Radiogenic Isotope Geochemistry Laboratory

Delighted to be here...

Both to represent the University of Michigan...
and, in a sense, NSB as well

This afternoon we are dedicating a

facility that in many ways epitomizes the extrdinary requirements of modern experimental research.

Research in radiogenic isotope geochemistry

requires a contaimination-free environment in order to treat and measure samples to extreme accuracy Not only must one achieve clean room conditions, with massive air handling equipment, but as well minimize metallic contanimation through the use of special materials and coatings.

Such an endeavor does not come cheaply,

and the laboratory we dedicate this afternoon cost close to $1.7 million.

However, through a strong partnership

involving industry, the National Science Foundation, the University, and the alumni of the department, the resources for this unique facility have been assembled.

Let me begin by recognizing the contributions

of each of these:

i) First, a note of thanks to the Shell Companies Foundation for their $300,000 grant to install the rare-gas mass spectrometer... Dr. David G. Nussman, a former PhD graduate of the Department, is here to represent Shell

ii) Next, thanks to the Union Pacific Foundation, as parent company of Champlin Petroleum, who contributed $200,000 to this project for the support of technicians.

iii) The National Science Foundation has made a grant for the acquisition of a state-of-the-art mass spectrometer, and Dr. Alan Gaines is here to represent the foundation.

iv) Alumni of the Department have contributed roughly $200,000 toward this project.

v) Finally, of course, both the College of Literature, Science, and Arts and the University administration have contributed the funds necessary to renovate this facility and acquire other equipment.

Professor Alex Halliday, director of the

laboratory, and his team have already launched a number of important research projects, aimed at using radiogenic isotopes for dating, tracing, and modeling evolutionary systems and reservoirs in the Earth.

The research conducted in this laboratory

represents the type of sophisticated, interdisciplinary effort to bring together the various sciences to better understand the geochronology of our planet.

Let me commend the Department for tackling

successfully such a massive project, and thank all of those who were so critical to these efforts.