



## Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research

### SCAR Medal for Excellence in Antarctic Research, 2012

# *John Priscu*

Dr John Priscu has been studying the microbial ecology of Antarctic ecosystems for almost 30 years and is one of the leaders in the investigation of sub-glacial biogeochemical processes. In addition to his leadership in sub-glacial lake research, John has also conducted seminal work on the microbial ecology and biogeochemistry of sea ice, lake ice and the water columns of Antarctic lakes, and led the first research expeditions to study microbial dynamics in lakes of the McMurdo Dry Valleys during the polar night. He has been key in organising and directing the global community in this exciting and innovative research. For example, recently after Russian scientists had reached Lake Vostok, John was interviewed and quoted by a large number of both scientific and news publications including Science magazine and the New York Times.

As well as publishing more than 200 manuscripts on polar systems, John has expanded the Antarctic scientific community by training a new generation of excellent scientists who continue to make significant contributions. He has trained 65 graduate students, technicians, and postdoctoral researchers in Antarctica and has been elected both Fellow of the AAAS and the American Geophysical Union. His scientific productivity and his scientific leadership records are truly outstanding.

In addition, John has contributed to SCAR in numerous leadership roles, for example as Chief Officer for the SCAR Scientific Research Programme Subglacial Antarctic Lake Environments (SALE), as co-chair of the 2010 SCAR Open Science Conference, as well as US scientific representative to SCAR. He has served on two US National Academy of Sciences committees: Frontiers in Polar Biology and Prevention of the Forward Contamination of Mars, has been a member of several advisory committees for the US National Science Foundation and NASA, and part of the US Ice Core Working Group and on the advisory committee for the US Ice Core Drilling Service. He has also served as a member of the Polar Research Board, a standing committee of the US National Academy of Science, is on the executive committee for the WAIS Divide project and is the chief scientist on the Whillans Ice Stream Subglacial Access Research Drilling project.

John is extremely deserving of this award. His contributions to Antarctic science have been numerous, and his impact is great. John's work has been of the highest quality, and his approach to Antarctic limnology, biogeochemistry and cryospheric ecology have been extremely innovative and will be the benchmark for others to follow. He has literally discovered life in many places where no one has expected it.

Mahlon (Chuck) Kennicutt II  
SCAR President

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July 2012