

**NSERC-Atlantic, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council's regional office in Atlantic Canada** continues to be active throughout the region and celebrated its second anniversary in July 2006. This past year, we consolidated and increased our activities throughout the region to fulfill our mandate of Presence, Access to Programs and Promotion. Working in close collaboration with various stakeholders, we are proud to be part of the success in building a strong and innovative research community in Atlantic Canada. This annual report provides an overview of the major activities of our office, presents statistics on some of these activities and highlights a few events and meetings.

**New Name** — With the opening of NSERC's new regional offices across Canada, it was felt that the office names should better reflect the region they represent. Therefore, we are now called NSERC-Atlantic, and in French, CRSNG-Atlantique.

**New Regional Offices** — The NSERC family is growing! NSERC-Prairies officially opened in Winnipeg, Manitoba in June 2006 and is now fully staffed. NSERC-Pacific in Vancouver is also in operation and will serve the West Coast. As planned, NSERC-Atlantic has seen its models and governance adopted in the other NSERC regional offices. The newly-hired managers and staff have visited the Moncton office to learn more about our day-to-day operations. Furthermore, Cécile LaPlante spent a week at NSERC-Prairies assisting in the set-up of that office.

### **NSERC-Atlantic Wins Top Award**

NSERC held its annual Staff Awards and Recognition Ceremony on May 23, 2006 to honour staff achievements during the past year. NSERC-Atlantic won the Council's top prize, known as the Extraordinary Achievement Award, which recognizes a detailed set of actions or achievements. Cécile LaPlante, Catherine Vardy and Yves Gagnon attended the ceremony in Ottawa and were honoured to receive their prize.



**Regional Funds Now Available** — When NSERC's regional offices were created, plans were made to establish a discretionary grant fund that could be used to help the offices achieve their mandate and objectives. In the last year, a process was put in place to define parameters for the use of this fund. NSERC-Atlantic recently announced that this fund is now available. Given that the total budget is roughly \$100,000 per year, funds will be allocated to non-recurring initiatives and for activities that are not eligible for regular NSERC program funding. For more information, contact NSERC-Atlantic.

**Ongoing Support** — During the past year, the NSERC-Atlantic Advisory Committee continued to play a vital role, providing sound advice and supporting the office's activities throughout the region. The Advisory Committee was expanded to include members from the Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium and from the student population. At their first meeting, the two new students provided feedback on the needs and perceptions of graduate students in relation to NSERC.

The NSERC-Atlantic Reps have also been busy promoting NSERC and science and engineering. Whether it's organizing student activities, sponsoring events or advising fellow researchers and students about NSERC programs and scholarships, NSERC Reps continue to be a visible presence in our region.

### **Soybeans Anyone?**

Did you know that roasted soybeans are easier for livestock to digest?

That is one of the many things learned on a visit to the No. 2 grain elevator in Cardigan, P.E.I. in November 2005. The visit followed a meeting that brought together stakeholders from industry, university and government to identify research questions related to the grain industry.

By the way, roasted soybeans taste really good!

(L-R): Mike Delaney, Director General, P.E.I. Grain Elevator Corp.; Bill Coderre, Director, Corporate and Regional Development, NSERC; Ray Hoensen, NSERC-Prairies; Yves Gagnon, NSERC-Atlantic.



**Major Activities and Impacts** — To promote NSERC programs NSERC-Atlantic implemented various initiatives in collaboration with the NSERC office in Ottawa. A series of Strategic Project Grants information sessions were held to inform potential applicants of the new target areas announced in January 2006. These sessions, held at the University of New Brunswick, the University of Prince Edward Island, Dalhousie University and Memorial University of Newfoundland, drew 122 people and appear to have been well received. The new target areas will also be applied to the revised Strategic Network Grants program.

Following the success of Workshops A and B, the third phase of the Workshop Series, Workshop C, was launched. The objective of this workshop is to bring together research and innovation stakeholders in academia, industry and government who work in a specific industry sector in order to help create collaborations and generate proposals to NSERC.

With some of the attention of universities and colleges being put towards the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency Atlantic Innovation Fund, the level of activity with Workshop C was not as high as expected. Nonetheless, two successful sessions were held. On the advice of the Advisory Committee, this workshop will continue to be offered. Potential partners are encouraged to identify opportunities, and NSERC-Atlantic is considering the Strategic Project Grants program target areas as future themes.



Yves Gagnon and Arthur Carty

### **A.G. Huntsman Award Celebrates Silver Jubilee**

To mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the A.G. Huntsman Award, a two-day jubilee that included public lectures was held September 6-7, 2005 at Dalhousie University.

