Six faculty members named to Royal Society

UAlberta's newest fellows of the Royal Society of Canada (clockwise from top left): Mark Boyce, **Martin Sharp**, Warren Finlay, Bernie Linsky, Austin Mardon and Marnie Giesbrecht

(Edmonton) In recognition of their outstanding scholarly, scientific and artistic achievements, six University of Alberta faculty members have been elected as fellows of the Royal Society of Canada.

Ecologist Mark Boyce, mechanical engineer Warren Finlay, music professor emerita Marnie Giesbrecht, philosophy professor Bernard Linsky, glaciologist **Martin Sharp** and mental illness advocate Austin Mardon were all elected as fellows to the Royal Society of Canada.

“I am delighted that six scholars from the University of Alberta have been elected fellows of the Royal Society of Canada this year,” said President Indira Samarasekera. “This is a tremendous honour—it recognizes our professors for their outstanding achievements as scholars and researchers, and brings great distinction to the university. My hearty congratulations to our newest fellows of the Royal Society of Canada.”

Martin Sharp, a professor in the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, is a leading international voice documenting polar environmental change in a warming world. Sharp’s prescient and innovative research focuses on the links between glaciers, the atmosphere and oceans. His benchmark contributions to our understanding of high-latitude ice masses include quantifying their meltwater contribution to global sea level rise, an issue with enormous societal implications.

Sharp says he came to the U of A in 1993 because it afforded him the opportunity to work on the glaciers of the Canadian Arctic Islands. He says outside the ice sheets of Greenland and Antarctica, this is the world's most heavily glaciated region, yet they had been markedly under-researched.

“Changes in these glaciers over the past decade have made a major contribution to the current rate of global sea level rise, and we have been able to document and explain this,” he said. “My studies have been possible because being at the U of A enabled me to access the NSERC funding and logistic support from Canada's Polar Continental Shelf Project, without which none of the work I have done over the past 20 years would have been feasible. The graduate students and post-doctoral fellows who have come to work with me at the U of A have played a fundamental role in all of that work, and U of A support for their research has been critical to their contribution to the success of my program.”

By Michael Brown on September 9, 2014
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