

Dear President, members of the Meteoritical Society, colleagues, friends,

Thanks, Christian, and all of you who nominated me for this award. I am grateful also to the Barringer Award committee, and of course, and most of all to the Barringer Family/Barringer Crater Co.

It is a great pleasure to receive the 2026 Barringer Award of the Meteoritical Society. I accept it with gratitude, joy, a touch of pride, but also with a sense of humility. I see it as a reward for the work we carried out together with remarkable colleagues over many years; some who guided me, others who worked with me closely, and some whom I mentored.

Relationships matter in science. They always have, but perhaps they count even more today, with online meeting replacing genuine personal interactions, home working alone, but also virtual friendships, and an endless stream of "likes" on social media. Mentorship is often viewed as a one-way process: the mentor possesses knowledge, experience, and wisdom, while the mentee absorbs as much as possible as quickly as possible. Certainly, a mentor opens hidden doors and reveals invisible paths, or simply provides the confidence to take the next step.

My mentors did that for me over the years, from two chemistry and biology high-school teachers in Brussels, to Stanley V. Margolis and Walter Alvarez, as PhD advisors in California, or Jan Smit when looking at KT boundaries in the field, to Frank Kyte and John Wasson at UCLA, all the way to Dieter Stoeffler at the Natural History Museum in Berlin; and many others whom I cannot possibly name today... but I am extremely grateful to all of them. They taught me, - in their own ways -, that the most profound forms of mentorship and interactions with colleagues are fully reciprocal leading to intellectual exchanges that critically question assumptions, cross established boundaries, explore new territories and sometimes even lead to a bit of friction...

When the time came for me to be in charge of my own team, - even if at the beginning that team consisted only of myself - I applied what I had experienced previously: do much more than simply transmit knowledge. I also tried to listen, learn, and accept that the people working with me address problems differently, see other priorities, and consider aspects or

opportunities that I had overlooked. In that sense, they evolve from merely recipients to full partners in a fruitful scholarly interaction. I deeply and truly appreciate that aspect of the relationship. I have been extraordinarily fortunate in the people who have supported me and from whom I have learned, and equally blessed in those who have challenged me and taught me things I did not know I needed to learn. As my research group grew significantly over the years, I did my best to create, maintain, and promote a constructive environment in which science travels further propelled by a new generation of academics full of fresh ideas, original concepts, innovative methodologies, and, most of all, unbounded enthusiasm and energy.

Therefore, I accept this award as recognition of all these common efforts and as a reminder to remain curious, inspired and open to new ideas, even if I do not fully understand them fully at first... Thank you to the Meteoritical Society, to my colleagues, to my mentors, to my students and younger colleagues—and to all those with whom the exchange of ideas and cooperation has made this great journey so rewarding. I am deeply honored to receive this year Barringer Award.