



Welcome to the new, spring issue of *Inquiry*, a publication highlighting the research achievements of Ames Laboratory, a U.S. Department of Energy research facility operated by Iowa State University. In an effort to keep our audiences better informed, *Inquiry* will now be published twice a year instead of just once.

It's just one of many changes taking place at the Laboratory. As I write this letter, a nationwide search has begun to replace Dr. Tom Barton as director, and we look forward to having his permanent replacement in position by late summer. Dr. Barton led the Ames Laboratory for 18 years and leaves behind a commitment to excellence that not only has helped the Laboratory strengthen its status as a world leader in materials research but also has helped expand the Lab's research mission to address new energy-related challenges in materials, chemical, engineering and mathematical sciences, and physics.

Two other major events are impacting the Ames Laboratory in 2007. One is the 60th anniversary of the Laboratory, which we began celebrating on May 17, and that history is celebrated on the cover and the center spread.

The second major announcement is the signing of a new contract between the Department of Energy and Iowa State University for the continued operation of the Ames Laboratory. ISU has been the sole contractor for Ames Lab for the DOE since the Lab's inception in 1947. The new contract, which took effect on Jan. 1, 2007, is a five-year contract worth \$150 million. But there are opportunities to extend the contract for up to 20 years based on outstanding performance in our scientific programs. We are confident this extension will be realized.

As exemplified by the research stories in this issue, we have a strong commitment to leading-edge research that responds to the DOE's energy mission. Senior physicist Costas Soukoulis remains a leader in the emerging field of metamaterials. Senior physicist Paul Canfield and scientist Sergey Bud'ko have discovered a family of zinc alloys that can be tuned to take on properties of other materials. And materials scientist Alan Russell and Material Preparation Center Director Larry Jones are using their collective know-how to help develop a cost-effective substitute for palladium to help make hydrogen-fuel technology a reality. The Laboratory remains committed to helping bring appropriate technology advancements to the marketplace to the benefit of the American taxpayer.

In addition, our commitment also extends to doing our part to educate the next generation of scientists and engineers through our symbiotic relationship with our contractor, Iowa State University. As one might imagine, our commitment to quality education and training pays off handsomely for the DOE and our nation through the entrance of a diverse, exceptionally well-trained cadre of scientists and engineers into the labor pool.

Although my time as director of the Ames Laboratory is scheduled to be short, I can assure you that while I'm here our commitment to high-quality research will not wane in the slightest. And I think it goes without saying that our new director will share that commitment as he or she envisions ways in which the Ames Laboratory can grow and prosper in the next 60 years.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Alan Goldman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alan Goldman, Interim Director