

## **Queen's biologist awarded prestigious Killam Prize**

2010-10-15



Queen's University Biology professor John Smol is one of five pre-eminent Canadian researchers to receive a Killam Prize for 2009.

Canada's most distinguished awards for outstanding career achievements in health sciences, engineering, humanities, natural sciences and social sciences, the \$100,000 prizes are presented annually by the Canada Council for the Arts. Dr. Smol's award is in the field of natural sciences.

Widely considered one of the world's leading environmental scientists, Dr. Smol is an international authority on aquatic ecology, human impacts on lakes, Arctic limnology and environmental change. As founder and co-director of the university's Paleoeological Environmental Assessment and Research Lab (PEARL), he oversees the work of about 30 scientists studying the history of lake environments. Dr. Smol has served as Canada Research Chair in Environmental Change since 2000 - a position that was recently renewed through 2014.

"I am extremely proud of John's considerable and continued success in achieving these prestigious awards," says Vice-Principal (Research) Kerry Rowe. "His dedication to research on environmental issues is demonstrated by his incredibly productive scientific activities spanning more than twenty-five years. John is highly deserving of this recognition."

The Killam citation reads, in part: "A pioneer in paleolimnology in North America, Dr. Smol has worked to transform a largely descriptive study of natural and human impacts on lakes into a recognized quantitative science with powerful analytical properties. His groundbreaking research on lake acidification, climate change, and land use change (e.g., the disappearance of entire ecosystems in the High Arctic), has permanently altered views regarding the extent to which human activities affect the natural environment, and prompted key public policy and program development worldwide. He has made cardinal discoveries, developed innovative techniques and research protocols, and published over 350 journal articles and book chapters, as well as 16 books."

The citation also pays tribute to Dr. Smol's mentorship of "many of today's influential scientists." That assessment was reinforced earlier this year when, along with nine other Canadian professors across the country to receive a prestigious 3M National Teaching Fellowship. Among numerous other national and international awards presented to Dr. Smol: the NSERC Herzberg Gold Medal as Canada's top scientist (2004); the National Research Council's Steacie Prize as Canada's most outstanding young scientist (1993); a Killam Fellowship (1995-1997); Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada (1996); and an Ontario Distinguished Researcher Award (2002). In 2008, Dr. Smol and his brother, University of Ottawa professor Jules Blais, were jointly named "Environmental Scientist of the Year" by the Royal Canadian Geographical Society.

"I am of course delighted to receive this prize," says Dr. Smol. "However, like all such awards, it would not be possible without the efforts of my students and colleagues, whose work has always inspired me. I am proud to be associated with such a stellar group of students and other scientists with whom I have the opportunity to work at Queen's University, and especially in our lab at PEARL."

Inaugurated in 1981, the Killam Prizes are financed through funds donated to the Canada Council by

## Queen's biologist awarded prestigious Killam Prize

---

Mrs. Dorothy J. Killam before her death, in memory of her husband, Izaak Walton Killam. The prizes were created to honour eminent Canadian scholars and scientists actively engaged in research, whether in industry, government agencies or universities.

Past Killam Prize winners from Queen's are professors Kerry Rowe (Civil Engineering) and Will Kymlicka (Philosophy), both of whom received their awards in 2004. Dr. Smol is the university's first recipient in the field of natural sciences.

### Contacts:

Nancy Dorrance, 613.533.2869 [nancy.dorrance@queensu.ca](mailto:nancy.dorrance@queensu.ca), or Stephanie Earp, 613-533-6000, ext. 79173 [stephanie.earp@queensu.ca](mailto:stephanie.earp@queensu.ca) Queen's News and Media Services

Attention broadcasters: Queen's has facilities to provide broadcast quality audio and video feeds. For television interviews, we can provide a live, real-time double ender from Kingston via fibre optic cable. Please call for details.

**Source URL:** <http://www.queensu.ca/news/articles/queens-biologist-awarded-prestigious-killam-prize>