



Joaquin Ruiz

2004 Medal of Merit Recipient

Dr. Joaquin Ruiz was born in Mexico City in 1951 and resided there until several years after completion of his Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico. Chemistry was for him a new way of exploring the world, and his deepening interest in that field was nurtured by his professors' love for their discipline. For a few years after graduation, Joaquin taught high school and found it rewarding. However, he then assisted a cousin with carbon-14 dating of pyramids in southern Mexico as part of her doctoral thesis and had an epiphany that revealed his true calling. He was fascinated by the notion that chemistry could be used as a tool to determine something's age and resolved to pursue post-graduate studies, earning his Ph.D. degree in geochemistry from the University of Michigan. He worked briefly as an assistant professor at the University of Miami and joined the Geosciences Department at the University of Arizona in 1983.

Joaquin has remained at the University of Arizona, where he is a full professor of geochemistry, having served as Head of the Geosciences Department. In 2000, he was appointed Dean of the College of Science and has had a profound influence in strengthening the College and in building its prominence as a center for education and research. His personal interest in research continues unabated and he is highly regarded by those in the mining industry for his extensive work on porphyry copper deposits, especially in the use of molybdenum and rhenium as tracers. Joaquin is a teacher, research scientist, and steward of a world-class educational enterprise. He believes in the importance of making a difference in the world and recognizes that professional excellence is the key ingredient. He has sought to have a positive and constructive impact on society and has been immensely successful in his quest.