

Recently discovered mineral named for LSU professor

February 16 2020

A Louisiana State University geology professor now has a scientific namesake—a newly discovered variety of tourmaline. Barbara Dutrow said she's surprised and thrilled by the honor.

"A lifelong passion has been to discover and decode the geologic information embedded in tourmaline; this recognition is a highlight of our discoveries!" she said in a news release Friday from LSU.

The statement said Italian researchers named dutrowite for her because of her contributions to mineral sciences, especially her research showing that tourmalines—a family of gemstones—hold evidence of their geological history.

Some of Dutrow's articles in scientific journals have had titles such "The tourmaline diaries: An eye-catching mineral and its many facets," "Tourmaline: A geologic DVD" and "Tourmaline as a petrologic forensic mineral."

The International Mineralogical Association accepted the name in December. Christian Biagioni of the University of Pisa and other researchers in Italy, Sweden and Austria recommended the name in October, papers provided by Dutrow showed.

They cite "her contributions to the understanding of the chemical variability of tourmaline supergroup minerals and staurolite."

Tourmalines come in a wide variety of colors.

Dutrowite was discovered in the Apuan Alps of Tuscany, Italy, near the Grotta del Vento (Cave of the Wind). It formed about 20 million years ago from compression and heating of a volcanic rock called rhyolite during the collision of the African and European tectonic plates, according to the release.

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Citation: Recently discovered mineral named for LSU professor (2020, February 16) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2020-02-mineral-lsu-professor.html>

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