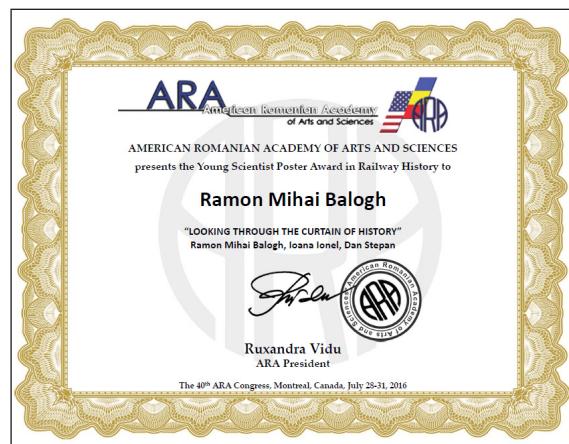


American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences Young Scientist Poster Award in Railway History Assist. Prof. Ramon Mihai BALOGH, PhD

Brief history of American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences

ARA is an internationally nonprofit organization recognized academic organization that supports multidisciplinary studies and achievements in exact and natural sciences, mathematics, also linked with arts, linguistics, literature, political studies and sociology. The main goal is to foster cultural exchanges between the American and Romanian cultures, and it is based mainly on its members' activity, having a Romanian origin or sympathizing with them. ARA was founded in California in 1975 by a group of American-Romanians, and by 2016 it has about 63 Honorary Members, 80 Full Members, 80 Corresponding Members and 7 Benefactors. Their valuable support is a great asset for ARA. Since 1975, ARA has had Honorary members amongst very well known personalities like: the writers Eugen Ionesco and Virgil Gheorghiu, the philosopher Mircea Eliade or presently the Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine, Prof. George E. Palade and the Romanian astronaut Dr. Dumitru-Dorin Prunariu. Some of the invaluable members have passed away but the legacy they left is still alive and cherished by ARA, its members, their families, and all of their friends. The Romanian branch of ARA has its center in Timișoara, being closely coordinated with the US main organization.

ARA organizes and sponsors conferences, annual congresses, organizes research projects, and publishes its own peer-reviewed international journal under the title Journal of the American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the ARA Newsletter for its membership. The highlight of the annual congress is its Proceedings which is published on an annual basis. Also organizes educational courses at various times in specific areas such as, for example: Mathematics, Fluid Mechanics, Economics, Romanian and American History, Comparative History of Religions, Romanian Folklore and American Literature correlates, Aesthetics, Folk Dancing, Folklore Quilting and Paintings. The engineering and computing courses organized in collaboration with the Romanian Branch of ARA in Timișoara are especially popular, and attracted large audiences of both students and faculty.



I took the opportunity, after I received my PhD title and gained experience in my field of activity to get more close contact to prominent thinkers of Romanian descent, as well as thinkers of demonstrated interest in the Romanian contributions to the advancement of arts and sciences, and thus I sent a proposal to the 40-the ARA congress, organized in 2016, Montreal, Canada, July 28-31. I feel very sad seeing the present situation of the Romanian railway, and felt that I should present, with my humble possibilities, that Romania, especially Banat, can be considered pioneer in railway applications, roads and construction, monumental achievements from which only the history is mentioning it. The Banat region, situated at the geographic crossroads between Eastern and Western Europe, with a special history and a destiny often broken by the vicissitudes of time, is known for many primordialities, all certified without denial. One of them is the first railway track on the present territory of Romania, that proofs the development and entrepreneurial spirit of the Bant inhabitants. Thus I wrote the paper Looking through the curtain of history, having as coauthors Dr. Dan S. STEPAN and Professor Ioana IONEL, that encouraged and supported me a lot. The surprise was that the paper was awarded with a special prize, and I feel proud of the fact that it was achieved in such a creative and precious atmosphere of the ARA conference.
<http://www.americanromanianacademy.org/2016-ara-awards>.