

# AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **American Geographical Society to Award Samuel Finley Breese Morse Medal to Dr. Christopher Baruth**

*Description: The Samuel Finley Breese Morse Medal, awarded by the American Geographical Society (AGS), is one of several prestigious honors given by the Society. Dr. Christopher Baruth, former Curator of the American Geographical Society Library (AGSL), will receive the medal on the 21st of June, celebrating the AGS' Library's 40th anniversary to be held at the AGS Library at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.*

[New York City, NY] — [May 16, 2018]— The American Geographical Society (AGS) announced that Dr. Christopher Baruth, former Curator of the American Geographical Society Library has been selected to receive the Samuel Finley Breese Morse Medal. The medal will be presented on June 21, 2018 during a dinner commemorating the AGS Library's (AGSL) 40th anniversary, to be held at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Library.

The Samuel Finley Breese Morse Medal was established in 1902 after Samuel Morse, who revolutionized the field of geography with his invention of the telegraph and Morse Code, the first system of rapid, long-distance communication. The Samuel Finley Breese Morse Medal commemorates innovation to the research of geography.

Dr. Christopher Baruth worked at the AGSL for 31 years before he retired from his position as Curator in 2011. Dr. Baruth began his extensive career in 1980 as the Map and Imagery Librarian until 1995 when he was appointed Curator. Under his leadership, Dr. Baruth paved the way for an increase in resources at the AGSL, including both the archives from the American Association of Geographers and the American Geographical Society. Dr. Baruth procured grants from the National Endowment for Humanities and initiated the continuous digitization of the library's collection. Dr. Baruth oversaw the update and preservation of thousands of deteriorating maps to be made available for internet access. GEODEX (GEOgraphic INDEX System for Map Series) is one of Dr. Baruth's notable accomplishments which allowed AGSL to create one of the largest carto-bibliographies in the world.

Dr. Baruth majored in geography at the University of Wisconsin (Madison) where he also received his Master's degree in Library Science. He received his PhD in 1990, at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, under the direction of Brian Harley, while working in the AGS Library. In 2011 Baruth received emeritus status from the Chancellor of UW-Milwaukee.

AGS Vice President and co-editor of FOCUS on Geography, Dr. Deborah Popper, noted: "In his 31-year career at the University of Wisconsin/Milwaukee, Christopher Baruth has done a superb job of caring for the American Geographical Society Library. The Library is an extraordinary resource, but (or maybe because) its materials are especially complex to preserve and make available. Baruth has managed to take these delicate materials and preserve or restore them, expanded the holdings, organized them and brought them into the digital age, and increased scholarly awareness and use. He is a highly regarded leader in his field."

The American Geographical Society (AGS) is a 21st century learning society dedicated to the advancement of geographic thinking, knowledge, and understanding across business, government, academe, social sectors, and most importantly with teachers and students. Established in 1851, AGS is the oldest professional geographical organization in the United States. It is recognized worldwide as a pioneer in geographical research and education for over 166 years. The mission of AGS is to advance

and promote geography in business, government, science, and education. Our goal is to enhance the nation's geographic literacy to engender sound public policy, national security, and human well-being worldwide. AGS seeks to engage the American public, from its youngest to its oldest citizens, with new and amazing ways to understand and characterize our changing world. The Society maintains its headquarters in New York City.



*Dr. Christopher Baruth*

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