A future look at WAAIME:
Strategic planning update

by Barbara Filas, Chair Elect

As we advised last year, WAAIME formed an ad-hoc Strategic Planning Committee to focus on where we want to take the Division in the future. We held our inaugural meetings of that committee during the MINEXCHANGE 2024 SME Annual Conference & Expo in Phoenix, AZ. The meetings were held on Saturday, Feb. 24 at the Sheraton Downtown Phoenix Hotel with a follow-up meeting held on Wednesday, Feb. 28. Attending the meetings were the full WAAIME Executive Committee: Lydia Hull (Chair), Margie Mansanti (Chair Elect), Susana Palomino (International Representative), Rebecca Siwale (Incoming Executive Committee Member) and Barbara Filas (Chair Elect Designate); the four new Committee Chairs: Amy Richins (Membership), Heather Lammers (Student Activities), Kat Tew (Education/Outreach) and Lydia Hull who is also the Scholarship Chair. There were also several at-large participants at one or both meetings including Jackie Herrera, Kelley Anne Severinsen, Emmanuel Jacob, Iris Owen/Whinnen, Pamela Swendseid, Sandra Nowosad, Line-Audrey Nkule, Linda Jaramillo Urrego, and Beth Price.

At the first meeting, Filas gave some background on both WAAIME and typical strategic planning processes. This was followed by a detailed discussion on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (commonly referred to as a SWOT analysis) of WAAIME as it exists today. The group unanimously agreed that our scholarship program and student reception are our primary strengths. Weaknesses considered our lack of industry input and perspectives, lack of benchmarking metrics for our programs and the fact that our recent scholarships have been predominantly going to graduate students instead of undergraduates. Threats considered our current inability to replenish funds, the lack of awareness of our programs among undergraduates and the lack of awareness of our programs among undergraduates and

(Continued on page 5)

Rebecca Siwale
Joins WAAIME Executive Committee

A global mining industry leader, Siwale began her career in the mining industry 24 years ago as plant metallurgist and front-line supervisor. Siwale worked in various positions of increasing responsibilities in mining operations, driving start-up, expansion and optimization projects for several mining companies. Siwale joined FLSmidth in 2012 as senior process engineer. She has held positions in various areas of the organization, including roles in operations, maintenance and the service business. She brings extensive experience leading teams and driving digitally enabled operation improvements for customers. She currently serves as vice president, head of digital services. Siwale holds a bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering from the Copperbelt University, an MBA from Cleveland State University and executive education from Henley Business School. Siwale is a 100 Global Inspirational Women In Mining awardee.

Siwale became a member of Society of Mining, Metallurgy & Exploration (SME) in 2010. She actively participates in various technical committees and networking events. Siwale serves as past chair of the SME Inclusion & Diversity Committee whose vision is to promote advancement and innovation in the mining community by strengthening inclusion and improving diversity in the industry. She co-chairs the Women of SME Breakfast event that keeps growing every year and hosts more than 300 men and women from the industry, the event aims to engage, energize and empower women and men in the industry with key topics for their career development. She joined WAAIME organization in 2018 supporting with student membership and student reception events. 

Rebecca Siwale
As your new WAAIME executive committee chair, I’m deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve WAAIME and to work alongside such a dedicated team. The passage of the Omnibus Resolution by the SME Board in 2023 was a watershed moment for our organization, opening up exciting new possibilities for growth and impact. Our strategic planning meeting in Phoenix, AZ served as a testament to the commitment and vision of our 2024 Executive Committee and ad-hoc Strategic Planning Committee.

Past chair Lydia Hull has been an unwavering pillar of support during this transitional period. Her extensive knowledge of WAAIME and its history, coupled with her deep passion for our scholarship program, have provided invaluable guidance.

The return of Barbara Filas to the executive committee brings a wealth of industry experience and a track record for driving transformative change. Her dynamism and strategic mindset are propelling us toward a bright future. Susana Palomino, brings international knowledge and experience, her work with WAAIME-Peru is a model for growth and innovation. We are thrilled to welcome Rebecca Siwale. Rebecca’s experience and commitment to inclusion and diversity make her a powerful voice enriching the perspectives on our leadership team.

