

## AME H.H. “SPUD” HUESTIS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN PROSPECTING & MINERAL EXPLORATION IN BC AND/OR YUKON

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**Scott Berdahl** is the recipient of the 2024 AME H.H. “Spud” Huestis Award for leading the advancement of the Valley deposit in the Selwyn Basin in the Yukon to a significant deposit.

Scott and the Snowline team made a significant gold discovery in 2021 with the first drill holes into the Valley deposit. Since then, in three short years, the team has taken Valley from discovery to the publication of a significant initial Mineral Resource Estimate in mid-2024 with an Indicated Resource of 4.05 Moz @ 1.66 g/t Au and an Inferred Resource of 3.26 Moz @ 1.25 g/t Au. To date, a total of 124 drill holes and ~53,000 m (>25,000 m in 2024) has been drilled into the deposit.

The unusually high gold grades for a Reduced Intrusion Related Gold System (RIRGS), the strong continuous mineralization, and the at-surface nature of the deposit have all contributed to redefining what the prevailing wisdom for this deposit style that are more typically low grade (<1 g/t Au). With a strong emphasis on scientific integrity, Snowline has been focused on building a strong geological foundation and knowledge of the region with several mapping teams hitting the ground over the past four field seasons and building an in-house system for managing and displaying near-realtime data from field teams. This approach has helped deepen the understanding of the Rogue Plutonic Complex, in which the Valley deposit is located.

Scott has demonstrated dedication to the concept that the rocks in the Selwyn Basin are prospective for gold deposits, persevered in pushing projects forward in this emerging gold district for more than 15 years, and has shown drive in making Snowline Gold Corp. an overwhelmingly positive company for the Yukon, for the communities in which the company works and for the employees who strive for excellence. Not surprisingly, this success in the central-eastern Yukon has encouraged investment in the region and has encouraged other explorers to search for RIRGS in the Selwyn Basin.

## AME MURRAY PEZIM AWARD FOR PERSEVERANCE & SUCCESS IN FINANCING MINERAL EXPLORATION

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**Sonia Scarselli, Libby Sharman, and Charlee Johnson (The BHP Xplor Team)** are recognized as 2024 AME Murray Pezim Award recipients for their success through the BHP Xplor program for initiating an innovative way to finance and support mineral exploration.

With Sonia Scarselli as Vice President, Libby Sharman as Technical Lead, and Charlee Johnson as Program Lead, the program worked closely with seven companies in its first year to provide new ways of working, thinking, mentoring, and discovering and advancing mineral projects.

The program provides funding to exploration businesses, typically either early stage, public or private, and provides coaching with access to their dedicated technical team and business and operational experts. BHP Xplor provides support in the way of partners and service providers and also a tailored learning program, and participants learn to deepen their understanding of best practices and corporate governance. The program also provides excellent networking and community building. In summary, the program had a great impact on all participants.

The BHP Xplor program continues to be an innovative program that is taking positive steps to prepare participants for exploration, operational, and business readiness. The program is preparing the next generation of explorers by being inclusive and sharing the expertise of high-level BHP professionals with those newer to the industry by way of mentoring and active participation in their progress.

## AME COLIN SPENCE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN GLOBAL MINERAL EXPLORATION

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**Dr. Thomas Bissig** is recognized as the 2024 AME Colin Spence Award recipient for leading the Faraday Copper team's discovery of significant new near-surface copper (-silver) mineralization at the Copper Creek deposit in Arizona. The mineralization occurs both in areas not previously drilled (Area 51) 800 m from the main resource and at American Eagle above an existing underground resource. Namely the high-grade mineralized Banjo and Prada breccias stand out. The company also intersected 15 m at 10.83% Cu in a massive sulphide zone below the Copper Prince Breccia. The near-surface location of these new discoveries has the potential to significantly enhance the economics of a future mine operation and contribute to the global supply of copper, which is, arguably, the most critical mineral for the energy transition.