Arthur Carty, National Science Advisor to the Prime Minister, spoke with Yves Gagnon during the networking session of the ceremony. Dr. Carty was interested in learning more about NSERC's regional offices and sees this initiative as a positive contribution to reaching Canada's objectives in research, innovation and advanced training.

### **NSERC-Atlantic Facts and Stats**

- 3,105 People attended an NSERC-Atlantic presentation
- 1,850 People attended events where we had a kiosk
- 400 People attended our workshops and information sessions
- 300+ Requests or contacts with regional stakeholders
- 69 Events with NSERC-Atlantic participation
- 67 Meetings attended on research and innovation
- 61 Visits to universities and community colleges
- 56 Presentations given
- 27 Visits to industry and non-university research labs
- 21 Events where we staffed a kiosk
- 12 Workshops and information sessions organized

**The NSERC-Atlantic Information Session** was introduced in response to requests from various universities. The Information Session offers a general overview of all NSERC programs, and targets researchers, students and research administrators. It was offered as a pilot session twice during the past year. We invite Atlantic institutions to contact us if they would like to host an Information Session in the coming year.

**The NSERC Synergy Gala** was held in Halifax, N.S. on October 19, 2005. The event was aimed at recognizing successful long-term partnerships between researchers and industry. Atlantic Canadian researchers were a proud part of the celebration, with Deborah MacLatchy from the University of New Brunswick Saint John, receiving one of the awards.

### **Update from CAURA-East**

NSERC-Atlantic received positive feedback on its activities at the Canadian Association of University Research Administrators (CAURA) meeting held at Mount Allison University (MTA) on November 18-19, 2005. CAURA's President, Julia Taylor, says NSERC is making a difference in the region and applauds the Council's initiative to open regional offices.



Front (L-R): Julia Taylor, CAURA; Anna Sheridan-Jonah, MTA; Yves Gagnon, NSERC-Atlantic.  
Back (L-R): Catherine Vardy, NSERC-Atlantic; Andrew Paskauskas, MTA.



(L-R): Diana White,  
Physics Society, MUN;  
Catherine Vardy, NSERC-Atlantic;  
Luc Beaulieu, Professor, MUN.

### Atlantic Provinces Council on the Sciences (APICS) Undergraduate Physics & Astronomy Conference

Over 110 participants attended the APICS Undergraduate Physics and Astronomy Conference held at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) February 3-5, 2006. Students from 10 Atlantic universities gave 15-minute talks and participated in poster sessions. Catherine Vardy gave a presentation on NSERC and staffed a kiosk at the Grad Fair.

**Personnel Updates** — Yves Gagnon ended his two-year mandate at NSERC-Atlantic on July 6, 2006. As Visiting Executive, Yves used his vast experience as a researcher and research administrator, and his extensive knowledge of the region, to lead NSERC-Atlantic during its crucial initial phase. Seconded from the Université de Moncton (UdeM), he established strategic relations with universities, colleges, government departments, industry and other partners throughout Atlantic Canada. Yves is returning to academia as a Research Chair at UdeM.

NSERC's Regional Offices Division in Ottawa has also seen changes in the past year. After leading the division since its inception, Danielle Ménard has moved on to become NSERC's new Director of Policy and International Relations. Since May 2006, William (Bill) Coderre is our new Director of Corporate and Regional Development. Bill is using his extensive knowledge of NSERC and the research community in Canada to lead the division and to continue the development of the other NSERC regional offices.

NSERC-Atlantic was pleased to have Karen Power as a Communications Assistant from January to May 2006. As a Public Relations co-op student at Mount Saint Vincent University, Karen worked on planning regional events and attended functions where NSERC-Atlantic had a kiosk. She also wrote articles about our activities for NSERC's internal newsletter, thus increasing the visibility of the region with our Ottawa colleagues.

Jeannie Bérubé has been hired as a Student Program Assistant for the summer of 2006. Her employment was made possible through an initiative of the NSERC Employment Equity Advisory Committee for Aboriginal students. Jeannie is doing research on NSERC's student programs and Big Science projects.

### Contact Information



Yves Gagnon  
Visiting Executive, Manager  
yves.gagnon@nserc.ca



Cécile LaPlante  
Administrative Officer  
cecile.laplante@nserc.ca



Catherine Vardy  
Research Promotion and  
Development Officer  
catherine.vardy@nserc.ca

**NSERC-Atlantic**  
Scientific Park  
55 Crowley Farm Road, Suite 1300  
Moncton, New Brunswick E1A 7R1  
Tel.: 506-854-8154 Fax: 506-854-7981