The Omnibus Resolution: Impact and opportunities

The Omnibus Resolution truly unlocked WAAIME’s potential, allowing us to fulfill a mission much broader than scholarships alone. We can now confidently engage in a comprehensive range of educational, charitable and philanthropic activities that align with the founding spirit of our organization. In addition to greater flexibility, the resolution facilitates enhanced continuity of leadership, fosters a more diverse board, streamlines the membership process and creates a space where everyone feels they belong.

Finance & scholarship program updates

The year 2023 was a record-breaking year for WAAIME’s Scholarship Program. We awarded a record 172 scholarships across 26 colleges and universities, distributing $458,000 in funds, ($398,000 within the U.S. and $60,000 to our international sections). With the support of UBS Financial Services we’ve been able to grow our portfolio while continuing to annually award scholarships, awarding $3.3 million over the last 10 years and more than $4.5 million since WAAIME joined the SME in 2008. As of January 2024, our portfolio had a closing value of $9.4 million.

MINEXCHANGE 2024 SME Annual Conference Highlights

This year’s MINEXCHANGE conference was a vibrant platform for WAAIME. The enthusiasm at our student reception was a highlight. We were also proud to present the WAAIME Founder’s Award to Blanche Blattner during the Women of SME Breakfast, showcasing our commitment to recognizing outstanding leaders.

2024 Priorities

As we move ahead in 2024, WAAIME is focused on several priorities:

- Operational excellence: Establishing robust operating practices to ensure efficiency and streamlining our activities.
- Strategic implementation: Executing our updated strategic plan with a well-defined mission and measurable goals.
- Structural alignment: Adjusting WAAIME’s structure to support our strategic direction and enhance impact.
- Engagement and outreach: Fostering stronger member engagement within the WAAIME and SME communities and collaborating on educational initiatives to support more students choosing careers in the extractive industries.

Join Our Mission

Become a part of WAAIME’s dynamic journey. Explore the benefits of membership and consider volunteering your time and expertise to support our initiatives. Together, we are building our WAAIME division’s future defined by innovation and inclusivity while actively working to inspire the next generation of mining professionals.

#WAAIME

Margaret M. Mansanti
2024 WAAIME Executive Committee Chair
WAAIME Founders Award presented; Nominations open for 2025 award

by Lydia Hull

The 2024 WAAIME division Founders Award was presented by WAAIME chair Lydia Hull to Blanche Blattner at the Women of SME Breakfast on Tuesday Feb. 27th.

The citation reads: “In recognition of her exemplary service to WAAIME, especially to its international Sections and Executive Committee along with her remarkable dedication to encouraging membership, tireless efforts to promotion, tremendous commitment of time and talents, incredible generosity of personal assets, vital mentoring of new members and dogged determination to restore WAAIME’s scholarship funds for Peruvian students, we commend and award her this Founders Award.”

Nominations are being solicited for the WAAIME 2025 Founders Award

The Founders Award was established by WAAIME in 2014. It is presented to a person in recognition of her or his exemplary service to WAAIME and its goals. This award is designed to replace the WAAIME National Honorary Member award and to recognize those members who have contributed significantly to a local section, the national board or committee, or to further the goals and purposes as set forth in WAAIME’s incorporation. This award is funded by our founding section, Tri-State (NY-NJ-CT), and is given in honor of their many years of service and hard work to build the WAAIME fund that promotes the many industries that make up the original American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical, and Petroleum Engineers and its member societies, AIST, SME, SPE and TMS.

Nomination

Please send in your nomination for a WAAIME you feel is worthy of this nomination. Please include a biography and a photo.

Timeline.

The award typically adheres to the following timeline:

- Call for nominations in the May newsletter.
- Nomination deadline — July 1.
- Qualified nominations are forwarded to the executive committee — July 15.
- Voting completed at executive session at the September midyear meeting.
- Recipient notified in October.

All nominations submitted will be considered active nominations for a period of three years.
Imagine a vibrant night in Phoenix, Arizona, where aspiring mining professionals mingle with industry leaders under a breathtaking downtown sky. This wasn’t a dream, but the incredible WAAIME Division Student Reception held during MINEXCHANGE 2024!

