

# CASCA Awards Committee Annual Report

**Luc Simard, 16 July 2018**

## **1. Executive Summary**

In the 2017-2018 cycle, the CASCA Awards committee evaluated nominations and made recommendations to the Board for the recipients of the J. S. Plaskett Medal (awarded to Dr. Gwendolyn Eadie), the Qilak Award (awarded to Dr. Robert Thacker), the Dunlap Award (awarded to Dr. Kipp Cannon) and the Carlyle S. Beals Award (awarded to Dr. Mark Halpern). The submission deadline for all award nominations was initially 1 December 2017. Poor response led to a second call with a deadline of 31 January 2018. The committee made its recipient recommendations to the Board on 20 March 2018. In the next cycle, it is recommended that the Board revises the nomination procedure for the Dunlap Prize and establishes a central repository for keeping track of nomination packages over multiple cycles.

The committee chair would like to apologize to the Board for the very, very late submission of this report.

## **2. The year in review**

The CASCA Awards committee for this cycle was comprised of Luc Simard (NRC; chair), Viktor Khalack (U. Moncton), Renée Hložek (Dunlap / U. Toronto), Catherine Lovekin (Mount Allison U.), Gregory Sivakoff (U. Alberta) and Christian Marois (NRC). Simard's term on the committee is ending this year, and a new chair will be appointed shortly.

An announcement of the competition was circulated on the CASCA email exploder at the beginning of November, and a reminder was sent on December 4 with an extended deadline of December 8. Response was poor except for the Plaskett medal. We received 6 Plaskett, 0 Qilak, 0 Dunlap and 1 Beals nominations. This poor response prompted a second call for nominations for awards other than the Plaskett with a new deadline of 31 January. This second call received 1 Dunlap nomination and 1 additional Beals nomination. We considered "roll over" nominations from the previous three calendar years for the Qilak and the Dunlap. The final number of awards evaluated was 6 Plaskett, 2 Qilak, 1 Dunlap and 2 Beals. Despite our recommendation made last year, there is still no central repository for nominations made over the years. Given that the committee chair has been on the committee for many years, this did not pose a problem this year, but a new chair will have to do quite a bit of "detective work" if nothing is done.

Each committee member received a Plaskett nomination package on 14 January 2017 via a Dropbox link tailored to exclude any nominations on which they had a conflict of interest (all conflicts were institutional). They received the nomination package for the other awards on 1 March 2018. Each committee member submitted a ranked list to the awards committee chair by 13 March. Clear top choices for each recipient emerged when the chair compiled the submitted rankings except for the Plaskett medal for which two nominations were very close; all rankings were circulated among committee members on 14 March 2018 and discussed via WebEx on that day. Most of the discussion focused on the Plaskett, and a final selection was successfully made. Despite the poor response for some of the awards, the committee strongly feels that all recipients were of the highest caliber and fully met all of the awards selection criteria. The Awards Committee made their recommendations to the Board on 20 March 2018.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) document was again extremely useful to the committee. Our sincere thanks go to previous committee chair, Kristine Spekkens, for providing it.

### **3. Recommendations for the next cycle**

1. The nomination requirements for the Dunlap Award should be revisited. The need for three external letters of support in addition to a joint letter of recommendation really seems to be barrier to nominations.
2. There should be a central repository maintained by the CASCA administrator where the nomination packages are stored until they expire.