

Expert on water on Mars to present annual lecture honoring Samuel Scholes Jr.

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Alfred University will welcome Dr. David Bish of Indiana University as this year's speaker for the annual Samuel Scholes Jr. Lecture on Tuesday, April 23 at 8 p.m. in Nevins Theater, Powell Campus Center. The public is welcome.

Bish, a prominent mineralogist, will talk about "The Mars Science Laboratory Experience." One of Bish's many interests is understanding water on Mars and as a co-designer of CheMin, the currently operating Mars rover, his research and passion is influential in his field.

Bish currently serves as the Haydn Murray Chair of Applied Clay Mineralogy at Indiana University. He holds a bachelor of science degree in geology from Furman University and a Ph.D. in mineralogy and petrology from Pennsylvania State University. He also served as a postdoctoral fellow in mineralogy and crystallography from 1977-80 at Harvard University.

Focusing on the application of crystal chemical and crystal structure to geological, materials, and environmental problems, Bish has been working to understand structures, properties, and origins of fine-grained materials, which are not widely understood. As a professor, he uses a multi-faceted approach to provide students not only with information necessary to understand mineralogy, but also real-world experiences applying what has been taught. Considered an expert in natural clay and zeolite minerals, he has been fundamental in working to understand clay mineral structures.

The Samuel Scholes, Jr. Lecture was founded in 1999 with a donation of Joshua Fierer, AU class of 1959, to honor his mentor and longtime friend Samuel Scholes Jr. This lecture also traditionally serves as a meeting for the Corning division of the American Ceramic Society.

A 1937 alumnus of AU, Scholes Jr. came to Alfred in 1932 when his father joined the faculty of the College of Ceramics. After graduating from AU, he went on to earn a Ph.D. from Yale University. He then served as a faculty member in the Chemistry Department at Alfred University from 1946 until his retirement in 1980. Scholes Jr. passed away on May 24, 2012 at the age of 97.