In addition to awarding the selfie-tag contest winners, the reception featured door prizes for WAAIME’s scholarship awardees, with an additional $1000 in Amazon gift cards in increments of $50 given to lucky winners. Overall, the reception was a success in promoting the WAAIME scholarship program and fostering a sense of community among future and established leaders in the mining industry.

The evening wasn’t just about the future, it was also a chance to honor the past. We celebrated the PA-West chapter’s centennial, with chapter legends Lydia Hull and Jean Davin adding a touch of historical significance and a testament to WAAIME’s longstanding dedication to the industry.

But the fun didn’t stop there. This event was all about forging connections. SME Executive Director David Kanagy and past, present, and future SME Presidents – Barbara Filas (2005), John Mansanti (2017), Barbara Arnold (2018), Ron Parratt (2022), Marc LeVier (2023), Marc Herpfer (2024), and Bill Hancock (2025) – provided invaluable insights for aspiring professionals.

The success wasn’t a stroke of luck. A big thanks goes to Ryan Brody, the SME meeting planner, and Lydia Hull for orchestrating the delightful ambience with casual drinks and hors d’oeuvres. Additionally, board member Barbara Filas’ efforts secured Reception sponsorships for the first time, making the event even more impactful. Sponsoring companies included Energy Fuels Inc. (Student Champion Level), Paterson & Cooke and Newfields (Student Enthusiast Level), Nexgen Resources (Student Advocate Level) and Orla Resources Ltd. (Student Sponsor Level). These companies not only contributed financially but most sent representatives to the reception to connect with the future generation of mining professionals.

WAAIME’s Student Reception at MINEXCHANGE 2024 was a strategic blend of recognition, support, fun, and industry connections – all under the beautiful Arizona sky. This memorable evening solidified WAAIME’s commitment to fostering a thriving mining community, one scholarship and selfie at a time!
Strategic plan;

(Continued from page 1)

K-12 students and the lack of broad support within the SME community.

The good news is that many opportunities were identified, and most of our time was spent thinking through and prioritizing them into some initial strategic goals. Five preliminary goals were agreed upon: 1) Grow our membership, 2) Assure long-term stability of our Division, 3) Tell our story to increase awareness of who we are and what we do, 4) Elevate our flagship scholarship program and expand our portfolio of offerings, and 5) Grow our relationships and partnerships with the extractive industries we serve.

These goals represent our initial thinking and are still a work-in-progress.

The Wednesday meeting focused on assigning near-term tasks to the committees that align with our preliminary goals. The intent was to assign bite-sized chunks to each committee that could be undertaken in the coming year to engage more of the volunteers who signed on to help us last year. Of course, our scholarship committee is well established and will remain much the same because “if it’s not broken, let’s not fix it.” Initial assignments were identified for our new membership, student activities and education/outreach committees, but these again are works-in-progress as we want to assure that they are reasonably achievable in the coming year.

The Strategic Planning Committee seeks to arrive at a succinct yet appropriate vision statement that captures WAAIME’s long-term goals and aspirations for the future. It will clearly focus on our primary goal: to support the extractive industries and advance young people to become our next generation of industry professionals. Once finalized, we intend to use our vision and strategic goals to make clear the industry and its stakeholders exactly what WAAIME’s target for its future activities is and the processes by which we intend to achieve them. We strongly encourage and welcome each of you to pitch in and help us get our target right: for the future of our students, for the future of the extractive industries, and for the future of WAAIME.

Minutes from the WAAIME Annual Board Meeting at MINEXCHANGE

WAAIME held its annual meeting on February 25, 2024 at the Sheraton Hotel in Phoenix, AZ. Attending were Lydia Hull, Chair, Margaret Mansanti, Incoming Chair, Executive Committee members Barbara Filas, Rebecca Siwale, and Susana Palomino. Also in attendance Beth Price, Heather Lammers, Emmanuel Jacob, and Iris Owen.

UBS presented a report by Thomas Austin and Ryan Smith on the market and economic outlook. In regard to our portfolio, we had an overall rate of return of 10.3% for FY2023.

Minutes from November 8, 2023 were presented and approved. Michelle Kroeger presented WAAIME’s financials. The budget WAAIME was working from was $571,258 with expenses being $481,279.

