

## The Canadian National Committee for IUPAC's Travel Awards Program—A Success Story

by Chris. I. Ratcliffe

The Canadian National Committee for IUPAC (CNC-IUPAC) runs a highly successful program of Travel Awards to enable top young Canadian scientists to attend and present their research at IUPAC-sponsored scientific conferences taking place outside of Canada and the USA.

The Travel Awards scheme has been operating for nearly 25 years and is made possible by funding from the Canadian Society for Chemistry's Gendron Fund and by CNC-IUPAC's Company Associates. The Gendron Fund had its origin in a highly successful IUPAC Congress held in Vancouver, Canada, in 1981. Surplus money generated from this Congress was put into a trust fund set up in June 1982 and administered by the Chemical Institute of Canada (CIC). The trust was named after Pierre Gendron, a prominent Canadian chemist.

Each year a competition is held for Travel Awards for the following year. Candidates who have obtained their Ph.D. within the last 10 years submit an application, which must include evidence of an independent research program, a publication record of high quality, and the ability to attract research funding, and indicate which IUPAC-sponsored conference they wish to attend. Preference is given to applicants who have not previously won an award. Applications are reviewed by a committee, whose members cover a broad range of expertise in chemistry, which then makes recommendations to CNC-IUPAC. Currently each award covers expenses up to a maximum of

### The 2006 Award Winners

**Garry Hanan**—associate professor at the Université de Montréal—went to the 37th International Conference of Coordination Chemistry in Cape Town, South Africa, in August 2006.

**Matthew Moffitt**—assistant professor at the University of Victoria—attended the World Polymer Congress: Macro 2006, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in July 2006.

**Joelle Pelletier**—associate professor at the Université de Montréal—traveled to Dresden, Germany, to attend the First International IUPAC Conference on Green-Sustainable Chemistry, held in September 2006.

**Alison Thompson**—associate professor at Dalhousie University in Halifax—attended the 16th International Conference on Organic Synthesis (ICOS 16), 11-15 June 2006, Merida, Yucatan, Mexico.

 [www.cnc-iupac.org/awards06\\_e.html](http://www.cnc-iupac.org/awards06_e.html)

CAN\$ 2 000. Normally, four or five awards are made per year. However, in 2003, in order to encourage the participation of young scientists at the IUPAC Congress in Ottawa, smaller awards were made to 10 individuals.

This is a nationwide competition and the awards are regarded as quite prestigious for young career chemists within the Canadian scientific community. The award winners are given considerable exposure, with short biographies published on the website of CNC-IUPAC and in the CIC magazine *Canadian Chemical News*. The Travel Awards program also increases awareness of IUPAC and CNC-IUPAC among young scientists and encourages their participation in IUPAC affairs. Winners who use their awards to attend an IUPAC Congress are also invited to become Young Observers at the IUPAC General Assembly that is held concurrently. Some Travel Award winners have gone on to play active roles within IUPAC or CNC-IUPAC. The incoming and outgoing chairpersons of CNC-IUPAC, Neil Burford (Dalhousie University) and Linda Johnston (National Research Council) respectively, were both recipients of Travel Awards early in their careers, as were other members of the committee.

CNC-IUPAC's Company Associates are also strongly linked to the Travel Awards scheme, as a large proportion (almost 90 percent) of their annual fees go directly to support this award. The awards give



exposure to our Company Associates (i.e., Boehringer Ingelheim (Canada) Inc., Merck Frosst Canada Inc., and Bruker Biospin Ltd.) who see this as a good way of helping the scientific community. They benefit from exposure in Canada, from announcements about the awards, and worldwide, through acknowledgements during presentations by the award recipients at IUPAC-sponsored conferences. Indeed, the Travel Awards program is a tangible incentive to become a Company Associate.

In addition to the benefits for awardees and Company Associates, the Travel Awards program also helps to spread awareness of the activities of CNC-IUPAC and IUPAC within Canada.

The Travel Awards program received a significant and welcome boost this year when the Pestcon Graduate Scholarship Fund, which was administered by CIC since 1986, was closed and folded into the

Gendron Fund. This could allow CNC-IUPAC to sponsor one more Travel Award each year in future competitions.

It appears that while most member countries of IUPAC have national committees that handle liaison with IUPAC, the Canadian National Committee for IUPAC is unique in promoting a travel awards scheme. All the parties involved benefit from CNC-IUPAC's Travel Awards program, including the award winners, the Company Associates, CNC-IUPAC, and IUPAC. Might this kind of program be worth trying in other countries?

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