

R&D Forum in Atlantic Canada rewards Calgary geophysical company

Michael Enachescu

with notes from PRAC website

Petroleum Research Atlantic Canada (PRAC) held its two-day Atlantic Petroleum R&D Forum this May 2007 at the Fairmont Newfoundland Hotel in St John's. Delegates from across the country were in attendance, as industry leaders, scientists, engineers and others addressed regional petroleum industry needs and challenges - and the important role that research and development (R&D) plays in meeting them. Forum delegates were involved in two days of high-level reviews of R&D needs in Atlantic Canada and activities in specific technical areas including: geoscience, metocean, geotechnology, environment, safety, asset integrity and offshore gas development.

During the meeting, David Finn, president of PRAC remarked "We're a high cost, high-risk region. Technology and an understanding of the resource are critical if we're to have long-term offshore oil and gas development. This forum is about fostering collaboration between research groups, government specialists and petroleum and service companies." Daily panel sessions addressed regional petroleum industry challenges and needs, as well as best practices for facilitating public-private R&D collaboration. The Honourable Kathy Dunderdale, Minister of Natural Resources of Newfoundland and Labrador, gave the keynote address during the program's R&D Luncheon. The Minister spoke to the growing importance of R&D in the province, alluding to the upcoming Energy Plan and also discussed a series of government funded research initiatives.

PRAC is a member-based not-for-profit organization that funds and facilitates collaborative research and development to support the safe and environmentally-sound development of Atlantic Canada's petroleum resources. Funding for running PRAC is provided by Atlantic Oil and Gas Explorers

and Producers, engineering companies and various levels of government. Since 1999, PRAC has awarded over \$4.2 million in direct funding to projects with a total value exceeding \$20 million. The grants were distributed mostly to universities, research institutes and private companies involved in R&D in Atlantic Canada. Additionally, PRAC undertakes a broad range of communications and outreach activities to assist with research identification, planning and dissemination of research project results.

Petroleum Research Atlantic Canada also hosted the 1st Annual Awards for Excellence in Atlantic R&D. Two awards were presented, recognizing an outstanding researcher in petroleum-related research and development, and a company active in supporting Atlantic R&D. "There is an incredible amount of talent within Atlantic Canada's research community - from engineers to geophysicists," said PRAC President Dave Finn. "We have created these annual awards to recognize these innovative researchers and the companies that support the R&D happening in the region."

Dr. Georgia Pe-Piper was chosen as 2007 recipient of the Award for Excellence in Atlantic R&D. A versatile scientist and geology professor at Saint Mary's University, Pe-Piper is highly recognized in the research community. She has made numerous contributions to Atlantic petroleum R&D over the past 20 years, particularly to the understanding of the geology of the Scotian Basin. Pe-Piper is also noted for her special effectiveness in mentoring students. "She excels as an educator in and out of the classroom," maintained past student, Lila Dolanksy. "Dr. Pe-Piper inspires students by her dedication and drive, and she enhances both the scientific community and industry - not only through her research contributions, but also through her track record of training



Jocelyn Frankow accepts on behalf of Geophysical Service Incorporated the PRAC's Outstanding Corporate Contribution Award from Dr. Michael Enachescu, CSEG Assistant Director of Communication.

Continued on Page 39

R&D Forum in Atlantic Canada rewards Calgary geophysical company

Continued from Page 38

promising geoscientists." Dr. Georgia Pe-Piper received a cash award of \$5,000. If you are a student of Georgia's working in the oil patch, do not forget to congratulate her for this award.

PRAC's Outstanding Corporate Contribution Award was presented to Geophysical Service Inc (GSI), a well-known North American seismic acquisition and processing company. The company was selected for its exceptional contributions to the advancement of petroleum R&D and support and collaboration with the research community. GSI is the only Canadian owned and headquartered marine seismic contractor with the ability to execute large 2D and 3D surveys in Atlantic waters. In 2003, GSI donated their entire Atlantic offshore data library to Memorial University for use in both applied and fundamental research. Valued at \$25 million, these data (including surveys of offshore Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador) are one-of-a-kind in the scientific world. Clearly, GSI understands the importance of modern seismic data for university-based geoscience research. Without modern seismic data no meaningful basin-wide research can be carried out and no geoscience based promotion of unexplored basins can be undertaken. The donation was made at the initiative of Davey and Paul Einarsson, both CSEG members. Their gift to Memorial of their entire seismic digital library has no worldwide equivalent. Jocelyn Frankow of GSI's Calgary office accepted the award at the ceremony: a work of art by the well-known Newfoundland pewter maker Ray Cox. If you are visiting GSI's office in Calgary, please ask the receptionist Penny Howarth to show you this prestigious award-artwork! **R**