Mrs. Filas gave her strategic planning update. One motion was made and passed relating to funds from a closing section, Texas, be put in the Iris Owen Chest Fund which is to be used for emergency expenses by students or sections. It was also announced that Iris Owen and Jean Davin have notified the committee that this will be their last year to chair the booth in the exhibit hall.

The meeting was adjourned to attend the SME board meeting.

WAAIME Thanks Michelle Kroeger

Michelle Kroeger, center, has been WAAIME’s SME liaison for the past four years. Kroeger’s support, insight, and guidance has been essential to our success. WAAIME wishes Kroeger the best in future adventures. Pictured Susana Palomino, Barb Filas, Michelle Kroeger, Margie Mansanti, Rebecca Siwale, and Lydia Hull.
WAAIME selfie tag event celebrates fifth year at MINEXCHANGE in Phoenix, AZ

by Margaret Mansanti, Chair

Selfie tag was a popular event again this year at the MINEXCHANGE 2024 SME Annual Conference and Expo in Phoenix, AZ. Fourteen companies expressed their interest to participate, and 10 companies who had not previously participated were selected. Justin Courtney, SME exhibits specialist, coordinated with the participating companies who submitted clues about their organization. Lydia Hull, who inaugurated the event, guides students from sign up to awards. The game is a win-win as the companies have an opportunity to engage with the students and the students in turn learn about the various businesses related to mining in a fun and interactive way. Winners were announced, and prizes awarded at the WAAIME student reception held Feb. 26 at the Hyatt Regency hotel. Michigan Tech’s Team Mining Engineers and Geologists (MEG) clinched first place and a cool $500. Second place, with a $300 cash prize, went to Rooms and Pillars from New Mexico Tech. Third place, and a $200 prize, went to team Gneiss Girls from Virginia Tech. Fourth place, with a $100 cash prize, went to TAK, from New Mexico Tech.

Top right: First Place Team: The MEG (Mining Engineers and Geologists) from Michigan Tech. Rapheka Targbwe, Theophilus Asumah, Angela Amoh and Maxwell Yeboah.
Bottom right: 2nd Place winners: Rooms and Pillars from New Mexico Tech Mariam Koanda far left, Milaan Van Wyk.
Left: Third Place Gneiss Girls from Virginia Tech Jordan Gillis, Nadia Bass, and Trace Percell.
Bottom: 4th Place TAK from New Mexico Tech. Third in from left: Narges Bagheri, Zooey Kazemi Motlagh, Harriet Tetteh, and Abraham Armah.
PA-West section of WAAIME celebrates 100th anniversary

by Jean Davin, PA-West Section Chair

The PA-Western Section of WAAIME is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2024 as the first WAAIME Section to obtain this distinction of continuous membership in our organization. We celebrated with a cake and gifts at the MINEXCHANGE 2024 SME Annual Conference & Expo in Phoenix, AZ.

Although, there are none of our older members of the PA-Western Section available for consultation, here is a short synopsis about the PA-Western Section as our collective memories and documents provide:

The first chair of the PA-West Section was Mrs. Frederick Crabtree and subsequently, 35 additional chairs have followed including myself. Our section had quite a few members in the past as mining and other Earth Science industries were flourishing in Western Pennsylvania. But over the years, we have lost most of our membership just as many other volunteer organizations, and as the industry has declined.

Nevertheless, the PA-West Section had various section members participate on the National WAAIME Board of Directors in various positions, including two presidents of WAAIME. After the WAAIME merger with SME, PA-West has maintained a presence quite frequently on its executive committee as well.

PA-West held many fundraisers including golf outings and sales events at various conventions. Our meetings over the years were held in various restaurants, country clubs and members’ homes. Our outings included visiting a strip mine, Picketts Fort, preparing and distributing rock sample kits for the National Science Teachers’ Convention and the Carnegie Museum and the Carnegie Science Center. We have visited each of the various universities in our local area on more than one occasion. PA-West Section members have attended banquets honoring our scholarship recipients at the various universities. We also hosted the mid-year WAAIME meeting in 2018 and attended various lunches and dinners in Pittsburgh’s great restaurants as well as toured Pittsburgh, saw a play, went to Phipp’s Conservatory and the Andy Warhol Museum and a trip on the Pittsburgh Rivers with SME. The chair of our section is also invited to attend a dinner at a conference sponsored by the SME Pittsburgh Section and gives a report about WAAIME activities, and has also been invited to AIME functions. Our members also celebrated our 75th anniversary at Lydia Hull’s home in 1999. Several members of the PA-West Section attended WAAIME’s 100th Anniversary in 2017 in Denver, CO as well.

