

## Bernard S. Baker Fuel Cell Scholarship

Mrs. Cornelia Baker

It is certainly great to be here again. It was only one year ago, when we last gathered, that the world seemed on the precipice of financial ruin and it was hard to imagine focusing on anything other than keeping our heads above water. A year later, we have stepped back from the edge, though how far remains to be seen. At least we have some breathing room to once again look ahead...

During my husband's career in the energy business, and still today, there has been an ebb-and-flow to society's collective interest in finding alternative means of meeting our ever-growing need for electricity. Sometimes it was a spike in oil prices that drove the pursuit. Other times it was a concern for the environment. Often, it was both.

Political whims can be fickle. When oil prices are up, the media and the politicians pay a lot of attention to the alternatives. But quickly, they move onto the next day's hot topic.

Global warming seems to be here to stay as a concern and an issue, though what can do and should be done about it is very much up for debate.

Everyone here knows that fuel cells can deliver real answers - today. We wouldn't be here if we didn't believe this.

Given the short attention span of the media and our elected officials, it's up to us to carry the torch (or maybe I should say the electrochemical reaction) and maintain a steadfast drive to see fuel cells in use for all manner of commercial applications.

That is why I am so honored to be able to once again be part of this year's presentation of the "Bernard S. Baker Fuel Cell Scholarship". Education and advocacy was very important to Bernie. He believed in the technology and he would gladly "educate" anyone who would listen.

All of this year's applicants have demonstrated creativity and technological knowhow. Our top three winners, as well as the three honorable mentions, were selected by the judges because of their understanding of fuel cell technology and its promise, as well as their academic excellence. I hope these awards help you to further your studies and your career in fuel cells. Get out there, invent and then tell the world.

Thank you for listening. I know Bernie would be proud of all the honorees. And if anyone is interested in learning more about the scholarship, I would welcome the chance to talk to you about it here at the conference.

Yes, it's been a trying year economically. Here's hoping the road to recovery and environmental sustainability is paved with bi-polar plates and proton exchange membranes. I close with great expectations that this year's scholarship honorees will make it happen.