

Bill Miller is an SME Local Section Hero

Local Sections are an integral part of SME, providing a forum for SME members to gather and helping to facilitate the exchange of information and increase grassroots participation in SME programs and services. Through involvement in their local section, members have the opportunity to network with their peers and to hear valuable presentations.

At the core of each local section is a group of dedicated volunteers who recruit members, organize section activities, work with local SME student chapters, raise money, provide educational outreach and more. To recognize our member volunteers for their hard work at the local section level, SME has created the Local Section Hero program. This column highlights an individual who carries out unique, exemplary or long-standing activities at a local section.

If you know someone who is providing exemplary service to your local section, visit www.smenet.org. Under Membership click on Local Sections, then Local Section Hero Awards. Take a few moments to nominate that individual as a Local Section Hero.

Bill Miller — Carolinas Section

John William “Bill” Miller is a professor emeritus in the Environmental Studies Department at the University of North Carolina at Asheville (UNCA). He has been an active member of the Carolinas Section of SME and has held several leadership positions, including vice chair, chair, treasurer and secretary, during the past 30 years. He has made distinguished contributions to the educational activities within SME relating to student affairs, mentorship and earth science education outreach. He was among the members of the SME Carolinas Section who successfully lobbied the North Carolina State Legislators to require students to take an earth science course before they can graduate from high school.

Miller has always been actively involved with the

Carolinas Section’s educational outreach programs and volunteered to assist in the SME booth during the annual meetings of the North Carolina Science Teachers Association, where they passed out rock samples to the teachers. He has always encouraged his students to become involved in SME activities, especially as they relate to earth science and geology. He also encouraged his students to become familiar with the minerals industries and to take advantage of internship opportunities. Students who participated in these internship programs would tell you that they were some of the most fulfilling experiences during their education at UNCA.



John “Bill” Miller, Carolinas Section hero.

In 2006, through the joint efforts of Miller and Robert Carland and Robert Mensah-Biney of North Carolina’s Minerals Research Laboratory (MRL), a collaborative program was initiated to establish mineral science and processing education in the Environmental Studies Department at UNCA. In 2012, through their continued efforts, the North Carolina General Administration approved the establishment of the mineral processing option in the environmental studies department. Miller was also a strong supporter of the rock kits program at MRL and assisted in procuring some of the minerals for the rock kits, which are sent to K-12 schools free of charge across the Carolinas and beyond. ■

Personal News

PONISSERIL SOMASUNDARAN (SME) received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Engineering Congress in Quebec City, QC, Canada. Somasundaran is the La von Duddleson Krumb professor and director of Langmuir Center for Colloids and Interfaces at Columbia University and director of the National Science Foundation Industry/University Cooperative Research Center. Somasundaran is a 1985 inductee of the National Academy of Engineering and a member of the Royal Academy of Sciences. He is also the recipient of numerous professional awards and the



SOMASUNDARAN

author of 15 books and 700 scientific publications.

After more than 41 years with Caterpillar, **DOUGLAS R. OBERHELMAN** will step down as chairman and chief executive officer (CEO) of the company at the end of this year. He will remain executive chairman until March 31, 2017, when he will retire. Oberhelman led the company to its highest sales and revenue peak in its 91-year history in 2012 and, since that time, has successfully led the company through the unprecedented downturn affecting its key industries. **D. JAMES UMPLEBY**, a 35-year veteran of the company and currently a Caterpillar group president with responsibility for Energy & Transportation,

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