



Andrew H. Knoll

GRFP Recipient: 1973

Undergraduate Institution:
B.A. 1973, Lehigh University

Graduate Institution:
Ph.D. 1977, Harvard University

Graduate Field of Study: Geology

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Current Position:
Fisher Professor of Natural
History and Professor of Earth
and Planetary Sciences,
Harvard University

RESEARCH INTERESTS //

Andrew H. Knoll is best known for his work on the early Earth, using fossils to understand early biological diversity and geochemical data for paleoenvironmental reconstruction and stratigraphic correlation. In particular, he has worked to understand how life and environment have influenced each other through Earth history. Knoll has also conducted research on mass extinctions, plant evolution, and the history of biomineralization in the oceans. Knoll's integrative approach to research was established as an NSF graduate fellow; Knoll credits the fellowship program with providing him the freedom to explore "side alleys" in research and learn how they curve back to illuminate big problems. He also serves as a member of the science team for NASA's MER rovers and is a member of the National Academy of Sciences.

AWARDS/ HONORS //

- Charles Schuchert Award, presented to a promising paleontologist under the age of 40 (1987) Walcott Medal (1987) and Mary Clark Thompson Medal (2012) of the National academy of Sciences
- Phi Beta Kappa Book Award in science for “Life on a Young Planet” (2003)
- Paleontological Society Medal (2005)
- Wollaston Medal, the highest award granted by the Geological Society of London (2007)

POSITION PROFILE //

Knoll is a professor of biology and of Earth and planetary sciences, a member of the NASA National Astrobiology Institute, and, according to Time magazine, America’s top paleontologist. Following five years on the faculty at Oberlin College, Knoll returned to Harvard University as an associate professor of biology in 1982. He has been a member of the Harvard faculty ever since, serving as professor of biology, professor of earth and planetary sciences, chair of the department of organic and evolutionary biology, and associate dean of the faculty of arts and sciences.

