



TMS Foundation: growth through giving

“Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got a hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.”

—George Bernard Shaw

Passing a “Splendid Torch”

Alexander Scott

In my mind, this beautiful passage will always be linked to the late Keith Brimacombe, the 1993 TMS President and a true innovator in advancing metallurgical engineering through collaboration across disciplines. The quote was a favorite of his to articulate his deeply held feelings of legacy—Our talents, time, and resources are wasted if, in some way, we don’t use them to ensure the progress of those who will come after us. As many of us who knew Keith can attest, he just didn’t say these words—He embodied them. His influence as a mentor and generous colleague is legendary. So, it wasn’t a great surprise to me that Keith proposed establishing the TMS Foundation as one of the priorities of his TMS presidency.

Keith was very clear that the purpose of the new Foundation would be to strengthen the next generation of TMS members. He believed that a successful

career meant more than learning, and studying, and working hard. Building “pride in the profession” and nurturing important skills that aren’t usually found in a classroom are very necessary stepping stones on an impactful career path. The Foundation gave TMS the means to reach out to our youngest members beyond our traditional services, enabling them to realize their fullest potential as people and professionals.

With Keith’s untimely death in 1997, the TMS Foundation lost its greatest champion. The Foundation still went on to accomplish good things. The Shri Ram Arora Award brought focus to the society’s international outreach. The creation of student scholarships spotlighted how TMS could support career development at its earliest stages. And, our Young Leaders program has already borne fruit as those who benefited from those awards are now assuming leadership positions throughout the organization. But, we had lost our spark. The momentum for making the Foundation’s mission relevant and compelling had stalled. Support for the Foundation dwindled. When I retired as TMS Executive Director seven years ago, I left feeling that one of the unfinished goals of the society was to have a flourishing foundation.

I am extremely happy to report that the spark has returned. And, so have I.

Under the enthusiastic, committed leadership of Rob Wagoner, the current TMS Foundation Board Chair, the Foundation has undergone a truly transformative process of re-evaluating its strengths and refocusing its priorities. (For



Bridging the past and present to revitalize the TMS Foundation for the future are James J. Robinson (left), TMS Executive Director, and Alexander Scott, Emeritus Executive Director. They are standing before a plaque at TMS headquarters that memorializes Keith Brimacombe, 1993 TMS President and founder of the TMS Foundation.

details, read the January 2014 *JOM* article, “Revitalizing the TMS Foundation: *JOM* Talks with Robert Wagoner on What Lies Ahead.”) When Rob approached me about serving on the Revitalization Committee that led this effort, I was caught up in a wave of “let’s make this happen.” Now that I have accepted the appointment of Foundation Trustee, I am continually impressed and excited by the overflow of ideas generated by the Board of Trustees on fundraising, donor recognition, and new programs—all hallmarks of a successful foundation.

A top priority for the Foundation is the creation of a “signature program” that will fire the interest and motivate support of TMS members. Our intent is to announce this program later in 2014. Hand-in-hand with the signature program is the development of a “culture of giving.” The Board of Trustees felt it important to “jumpstart” this culture by initiating it at the highest level of the organization. As a result, all of the Trustees and members of the TMS Board of Directors had made donations to the Foundation by the close of 2013. And, when the Trustees personally communicated our revitalization plans to our past major donors, many of them sent contributions as well. This tells me that we are headed in the right direction.

Another approach that the Foundation is adopting to promote the “culture of giving” concept is connecting our donors with those who have benefitted from their generosity. A downfall of the Foundation in the past was not appropriately recognizing its supporters. We are rectifying that at the TMS 2014 Annual Meeting and Exhibition by hosting an event for our top donors. The

centerpiece of the evening, though, will be the presentation of commemorative pins to our Diamond, Gold, and Silver Society members. (See sidebar article.) We have asked student and young professional members to do the honors, as well as talk about the impact that the Foundation has had on their lives. I believe that fostering these types of relationships is important so that donors can see the first-hand results of their giving.

One thing that will not change with the Foundation is its core mission to make a difference in the career development of TMS’s youngest members. I am very energized by the prospect of developing new and stronger programs that will “come up alongside” our early career professionals and guide them carefully and effectively along the way. In this, I believe that the TMS Foundation will evolve into an important and valued partner in the professional development of many of our members for years to come.

I am grateful to be part of the future of the TMS Foundation, having had such strong ties to its past. I spent 37 years of my career with TMS and it was good to me in so many ways. I have the utmost respect for the society, its members, and what they stand for—the betterment of life as we know it. I believe I can now contribute in a unique way to this effort by providing context as to what our foundation can achieve. My personal hope is that we can complete the unfinished work of Keith Brimacombe—and finally create the “splendid torch” that he envisioned passing to future generations of TMS members.

Alexander Scott is a TMS Foundation Trustee and Emeritus TMS Executive Director.

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A Lifetime of Contributions

The TMS Foundation has established a series of new recognition levels to honor those who have made generous donations over the course of a lifetime, with a lasting impact on the future of the minerals, metals, and materials professions. These are:

- Diamond Society: Lifetime contributions totaling \$100,000 or more
- Gold Society: Lifetime contributions totaling \$20,000 or more
- Silver Society: Lifetime contributions totaling \$5,000 or more

Diamond- and Gold-level Society members are offered complimentary lifetime memberships in TMS in appreciation for their support.

You can also contribute to the work of the TMS Foundation through a variety of annual giving levels. Visit the Foundation website at www.TMSFoundation.org to learn more and to make an online donation. For questions or to make a donation by phone or mail, contact Mary Samsa, TMS Foundation & Public Affairs Manager at msamsa@tms.org.