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Top Stories

Metallurgist Retires from Army Research Laboratory

Adler Chaired Corrosion Education Consortium for DoD Corrosion Initiative

By Cynthia Greenwood

On June 30, 2008, Ralph Adler, a research metallurgist at the Army Research Laboratory (ARL), retired after 23 years of service. Before retiring, Adler served as Deputy Chief of the laboratory's Materials Applications Branch, within the Materials Division of the Weapons and Materials Research Directorate. Concurrently, he served as Research Metallurgist in the Coatings and Corrosion Team. In addition, he assumed the role of voluntary archivist of Army materials technology programs conducted in Watertown, Massachusetts.

Throughout his tenure at ARL, Adler represented the Army on high-level DoD panels, providing technical knowledge of Army materials technology programs. Most recently, he was a member of the DoD Corrosion Forum where he chaired the Corrosion Education Consortium.

Since the mid-1990s, he has served on corrosion-related planning committees for the annual Army Corrosion Summit and the Tri-Service Corrosion Conference. In 2005 the DoD Corrosion Executive, Michael Wynne, awarded him a commemorative plaque for his outstanding leadership as the technical chair and conference proceedings editor during the Tri-Service Corrosion Conference.



Ralph Adler

Adler's career as a federal employee started in 1985 when he joined the Army Materials Technology Laboratory (MTL) in Watertown, Massachusetts. He was promoted to Metals Research Branch Chief in 1988. As a result of the 1994 Base Realignment And Closure Act, he oversaw the planning and implementation of the double relocation of personnel and facilities from Watertown to Delaware to Aberdeen Proving Ground.

Under Adler's oversight, more than 50 percent of staff at the Metals Research Branch moved from Watertown to Aberdeen Proving Ground. This metric was the highest percentage of all former MTL branches and is triple the national average for similar facility and personnel relocations. Additionally, Adler closely managed the design and planning of laboratory and office facilities at Chestnut Run and the Rodman Materials Research Laboratory. Lawrence D. Johnson, then Director of the Materials Directorate, stated in a letter dated April 27, 1998, that "the unparalleled success of this move was due in no small part to Dr. Adler's positive attitude, leadership, and commitment."

Throughout his career Adler has strived to enhance the professional reputation and visibility of ARL with professional societies, universities, and industry. He has worked as the Army liaison to many governmental committees, as well as professional and academic organizations. He served as the initial chair and briefer of the Materials Processing/Manufacturing Research sub-panel for the Project RELIANCE-Technical Panel of Advanced Materials (TPAM).

Adler was a member of the Office of the Secretary of Defense Laboratory Infrastructures Consolidation Study; the Joint Directors of Laboratories-TPAM Manufacturing Sciences Working Group; and two sessions of the Technical Managers Acquisition Workshop. He also served on the Metals Performance Technical Panel of the Materials Group under The Technical Cooperation Programme from 1993 to 2000.

Professional and academic engagement has been a lifetime priority for Adler. Most recently he has been the corrosion subject matter expert for the Army Corrosion Office in Picatinny, New Jersey. He has served as frequent collaborator and co-author for the Concurrent Technologies Corporation and University of Hawaii Congressional Corrosion Programs.

He currently serves on the National Materials Advisory Board's "Assessing Corrosion Education" panel for the National Academy of Sciences. He has been a service liaison on two National Research Council panels; he is an award-winning member of the American Society for Metals/Advisory Technical Awareness Council and the Tufts University Mechanical Engineering Department's Industrial Advisory Committee.

ARL managers have also acknowledged Adler's longstanding interests in mentoring colleagues to produce the highest quality research and associated proposals, reports, technical publications, and briefings. He has taught graduate courses in X-Ray Diffraction at Northeastern University. To encourage ARL technical collaborations with universities, he has worked with university faculty in an advisory capacity to provide project oversight and to share resources and materials. These efforts frequently resulted in co-authored publications.

Adler earned a Doctorate of Engineering in Metallurgy from Yale University and holds B.S. and M.S. degrees in Metallurgical Engineering from Stanford University. He is the author of numerous publications and holds patents in a variety of technical areas with commercial and military applications.