization that was losing credibility, membership and money. I was skeptical but his enthusiasm won me over.

Over the next 10 years Dave was able to accomplish some remarkable things. But as with any good leader he did not do these things by himself. He worked with a team of people. He took ideas that were brought to him by people in this room and shared a vision about how to achieve them.

Another letter of recommendation read, “His leadership, enthusiasm and drive have led to a number of significant initiatives. A great example of this is the development of OneMine.org. David took the lead role in obtaining the OneMine.org web domain name and developed a vision for how to turn this into the most important web-based information available to the mining industry globally.”

Today OneMine.org has over 112,000 documents available for research. But it has a lot more documents that are available because of the formation of the Global Mineral Professionals Alliance (a collaboration between SME, CIM, AusIMM and SAIMM), which allows access to another mountain of technical data.

The current estimate is that over 2 million pages available through OneMine. In my professional life OneMine has been an invaluable tool.

Public outreach is another area where Dave's leadership has had a significant impact. Under Dave's guidance SME has established:

- The Minerals Education Coalition which was created by merging MII and GEM to form a consolidated and stronger outreach program for K through 12 minerals education,
- The SME Government and Public Affairs Committee which included hiring a Government and Public Affairs Director who travels to Washington D.C, on a regular basis to meet with Congressional staff and provide technical information about mining and minerals to policy makers,
- The SME Congressional Fellowship.
- The World Federation of Engineering (WFEO)-SME Task Force on Sustainable Mining which is a global task force that focuses on capacity building in developing nations.

Dave's leadership has built SME's impact and credibility to the level where it is today.

The old saying "A rising tide lifts all boats" holds true. All of the professional mining organizations that I am familiar with have benefited by SME's new vision of the future.

Dave deserves to be recognized for his leadership and service to the mining profession and the MMSA Gold Medal Award is a very fitting way to honor him for his achievements.

The Gold Medal Committee has cited David for "outstanding leadership that has advanced the global collaboration of technical information, networking and professional development for mining professionals and enhanced public education about mining and minerals".