

**Julie Brigham-Grette AMQUA DCA Acceptance speech.**  
**June 8<sup>th</sup> 2022**

It is truly an honor to receive this award from my colleagues in AMQUA – Throughout my career AMQUA and the GSA QGG have always been my community. I served as AMQUA secretary for 8 yrs (1990-1998) and later as President (2004-2006). What I have always liked about AMQUA were the biannual meetings but also that the council was deliberately made up of people to represent all facets of our science. Placing value on all parts of what we do as a community contributed to my early perspectives concerning the interconnectedness of Quaternary studies and how over the last 50 yrs we have always practiced interdisciplinary earth systems science by developing teams of expertise to tackle complex problems. None of us do things in isolation.

Estella Leopold is one of this year's honorees and she has been a trailblazer starting out in a generation when few women were doing geological field work and paleoecology. In 2015, paleoecologists Mary Edwards and Pat Anderson and I got together for a few days to plan more work in Beringia, but also making time to see Estella, still working on projects in her laboratory at the University of Washington. Estella was a USGS contemporary of David Hopkins.

Growing up, what I didn't realize was the extent to which I was getting assertiveness training from my parents and my mentors. And assertiveness requires "polite persistence". I will just share a few examples :

When I was in grade school, I asked my parents if I could go to summer Girl Scout Camp for 2 weeks. They had not planned for that on their very modest income, but told me "**we will find a way to make it happen**" and they did for several years.

I attended Albion College and joined groups of geology majors on the annual pilgrimage to visit J Harlen Bretz (Albion, 1905), talk science, and recover his collection of boulders. When I applied in 1977 to Graduate school at Univ of Colorado the Quaternary program was full, so instead I applied in sedimentology and structure. Two weeks into my first semester I made an appointment with John Andrews and told him I was interested in studying in the Arctic. While he could have told me the program was full, instead he said **we don't have any funding right now but we will find a way**. Those first trips to Baffin Island in 1978/79 changed my life.

At the surprising invitation of John Andrews and Giff Miller, I stayed on for a PhD, and continued working in the amino acid geochronology. Giff left for a sabbatical in Norway, so among the 3 remaining grad students in the lab (Bill Mode, Bill McCoy and myself), we divided up the lab contracts and I got Alaska and Greenland. So very soon I got a call one day from David Hopkins at the USGS looking for Giff to interpret his AA data. (Dave asked, who are you? ) So with Dave's invitation, I then flew to Meno Park to meet David for the first time. Dave introduced me to this first Bering Land Bridge Book. (The Old Testament, he called it) and to his newest edited book, the so-called new Testament. From there, in short, he became my Beringian guru – I was his apprentice. Despite the cold war, Dave maintained relations with Russian scientists so when we saw the Soviet Union fall in Dec.1991, we quickly submitted a proposal to NSF to conduct shared research on the Glacial and sea level history of both sides

of Bering Strait. In 1994, Geomorphologist Olga Glushkova from Magadan showed me a picture of a large meteorite crater lake in Chukotka and she told me about how we should core this lake. I told her “**we will find a way to make that happen!**”. And after many trips to Russia, a lot of vodka, and many proposals, we drilled Lake El’gygytgyn in 2009, to recover a remarkable record of the arctic change over the past 3.6 Million years. We were committed as a team to create good science and stay friends.

I want to say a heartfelt thanks to my family who pretty much decided I was married to “work”? So my passion for science, clearly took me away from my family, especially in summers.

Recent events are terrifying. Putin’s war in Ukraine means I may not see my Russian colleagues of 30 yrs any time soon. On that front, I am pessimistic, but I trust The Biden Administration to figure it out. Meanwhile we Quaternary geologists need to fight climate change pessimism. I encourage you all to use every opportunity to work for and communicate solution-based dialog about local to regional actions to make change. We really don’t have much time. Lets do this. Look at the S curve of technological change and see we are on the cusp...there is much room for optimism.

One quote that has driven the last 25 yrs of my career is this:

**Start by doing what's necessary;  
then do what's possible;  
and suddenly you are doing the impossible. ...Francis of Assisi**

Thank you NSF for supporting my research and thank you AMQUA for this honor!