



4220 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22302-1502
703-379-2480;
Fax: 703-379-7563
www.agiweb.org

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Contact: Christopher Keane
keane@agiweb.org

AGI Announces Wayne D. Pennington as its 2012 President

Alexandria VA – The American Geosciences Institute (AGI) is pleased to announce Dr. Wayne D. Pennington as its new President. He will be inducted at the Geological Society of America Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Pennington, currently chair of the Department of Geological and Mining Engineering and Sciences at Michigan Technological University, received degrees in Geophysics and Geology from Princeton University (B.A. in 1972), Cornell University (M.S. in 1976), and the University of Wisconsin-Madison (Ph.D. in 1979). He has been a professor of geophysical engineering at Michigan Tech since 1994, and became department chair in 2003. Prior to that he was a research associate at Marathon Oil (1985-1994) and an assistant professor at University of Texas at Austin (1979-1985). He has held numerous civil society positions during his career, most recently being a Jefferson Science Fellow at the U.S. Department of State and USAID, the Agency for International Development (2009 – 2010), the Chair of the AGU Board of Heads and Chairs of Earth and Space Science Departments (2008 – 2010), and the Society of Exploration Geophysicists First Vice President (2002-2003).

During his appointment as a Jefferson Science Fellow at USAID, he worked in the Office of Infrastructure and Engineering within the Bureau of Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade. After USAID's Office of Science and Technology was created in 2010, he shared his appointment in that office. In those positions, he first worked on issues relating to earthquake hazard in Afghanistan and science and engineering projects in Pakistan. When the M7.0 Haiti earthquake occurred in January, he used the rest of his appointment to coordinate scientific and engineering teams heading to Haiti, to present talks for non-technical audiences on the seismology of Haiti, and to co-organize a workshop on infusing Haiti's reconstruction with science and engineering.

Pennington is a distinguished leader with a demonstrated track record of technical geoscience excellence as well as a highly effective communicator to the public, conveying complex concepts so the public can understand with ease. He is also recognized for his skill in articulating and communicating the intricacies of policy making, particularly for diplomacy and development, to scientists and engineers.

The American Geosciences Institute is a nonprofit federation of 50 geoscientific and professional associations that represents more than 250,000 geologists, geophysicists and other earth scientists. Founded in 1948, AGI provides information services to geoscientists, serves as a voice of shared interests in the profession, plays a major role in strengthening geoscience education, and strives to increase public awareness of the vital role the geosciences play in society's use of resources, resiliency to natural hazards, and interaction with the environment.

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