



Mary M. Poulton

2009 Medal of Merit Recipient

Mary M. Poulton, head of the Department of Mining and Geological Engineering at The University of Arizona since July 2000, is the first female to head a department in the College of Engineering at The University and only the second to hold such a position in American mining education. Since becoming Department head, she has displayed exceptional leadership and collaborative qualities within the department, the University, and with executives of the mining industry that the Department supports.

After receiving her Ph.D. in 1990, she devoted her career to the advancement of earth science and mining education. She wrote minerals chapters for the American Geological Institute's national middle school earth science curriculum project EarthWorks, was team leader for the resources section, and wrote the minerals module for the national high school earth science curriculum project EarthComm: Earth Science in My Community.

Mary was a driving force in the formation of the Lowell Institute for Mineral Resources at The University and is currently its director. The Institute was formed to include Department of Mining and Geological Engineering, the Department of Geosciences, the College of Public Health, and faculty from several other colleges. The Institute is jointly funded by the State of Arizona and the mining industry and has as its goal is to be a global center to bridge pure and applied science, engineering, business leadership, and responsible stewardship. Dr. Poulton has also negotiated a collaborative research agreement and student exchange with the University of Queensland in Australia and is spearheading discussions with mining programs around the world regarding collaborative teaching and research.

Mary has also been active in supporting mining programs at a national level through efforts to replace Bureau of Mines research support with a new federal program to support mineral resources science and engineering research and education. Under her leadership, the San Xavier Mining Laboratory, the only mining laboratory in the United States with a working vertical shaft,

Mining Foundation of the Southwest
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multiple modes of underground access and multiple working levels, has become a nationally prominent teaching and research facility.