

Acceptance of the Dana Medal of the Mineralogical Society of America for 2024

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I have no doubts in stating that, for a mineralogist, receiving the Dana Medal of the Mineralogical Society of America is among the most important scientific honors. I am so grateful to obtain such international recognition that this is giving me even more enthusiasm and strength in continuing my work. This is the first time that the Dana Medal has reached an Italian research and/or university institute, and this represents a significant achievement for the entire Italian mineralogical community, which is among the most active in the world, still providing young and very promising mineralogists.

I have always felt very close to the Mineralogical Society of America, and my entire mineralogical background has been based since the very first moments of my scientific growth on its several important publications. I deeply studied many volumes of the *Reviews in Mineralogy and Geochemistry* series like volume 39, *Transformation Process in Minerals* (Redfern and Carpenter 2000), volume 41, *High-Temperature and High-Pressure Crystal Chemistry* (Hazen and Downs 2001), and volume 62, *Water in Nominally Anhydrous Minerals* (Keppler and Smyth 2006)—just to mention three of them. This is why it was really a great honor to act as one of the Editors for volume 88, entitled *Diamond: Genesis, Mineralogy and Geochemistry* (Smit et al. 2022). Since 2016, I am an Associate Editor for *American Mineralogist* (the leading publication of the Mineralogical Society of America), and there I have published more than 70 articles. *American Mineralogist* not only being my favorite magazine where to submit my research but also where to read most of the important literature for my background. Finally, I cannot neglect a further publication of the Mineralogical Society of America, which is *Elements*, as I always suggest reading it to my students in Earth and Natural Sciences.

In terms of my career, I got my Master's degree in Geological Sciences at the University of Turin, Italy, where I started to learn sciences thanks to the strong help of people like Mario Tribaudino, Mauro Prencipe, and Emiliano Bruno. I also started to work on the mineralogy of some very rare meteorites thanks to collaborations with Chiara Domeneghetti, Vittorio Tazzoli, and Fernando Cámara. After that, I started my Ph.D. officially at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia in association with the University of Turin where I studied the high-pressure and high-temperature crystal chemistry of clino- and orthopyroxenes. During the same years, I spent much of my time at



the Bayerisches Geoinstitut, Bayreuth (Germany), where I had the great opportunity to develop my research on non-ambient condition crystallography thanks to Tiziana Boffa Ballaran and the special scientific and international environment that I found in that research institute (that I always feel like is my second home). All this at the Bayerisches Geoinstitut was not only thanks to the first Marie Curie Training Internship obtained during my Ph.D. but also thanks to the Alexander von Humboldt Research Fellowship that I got as a postdoc. At the same time, during these years, I cannot forget another important scientific experience at the University of Copenhagen thanks to a great crystallographer, Tonci Balić-Žunić, who taught me so much. After my experience in Germany and Denmark, I was very lucky in getting an Associate Postdoc position at Virginia Tech (U.S.A.) working on the high-pressure crystal chemistry of feldspars, where I had the great opportunity to be directed by Ross Angel in collaboration with Nancy Ross. Then in 2006, I got a permanent research position at the Department of Geosciences, University of Padova, where I could collaborate with other great crystallographers, like Alberto Dal Negro, Gianmario Molin, and Luciano Secco. At the University of Padova, I was able to bring all I learned in a few years around the world, and finally, I was able to build up my own research group thanks to an important research fund provided by the European Research Council that allowed me to establish a world-recognized diffraction laboratory for the investigation of natural diamonds and their mineral inclusions. This

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achievement also allowed me to get, in 2015, a Full Professor position in the same Department where I am still working. In 2019, I had the honor to get the Humboldt Research Award at the University of Frankfurt (Germany) thanks to the support of Prof. Frank Brenker, and between 2018 and 2022, I had the pleasure of directing the Department of Geosciences at Padova. Since 2023, I am involved in another enthusiastic work, being the President of the University Center for the Museums, where I direct 11 Museums covering all scientific topics. It is very

difficult for me to list here all people who helped me in any moment of my career, all collaborators of these years (Steve Shirey, Graham Pearson, Steve Jacobsen, Joe Smyth, Thomas Stachel, Jeff Harris, Matteo Alvaro, Alessandro Guastoni, Marco Bruno, Frank Brenker, Paolo Nimis, Diego Gatta, Nicola Rotiroti, Anatoly Kasatkin). That I am here right now writing the acceptance of my Dana Medal in 2024 is mainly thanks to them, who all taught me something and my family who every day supports my work.