In Memoriam

The Clay Minerals Society (CMS) sadly has lost one of its highly esteemed members, Dr. Robert “Bob” James Pruett, Ph.D., who passed away on Tuesday, July 25, 2017, in Milledgeville, Georgia, USA. Bob was born on July 5, 1963, in Madison, Wisconsin. He received his B.S. degree at the University of Wisconsin, and his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees at Indiana University, where he studied under the pioneering clay scientist, Professor Haydn H. Murray.

He was a member of five professional societies, but The CMS was special to him as evidenced by his contributions. He served on many of its committees and on the Council. At the time of his death, he was President-elect. He was also very active in the Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration.

Bob joined The Georgia Kaolin Company (GK) research department in 1990 and relocated from New Jersey to Georgia in 1991 when ECC International acquired GK. Bob became leader of the Minerals Technology Department in 1996 and continued in that role after IMERYS purchased ECCI in 1999. He then served as the Minerals Technology Director for their pilot plant, analytical lab, microbiology lab, and process development department located in Sandersville, Georgia. He worked for IMERYS’ Pigments for Paper and Packaging Group and, since March 2013, he worked for IMERYS Oilfield Solutions as Technical Director.

As an internationally recognized expert in many industrial mineral processes, Bob was innovative and conceived the development of hyper-platy clay products, and scaling up through commercial production. He played a key role in developing his company’s hydrous product portfolio, which relied on the ability to measure shape factors for kaolin products and process streams, where Bob was also an internationally recognized expert. All of his professional and scientific achievements could not overshadow his humble, kind, and generous character, to which all who knew and worked with him have testified.

Clay science has lost a great scientist, society member, friend, and colleague, who will be fondly remembered for many years.

Douglas K. McCarty
President 2017–2018
The Clay Minerals Society