



The inaugural recipient of the Weston Family Prize for Lifetime Achievement in Northern Research is Dr. Serge Payette. Dr. Payette found his passion for the north in 1966, after spending time in the arctic as a student. In 1969 he began lecturing at *Université Laval*, where he still remains as a professor and researcher at the university's *Centre d'Études Nordiques (CEN)*. His many contributions to Northern research include his work as director of the CEN for twelve years, his research on tree line dynamics and the response of Northern ecosystems to climatic disturbance, the training of multiple student Northern researchers, and numerous scientific publications. He has held one of the six prestigious NSERC Chairs for Northern research since 2003—a nationwide acknowledgement of his scientific and personal achievements.

As director of the CEN, Dr. Payette helped establish it as a premier Northern research centre in Canada. He recognized the necessity of using multidisciplinary practices in conducting northern research, and strongly encouraged the combined use of natural and social scientific research methods. Researchers were recruited from all disciplines such as biology, geography, archaeology and anthropology. A priority for Dr. Payette was to ensure that the CEN researchers had the proper infrastructure in place to support their work, first on the CEN's main station in Whapmagoostui-Kuujuarapik on the Eastern shore of Hudson Bay, and later in remote satellite stations which he outfitted with daily link-ups with the main station. He also built an environmental and climate-change telemetry network and an experimental greenhouse currently being used for site-restoration experiments.

Dr. Payette is recognized internationally for his research work and contributions to Northern Science. Through the study of interpretation of tree growth forms and tree-ring series, Dr. Payette's research has shed light on topics such as tree line dynamics, climatic reconstructions at the northern limits of forests, the origins of the lichen spruce forest, a special type of forest decline in the Torngat Mountains, the dynamics of palsa bogs, and past activities of caribou herds. The NSERC Chair for Northern research that he holds has also studied land rehabilitation techniques for sites disturbed by human activities in Northern villages. For his efforts, Dr. Payette has been recognized as a laureate of the *Killam Fellowship* (1989-1991) from the Canada Council for the Arts and received the *Cooper Award* from the *Ecological Society of America (ESA)* with his PhD student, Dominique Arseneault.

Dr. Payette has dedicated over 40 years of his life to Northern research and to teaching and mentoring young scientists. A total of 81 post-graduate students—22 doctorate, 9 post-doc and 50 masters—as well as hundreds of undergraduate students have all had the privilege of learning and experiencing the North in the "Payette School". Many of these former students are now working as university-level research professors, specialists and professionals in Northern research. In a collective letter of support, his former students stated "Serge Payette stands apart from other researchers in Northern environments by his contagious passion for the North and for the ecology of the Northern landscapes. His enthusiasm is, and has always been, a source of inspiration for his students and his associates. An excellent teacher, Serge Payette has always given priority to learning in the field, never hesitating to put on his boots and to roll up his sleeves to explain in a concrete way the practice of ecology, often with humour. This type of mentoring, personalized and applied, is the trademark of Professor Payette."

To date, Dr. Payette has published over 170 articles in peer-reviewed journals, 14 book chapters and a number of research reports for a total of some 200 published papers. He established the international *Écoscience/Ecoscience* journal specializing in ecology now entering its 17th year of publication and held editorial positions on such journals as *The Holocene*, *Plant Ecology*, and *Plant Ecology and Diversity*,⁽⁹⁾ an international journal sponsored by the *Botanical Society of Scotland*. His next publication will be a four-volume set, *Flore du Québec Nordique*, in collaboration with several botanist colleagues, which will be released in the next few years. This illustrated botanical and biogeographical treatise will be unique in its coverage of phytogeography and vascular plants north of the 54th parallel in Quebec and Labrador.