

# Richardson Receives AAG Presidential Achievement Award

**A**AG Past President Thomas Baerwald announced that Douglas Richardson has been selected as a recipient of the AAG Presidential Achievement Award for 2009. An award ceremony was conducted during the Past President's Plenary at the AAG's Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, during which Baerwald presented the award and delivered the following statement on behalf of the AAG Council:

"On behalf of the AAG and with unanimous concurrence of the AAG Council, I am proud to present Douglas Richardson with the 2009 AAG Presidential Achievement Award. Doug earned his bachelor's degree at the University of Michigan, his M.A. at Goddard-Cambridge College, and his PhD at Michigan State University. Doug worked on the Northern Cheyenne Research Project and with the Council of Energy Resource Tribes before founding GeoResearch, Inc. This company was one of the first private-sector firms devoted specifically to geographic research, and it became a worldwide leader in GPS/GIS technology, automated mapping, and geographic management systems.

After selling the company in 1998, Doug began working with the AAG in 2000, first as Director of Research and Strategic Initiatives. In January 2003, he was appointed to serve as the AAG Executive Director. Since

that time, the AAG has grown and prospered, and with it, geography as a field has advanced in many different ways. Evidence of Doug's success at overseeing the AAG have been the growth of membership from 7,000 in 2002 to more than 10,000; the growth in registrations at our Annual Meetings from the 4,000 range as late as 2003 to more than 7,000; and the transformation of the operating budget of the AAG from significant losses in the early years of this decade to the generation of positive net assets for six consecutive years that have totaled almost \$6.5 million.

Under Doug's leadership, the AAG has entered into a publication agreement that expands the number of issues, pages, and distribution of the AAG journals while providing secured funding for the association. He has led efforts that have greatly expanded the association's activities in education, research, public policy, and outreach. The AAG is very fortunate to have as its executive director an individual who is both a knowledgeable geographer from both scholarly and practitioner perspectives, but also a skilled administrator whose business acumen enables it to be as effective and efficient as possible.

In addition to leading the AAG, Doug has served in critical positions with the Population Reference Bureau, the University Consortium for Geographic Information Science, the Con-

sortium of Social Science Associations, and several college and university foundations.

Because of Doug's leadership, the AAG has gone from a precarious financial situation to a position that enabled Council last year to direct that \$5 million be placed in a new endowment fund for the long-term benefit of the association. On behalf of the Council, I am pleased to announce that this new endowment has been named the Douglas Richardson Endowment for Geography's Future.

Doug has been named a recipient of this award for his outstanding service as a geographer, as the leader of a path-breaking company that advanced geographic information science and technology, and as the Executive Director of the Association of American Geographers, which he has enabled to be a strong, cohesive, inclusive, and vibrant organization working to advance geography now and in the future. I ask you to join me in recognizing and thanking Doug for his outstanding service to geography and to the AAG."

Previous recipients of the AAG Presidential Achievement Award are Harm de Blij, Bruce Alberts, Donald Meinig, Alan Voorhees, Trevor Barnes, Wilbur Zelinsky, Jack and Laura Dangermond, James Knox, David Ward, and Thomas Wilbanks. ■