

As the Presidents See It...

MRS Plays Key Roles in Materials Research Community

G. Slade Cargill III, 1992 MRS President

During 1992, the nineteenth year of MRS and the year during which I served as MRS president, there were many successes and many frustrations for the materials community. Among the successes closest to the Materials Research Society were record numbers of papers at the Spring and Fall meetings, the continuing high level of quality of these meetings, a steady stream of interesting articles in *Journal of Materials Research* and in the *MRS Bulletin*, and the recognition of outstanding materials researchers via MRS awards—the Von Hippel Award, the new Turnbull Lectureship, MRS Medals, Young Investigator awards, and Graduate Student awards.

The health of the materials research endeavor has been demonstrated by the number of new materials discovered, including improved diamond films, and ever-growing numbers of fullerene balls, tubes, and sheets—with properties that may lead to important new applications. In addition, materials research is flourishing, with advances and new applications of analytical techniques such as STM and high brightness synchrotron x-ray sources, and with new capabilities in modeling, simulation, and visualization that use ever more accessible and powerful computers.

This year, however, has also brought its frustrations to the materials community. The long-awaited and highly touted Advanced Materials and Processing Program (see *MRS Bulletin*, March 1992, p.18) seems to have produced no real increases in funding for most materials researchers. With the continuing national economic downturn, most industrial, government, and university-based research activities are contracting rather than expanding. With this contraction there is a dearth of employment opportunities, with many recent PhD graduates moving from one temporary postdoc job to another. Competition for research funds has never been tougher.

In this mixed environment, the Materials Research Society continues to work in its key roles of communication and education through its meetings, publications, and short course programs; recognition of tech-

nical and professional accomplishments through its awards program; and representation and advocacy for the materials community through its external affairs/public affairs program and its publicity and public relations activities. Recent initiatives by the volunteer leadership and professional staff of MRS in fulfilling these roles include: broadening the topical coverage of our meetings to address important new areas, increasing capabilities for electronic communications with MRS members, increasing MRS' efforts and effectiveness in college- and university-level materials education, inspiring and enabling MRS volunteers to contribute successfully to K-12 science education, and better conveying the importance of materials research and the views of our members through contacts with the Washington establishment and with other technical societies.

In addition to these initiatives, we are examining how MRS volunteers, staff, and contractors can work together more effectively to serve the MRS membership and to meet the goals of the society. This is particularly important today, as work-related pressures increase for our member volunteers in industry, universities, and government—pressures that may limit the amount of time and effort they are able to contribute to MRS and to other outside activities.

I am proud of the progress MRS has made during its nineteen years, and I am optimistic that the society will continue to be an effective, dynamic, and adaptable organization.

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Views on MRS and materials
research from former MRS
presidents

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- Symposium C:** Ion Beam, Plasma, Laser, and Thermally Stimulated Deposition Processes
- Symposium D:** Integrated Processing for Micro- and Optoelectronics
- Symposium E:** Light Emission from Silicon
- Symposium F:** Advances in Solidification Processes
- Symposium G:** Materials Aspects of Ion Beam Synthesis: Phase Formation and Modification
- Symposium H:** Molecular Electronics: Doping and Recognition in Nanostructured Materials

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