New Chairs to Boost Research in Canada's North

NSERC will contribute $6.1 million over the next five years to expand research efforts in Canada's North.

The Chair program, the result of a recommendation by the Joint NSERC/SSHRC Task Force on Northern Research, supports Canada's Innovation Strategy by promoting and expanding Canada's capabilities in northern science. The Chair proposals were made with the support of northern communities and other partners concerned with northern research, after a national competition. The funded chairs are:

- Dr. Christopher Burn, Carleton University
  Permafrost in the Yukon and Northwest Territories

- Dr. Laurie Chan, McGill University
  Environmental contaminants, food security and their relation to the indigenous peoples of the North

- Dr. Terry Dick, University of Manitoba
  Aquatic and northern ecosystems: freshwater and marine environments

- Dr. John England, University of Alberta
  Environmental change in Arctic Canada: Ice Age to present

- Dr. Serge Payette, Université Laval
  Ecology of subarctic forests

- Dr. Brent Wolfe, Wilfrid Laurier University/University of Waterloo
  Paleohydrological and paleoecological reconstruction of the Mackenzie Basin Deltas.

Do You Know Your NSERC Rep?

There are now NSERC Representatives at 51 postsecondary institutions. In response to our invitation last fall, they were named by their university or college to work with NSERC, providing two-way communications with the researchers and interacting with the local community.

NSERC Reps have been active participants in both the NSERC workshops on Highly Qualified People (see Editorial in this issue) and the government's consultations on Canada's Innovation Strategy (see page 3). Some Reps have also been active in arranging acknowledgement events for local grant and award winners, and others have made the case for increased funding for researchers to local decision-makers and have published articles on the importance of research in local media.

To find out who your NSERC Rep is, visit www.nserc.ca/about/reps_list_e.htm.

And the Envelope, Please....

The Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education (CCAE) every year gives awards that recognize the best achievements of university communicators, and this year they've added a new category for articles about research performed by faculty.

NSERC staff who attended last year's awards ceremony noted the lack of a category about research among CCAE's *Prix d'excellence*. When approached about this, CCAE planners agreed that research is at the heart of the university enterprise, and added the category in time for the 2002 awards.

The first prizes for articles "on a Subject Related to University Research in Natural Sciences and Engineering" were presented in Saskatoon June 9.

eSubmission on the Way

NSERC's eBusiness Project has the ambitious goal of developing a broad range of easy-to-use electronic services to lighten the administrative load on researchers, facilitate research collaboration and communication, enhance accountability and transparency, and deliver services to its communities more efficiently and effectively.

Volunteers are now being recruited from the university community to test the modules that form part of the Council's new on-line application submission system. The full system will be available at the beginning of September.

For the latest on the eBusiness Project, visit www.nserc.ca/e/index_e.htm.

A SPARKling Success

Brock, McGill and Ryerson universities were the successful applicants in this year's SPARK competition. They join the eight institutions now receiving NSERC SPARK funding.

SPARK is a program through which students are recruited, trained and paid to write stories based on the NSERC-supported research at their institutions. Most SPARK "alumni" — those whose three-year NSERC SPARK grant has run its course — have continued the program using their own resources.

Visit www.nserc.ca/science/spark/index.htm for information on the program and a sampling of the stories SPARK writers have produced.