2023 MGPV Division Distinguished Geological Career Award to Katharine Venable Cashman: Citation

Rebecca Lange, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
October 18, 2023

It is a great pleasure to introduce Kathy Cashman as the 2023 recipient of the MGPV Distinguished Geological Career Award. Over her accomplished career, Kathy has made several key contributions to the fields of volcanology and petrology, while at the same time training numerous graduate students, many of whom have gone on to have highly successful careers, highlighting her role as an inspiring mentor.

Kathy is perhaps best known for her pioneering methods to quantify the textures of volcanic deposits, connecting them to analog experiments, and thus showing how to extract rates of magma ascent, cooling, and degassing. These efforts have led to a deeper understanding as to why some magmas erupt effusively versus explosively. In addition, Kathy's insights have improved our understanding of how magmas ascend through the crust and the nature of their plumbing and storage architecture. Kathy's work is highly interdisciplinary, and she has been a leader in incorporating concepts and theory from the fields of material science, fluid dynamics, atmospheric science, ceramic engineering, hydrology, and geomorphology. In addition, she has consistently highlighted the incredible value of traditional Indigenous knowledge and oral traditions for unraveling eruption histories.

I have known and "talked rocks" with Kathy for more than 30 years, and I've read most of her papers. All of which leads me to suggest that there are four key qualities that have been foundational to her success. First, she is insatiably curious about the world around her, and is a voracious reader of an extremely broad scientific, historic, and artistic literature. Second, she is an exceptionally gifted writer and brings a remarkable clarity to complex, multidisciplinary topics. Third, she is fearless about asking and pursuing questions that she does not know the answer to. Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, Kathy is widely known for her enormous generosity, which takes on so many forms. One is with how freely she shares her original, often novel, ideas with her colleagues and especially her students. One reason why Kathy is so generous with her ideas is because she has so many of them! We are so fortunate, as her collective colleagues in MGPV, to have this opportunity today to celebrate her many gifts and contributions to our field.