Copper Creek is a porphyry-style mineral deposit. However, it differs from textbook examples elsewhere in that mineralization is hosted in high-grade breccias and early halo veins as well as magmatic cupola style mineralization. Careful geological work with an open mind to step out of textbook models and focus on oreforming processes in a mineral system context was essential. Geological mapping aided by airborne short and long wave infrared spectral, magnetic and electromagnetic datasets led to a new model for the structural controls on mineralization. This was then put in relation to datasets collected on drill core, including AI assisted spectral mineralogy of systematically collected short wave infrared (SWIR) measurements (aiSIRIS), systematic downhole coverage with data from inductively coupled plasma-mass spectroscopy (ICP-MS) following four-acid digestion, and collection of physical property data such as magnetic susceptibility and density.

Thomas has proven that exploration success is achievable even in districts widely considered mature. With decades of international experience in both academia and industry, he leads his teams by emphasizing the value of comprehensive geochemical datasets and fostering collaboration across disciplines, including geology, engineering, and investor relations. His approach prioritizes longterm economic outcomes over short-term, flashy drill results, driving more sustainable exploration success. Passionate about mentoring, Thomas is also dedicated to the transfer of knowledge, ensuring the next generation of geoscientists is well-equipped for future challenges.

## AME ROBERT R. HEDLEY AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

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**Tahltan Nation Development Corporation** is the 2024 AME Robert R. Hedley Award recipient for Excellence in Social and Environmental Responsibility for its holistic approach to developing a three-year Heavy Equipment Operator program.

In early 2023, Indigenous-owned Tahltan Nation Development Corporation (TNDC) launched its Tahltan Heavy Equipment Operator (HEO) Training Program, a three-year pilot, with a goal to build community capacity and employability using the premise of 'Tahltans teaching Tahltans'.

The Tahltan HEO Training Program is a multi-faceted program designed to build capacity in Tahltan communities across several areas: drivers' licences and driving for employment; developing new heavy equipment operators; and continuing to grow current heavy equipment operators into mentors, trainers and instructors. It helps to address skill shortages within the region while also providing on-the-job practical work experience to set participants up for success.

The Tahltan HEO Training Program has been developed with several partners and funding partners: the provincial government, TD Bank, Finning, Newmont, Arrow Transportation, Bandstra Transportation, the Centre for Training Excellence in Mining (CTEM), Contact North BC, Iskut Band, Mining Industry Human

Resources Council (MiHR), Procon, Tahltan Band, Tahltan Central Government and Thompson Rivers University.

Together, a robust program was built that trains local people using local resources to a national standard in mining and construction. The program addresses three key areas: increasing the number of licensed drivers in Tahltan territory; developing new heavy equipment operators; and building capacity and sustainability.

A Class 5 driver's licence is required for most industry positions. This was a barrier to employability in the Tahltan community until TNDC partnered with a local driving school as part of this new program. Individuals are now supported with in-territory classroom instruction for their learner's licence and in-vehicle instruction for their driver's licence. To date, 85 people have participated in the basic driver's licence program, with 55 having moved forward into the license pathway. This program has since been expanded to cover commercial licenses up to Class 1 through new funding from the BC Government and additional industry partners, supporting access to employment in critical industries in the region.

To increase the number of operators in the industry and in the Nation, the program provides training and on-the-job work experience in Tahltan Territory, enabling residents to have careers close to home for generations to come.

To further support the program, TNDC and trusted partner Finning collaborated to create the TNDC Mobile Training Centre. This innovative 44-foot trailer equipped with cutting-edge simulators donated by Finning, is designed to provide comprehensive HEO training in a safe, controlled environment. Using the same controls and machine applications found in real-world worksites, Tahltans can develop the skills needed to become certified heavy equipment operators. Based at Newmont's Red Chris copper-gold mine within Tahltan territory, the training centre, which became operational in March 2024, can be relocated to other sites as needed.

The HEO Training Program includes three levels, each allowing participants to learn multiple pieces of equipment. Participants who successfully complete the program are offered an apprenticeship role for the season with one of the industry partners. Over the last two years, 12 people have participated in the level 1 program and five in the level 2 program. Year two of the program boasted 100% female participation, helping to break down employment barriers and empowering Tahltan women in the workforce. Year three of the program will take place in spring 2025.

Additionally, a mentor program has been established to build long-term capacity and create a stronger, more effective environment that supports Tahltan career growth and new entry-level operators. Successful applicants are provided training through MiHR, which includes Industry Trainer and Workplace Assessor courses that equip mentors with the skillset they require. The program provides a pathway to certification to become onsite Workplace Assessors and eventually Site Trainers and Instructors – TNDC is successfully employing Tahltans in these roles.