Over the years, PA-West has donated funds to various libraries in the Western Pennsylvania area for the purchase of Science books. We also donated prize money for Geoworld competitions in various schools in this area. Each year, thousands of scholarship dollars continue to be given to college students and include both our Young and Eavenson awards.
WAAIME News

International

International news;
Updates from international sections

TORREON

By Maria teresa Arias Negrete.

WAAIME Torreón confirms its commitment and gratitude to WAAIME USA as a channel to provide scholarships to students with limited economic resources.

Scholarships

Currently WAAIME Torreón has 11 scholarship recipients, all of them studying mining and metallurgy careers. Next June, four of our students will be finishing their professional careers.

The ladies who are in charge of this area are Betty Berumen (scholarships chair) and Tere Terán (assistant), they will begin the recruitment of four new students to fill the vacancies, requesting the support of the career coordinators of the different institutions in our region, such as: Technological Institute of La Laguna (chemical engineering – extractive metallurgy), La Salle Laguna University (mining and construction engineering), Technological University of the Laguna de Durango (Mining Engineering).

Betty Berumen is in charge of following up with the scholarship recipients and requesting documents that endorse their permanence in the university and to check grades to confirm that they meet the average required to continue receiving financial support.

In order to have a better approach with the scholarship students, Berumen and Terán organize meetings with the students to discuss academic and personal issues as signs of support from our association and at the same time reaffirm the commitment they acquire by being a WAAIME scholarship recipient.

Training program

Conchis Cortés, is in charge of the training program. In addition to being a member of WAAIME, she is chair at the Women’s Committee of the Association of Mining Engineers, Metallurgists and Geologists of Mexico (AIMMGM) at the national level. With the support of her husband, who is the director of the mining division of the Peñoles Mine, she can receive all the support to carry out this program and workshops with the Peñoles company. “Plant Process Automation” is led by Víctor Hugo Ramírez Chávez.

“Basic Course of BricsCAD” by the company CADHAUS led by Luis Carlos López and Luis Alva Barbosa. (12 hours). The students who attended the total number of hours obtained the license for one year to practice and learn more about this application.

Education for tomorrow

Paty Cárdenas, organizes the call for the contest “THE ELEMENT.” This year it silver (Ag) is the chosen element. Upper secondary students must develop a creative essay in English to explain the characteristics and uses of the chosen element. On this occasion, three schools that stand out for their high academic level will participate. The selection of works will be in May and the award ceremony will be in June.

Monthly meetings

The members of WAAIME Torreón attend our meetings on the second Wednesday of each month in order to follow up on matters related to the administration of the association, such as scholarships, training, competition and above all to renew the commitment and responsibility acquired by belonging to this noble association.

Getting to know the members of the WAAIME Torreon Committee

Rosio Hermosillo Obregon – Vice Chair

She was born in the state of Sonora. She has lived in Torreón, Coahuila for 22 years. She is distinguished by being a very active, helpful, generous woman and has a great ability to organize events. She has been a member of WAAIME for more than 10 years and has held the position of secretary.

Maria Teresa Arias Negrete – Chair

She was born in Guanajuato and is married to Ramón Alanís Orozco (metallurgist, former WAAIME scholarship holder). She has lived in mining communities and has been living in Torreón for 23 years. She received the invitation to participate in WAAIME in 2017, she is proud and grateful to be
Olga Navarro de Echavez – Secretary
Born in the state of Chihuahua, her married life has given her the opportunity to meet and live in a mining environment. She was a member of WAAIME Mexico section for 10 years, currently holding the position of secretary, and 25 years ago joined WAAIME Torreon. She is distinguished by her generosity, tireless community work, attitude of service and a very cheerful character.