Participants of the driver's licence, HEO development, and mentor programs are provided financial support throughout the duration, making them more accessible to Tahltans.

## AME INNOVATION AWARD FOR INNOVATIONS BENEFICIAL TO MINERAL EXPLORERS

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**Mike Ravella**, Executive Vice President Innovation and Co-Founder of Veracio, is recognized with the 2024 AME Innovation Award for leading the development of TruScan, a cloud-integrated in-field sample-scanning platform designed to provide immediate access to orebody data.

In today's environmentally conscious era, the demand for critical minerals is skyrocketing due to the shift towards electrification. The mineral industry faces the dual challenge of extracting increasingly low-grade

ores from complex and geopolitically sensitive regions while striving to minimize environmental impact and carbon emissions. Traditional exploration and mining methods are no longer sufficient to meet these evolving demands. Integrating state-of-the-art scanning and sensing technologies with AI-driven processes fosters informed, real-time decision-making, emphasizing efficiency, profitability, and sustainability.

As an example, Newcrest Mining (now Newmont), operating in British Columbia, sought to elevate its success at the Red Chris Project. Having already uncovered valuable mineral deposits, they wanted to build on the value by accelerating the discovery process to uncover more deposits within the project. In an environment where assay turnaround could extend to months, TruScan offered real-time geochemical data, enabling swift updates to drilling plans and geological models. Through streamlining core photography through scanning technology, redundant steps were eliminated, allowing geologists to dedicate more time to analysis and decision-making. The potential of this technology was achieved by combining the use of TruScan with the expertise and insights of geologists, facilitating creative opportunities for mineral discoveries. Beyond just scanning, TruScan's data allowed geologists to build advanced geological models well ahead of lab assays, enabling more precise exploration and resource allocation. By maximizing exploration success and unlocking valuable mineral resources, TruScan's implementation at Red Chris has played a strategic role in driving efficient and successful exploration campaigns.

#### AME SPECIAL TRIBUTE AWARD

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**Maurice Colpron** of the Yukon Geological Survey is being acknowledged with a Special Tribute from AME for his leadership in mapping the Rackla belt. The mapping project initiated by Maurice in the Rackla belt of central Yukon highlighted parallels in the depositional and structural settings of Rackla belt and the Carlin Gold District in Nevada.

Maurice drove the work behind compilations of the Yukon's bedrock geology, geochronology and litho-geochemistry, which (among other things) allow explorers to identify metallogenetically important plutons. This supports exploration for Late Cretaceous reduced intrusion-related gold systems and Casino-age porphyries among other deposit types. As part of this work, Maurice participated in and provided much of the regional geologic framework for MDRU's Yukon-Alaska Gold Metallogeny Project and co-supervised an MSc thesis on the Minto copper deposit and informally provided guidance to an MSc thesis of the Carmacks Copper deposit. Results of these studies contributed to a revised understanding of the genesis of these deposits.

As the head of the bedrock geology unit at the Yukon Geological Survey, Maurice's role has been both as a contributor to this knowledge base, and a leader who sets a high standard for the rest of the survey. Maurice has authored many of the seminal papers that underpin our understanding of Cordilleran metallogeny and by spearheading the use of Avenza Systems, he has allowed field geologists to use interactive, GPS-enabled Yukon Geological Survey maps.

#### AME OUTREACH EDUCATION FUND

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**Britannia Mine Museum** and **MineralsEd** are each granted \$10,000 to support the public's appreciation and understanding of BC's mineral exploration and development industry through the advancement of public education and community programs. These grants continue to build on the work financed by AME's Outreach Education Fund in 2024.

AME Education Outreach Funding will continue to support **Britannia Mine Museum's** earth science programming. In recent years, the fund has supported event days and school and public programming. Earth science will be central to the theming of the museum's exhibitions and programs. Britannia Mine Museum will focus on earth science in its programming because Earth Materials is a Grade 5 curriculum Big Idea that blends well with BMM's existing site, resources and assets. As the site of a mine that has undergone

significant remediation, BMM is uniquely positioned to interpret the methods and impacts of mineral exploration.