SANTIAGO
By Susana Palomino
The Santiago section awarded 10 scholarships to students from the University of Santiago and the University of Chile
Katherine Pinochet finished her role as a mentor within the Mentoring Program for Job Placement in 2023, an initiative that promotes the exchange of experiences with high-performing women at the mining company SQM, in order to help build job skills in future professionals and encourage female participation with a focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers.

In November we met with the members and part of our scholarship recipients to talk about the closing of the 2022-2023 scholarship period and WAAIME Chile projections for this coming year.

LIMA & CAJAMARCA
By Susana Palomino, vice president & scholarships chair
In addition to the scholarships, Lima section has a coaching program and it was very successful. This program takes place over a period of two to three years, which allows students to have up to 36 one-on-one sessions, in addition to three group workshops per year.

We also had a full day coaching workshop, a training program was led by southern Peru copper corporation and a workshop held by Goldfields mining company.

Expectations and reflections for working life
On Monday Jan. 29, 2024, the workshop, “The importance of Formal Mining in our country,” took place at Southern Peru Copper Corp. directed by the Superintendent of Institutional Relations, Vidalón Guillermo.

During the session, he provided an exhaustive analysis of the importance of the mining industry in Peru, addressing the advances, risks and strengths that have emerged.

Emma Malpartida Benavides, Talent Management & Talent Specialist at Gold Fields, led a workshop focused on highlighting the skills most appreciated by the labor market, which are essential to achieve greater employability. In addition, he addressed the “new” skills that candidates must possess today. During the session, the importance of writing a strong resume was emphasized and keys to creating a successful profile were shared.

MEXICO DF
By Irene Sandra Laguette de Figueroa. communications chair
Most of our members went through a terrible ordeal during Hurricane Otis while attending the XXXV Convención Internacional de Minería. So the November meeting was about sharing experiences to overcome difficulties and being grateful for a safe return home. From our own resources, we also sent food and clothes to victims in Acapulco.
In December, we got an emotional video from Ing. Rafael Valdés González thanking WAAIME for his scholarship and explaining how much economic aid meant for him, his family and his career advancement.

For some months now the dollar peso rate has been lower, which means that we are getting less Mexican Pesos for each U.S. Dollar. Consequently, we can award less scholarships with what therefore, we agreed that MX-DF members will contribute a monthly fee in order to grant an extra scholarship.

Four of our former eight students in 2023 graduated in December.

Miriam Yexalen Ortiz, Fernando Galicia, Brenda Nava and Alexandra Reverte continue studying Geological Engineering at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Except for Alexandra they will complete their courses by June. Alexandra by December.

Marbella Durán and Luis Gabriel Tavera are the students that have been awarded scholarships recently. Marbella was recommended by WAAIME International and is in second semester pursuing a master’s degree in metallurgical sciences.

Luis Gabriel’s major is environmental geological engineering at Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo, currently in fourth semester.

**LA SERENA**

*By Susana Palomino*

In March 2024, The ladies from La Serena section had their first meeting of the year. At this moment they are in contact with the university in order to have information for new applicants, so they can make the interviews and have everything ready when they receive the international transfer.
Lima & Cajamarca Section Scholarships

- **13 Scholarships awarded**
- **3 Coaching workshops & training programs**
- **54% male**
- **46% female**

**Scholarship recipients**

- Jhaird Alexander Pérez Cruzado
- Jean Alvarez
- Yimar Roja Mogrovejo
- Romina Rosa Saravia Rávez
- Claudia Cahuana Carabajal
- Franco Miguel De La Torre Lopez

**Mining & Geology**

- **4 Mining**
  - 1 Geology
  - 2 Metallurgical

**Scholarships**

- **Mexico D&F Section Scholarships**
  - **4 Geologic Engineering**
  - **1 Environmental Geological Engineering**
  - **1 Master degree metallurgical sciences**

- **University Nacional Autónoma de México Universidad Autónoma de Hidalgo**
  - **50% male**
  - **50% female**
La Serena Section Scholarships

8 Scholarships recipients
1 MASTER Business ADMINISTRATION
2 GEOLOGY
2 CIVIL MINING ENGINEERING
3 MINING ENGINEERING
38% male 62% female

Scholarships awarded by all international sections in 2023

TOTAL 56