**MineralsEd** will deliver their Junior Geologist classroom workshops for students in Grades 4 to 7, virtually and in-person in 2025. Since 2017, MineralsEd has delivered Junior Geologist to over 3,400 students in BC schools. MineralsEd's Junior Geologist workshop provides an immersive, hands-on learning experience for the students and is a valuable support for teachers. Partner-Teachers Andrea Eisler and Wanda Pickell have a passion for introducing students to the fascinating world of rocks and minerals, sparking curiosity and encouraging engagement with the natural materials around them. This year, we are thrilled to welcome our newest Partner-Teacher, Kate Gregory, to the team. Kate is a fully accredited BC teacher and holds a PhD in Geology from the University of Arizona, bringing an invaluable depth of knowledge to the program. In 2024, MineralsEd had the privilege of delivering an in-person Junior Geologist workshop at Nisga'a Elementary School in Gitlaxt'aamiks (New Aiyansh), fostering a deeper understanding of the mineral resources within their community.

#### **AME DAVID BARR AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION IN MINERAL EXPLORATION HEALTH AND SAFETY**

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**Archer, Cathro and Associates (1981) Limited** is recognized with the AME David Barr Award for its leadership in developing a culture of safety in exploration in the Yukon over the past 60 years.

The firm, founded by Al Archer and Bob Cathro in Whitehorse in 1965, is a leader in health and safety in the industry and is the only COR Certified mineral exploration company operating in the Yukon. After three years of effort, Archer Cathro became COR Certified in 2015 and has continually and proactively improved its Health and Safety policies and procedures. As of late 2023, it had participated in three external audits and eight internal audits, which have reduced injuries and accidents in the workplace and improve its workplace safety culture. In 2024, Archer Cathro had no lost time injuries while conducting 4,583 person-days of field work.

The current president and managing director of Archer Cathro, Heather Burrell, is the Chair of the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board (YMAB), which is an appointed board that provides advice to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. With Archer Cathro's leading health and safety practices, and its equity, diversity and inclusion hiring practices, the participation of Archer Cathro on YMAB is of immense value to the mineral exploration and development industry in the Yukon.

In addition to promotion of safe practices, the David Barr Award recognizes compassion and resilience following tragic events in the industry. On August 6, 2019, Julia Lane, a partner in Archer Cathro, tragically passed away when the airplane she was travelling in crashed into a mountain while on a routine work flight. In 2020, the late Julia Lane received AME's Special Tribute Award. Rising from the tragedy of Julia's passing, Archer Cathro formed and funded the Julia Lane Foundation (administered by the Raymond James Canada Foundation) to keep Julia's passion for geoscience alive by encouraging youth to pursue science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) in high school and post-secondary. Since its formation, the Julia Lane Foundation has sponsored the Science Fair Foundation BC contributing over \$55,000 in scholarships.

#### **AME FRANK WOODSIDE GOLD PAN AWARD**

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**Robert McLeod** is recognized with the Frank Woodside Gold Pan Award for his contributions to the mineral exploration and development community through service to AME. Throughout his two decades of service to AME, Rob has championed diversity and inclusiveness in the industry, first in championing the stories of community and Indigenous leaders in the Association's magazine that was distributed to both members and elected officials, and then through serving on AME's Nominating Committee and Board of Directors. During

this time, Rob also became known in the industry for his dedication to fostering reconciliation and building strong partnerships with First Nations and the communities where mineral explorers work. While Chair of AME in 2019 and 2020, Rob guided the Board with intent and worked closely with AME management to promote diversity and inclusion. This special focus was particularly important during the COVID pandemic as AME hosted its Remote Roundup conference and virtual Awards Gala.

#### **SAFE DAY EVERYDAY GOLD AWARD**

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AME, together with the Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada, and the Canadian Diamond Drilling Association recognize two companies with the Safe Day Everyday Gold Award for their exemplary performance in safe exploration throughout Canada in 2023. **Major Drilling** receives the award for achieving 1,146,094 hours without a lost-time injury, and **Skeena Gold + Silver** receives the award for achieving 300,184 hours without a reportable injury – no incidents resulting in lost time, restricted work or medical aid. The survey reporting on the year 2024 will be launched early in 2025.