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Burgi, Philip; Davies, Peter; Findikakis, Angelos; Goodwin, Peter Looking to the Future - 2009 IAHR Awards Committee

HydroLink

Verfügbar unter/Available at: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11970/109103>

Vorgeschlagene Zitierweise/Suggested citation:

Burgi, Philip; Davies, Peter; Findikakis, Angelos; Goodwin, Peter (2010): Looking to the Future - 2009 IAHR Awards Committee. In: HydroLink 2010/6. Madrid: International Association for Hydro-Environment Engineering and Research (IAHR). S. 93-93. https://iahr.oss-accelerate.aliyuncs.com/library/HydroLink/HydroLink2010_06_Changing_the_Way_We_Think_About_Water.pdf.

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Looking to the Future 2009 IAHR Awards Committee



In the spirit of increased transparency and broader engagement of the IAHR membership, the IAHR Council invited the 2009 Awards Committee (AC) to reflect on the selection process and encourage increased nominations for the next award's cycle that starts at the end of 2010.

Written by:

**2009 IAHR Awards Committee:
Philip Burgi, Peter Davies, Angelos
Findikakis and Peter Goodwin**

It has been a privilege to serve on this committee as it provides an opportunity to view the remarkable talent, research innovation and commitment to education that is prevalent throughout the IAHR community. The future of IAHR is very bright when observing the awareness of environmental and social issues, the key role of emerging technologies and the dedication to prepare the next generation of our IAHR research community. The downside is that this deep pool of talent, distributed across a broad range of water engineering, makes judging of individual achievements very difficult. These perspectives from the past Committee are intended to supplement the IAHR award details (www.iahr.org/awards/) and assist future nomination preparation. The AC eliminated any current members of the IAHR Council for award consideration to avoid the perception of favoritism. Most of the work was done (preliminary assessment and rankings) through the Internet but the final decision was taken following three teleconference calls, each set one week apart. This period allowed more detailed assessment by the AC and reflection prior to the final decision. Specific comments on the individual awards include:

Jan Schoemaker Award:

nominations came from three sources:

- (1) Nominations of the Journal of Hydraulic Research editorial team made through the editor. The editor declined to rank these nominations.
- (2) The IAHR Secretariat received nominations with justification from third parties. These nominations were very well argued and persuasive.
- (3) The AC reviewed all journal issues for the Award period and added additional recommendations to the pool of papers considered.

Since the Editor has access to confidential peer reviews (which of course the AC does not), the AC invited the Editor to ratify the selection as a final quality control.

Arthur T. Ippen Award: this award recognizes excellence in research and commitment to IAHR by a younger member. It is very difficult to compare brilliance between early-career and mid-career researchers since the cumulative productivity is quite different and the education and career-progression systems vary between countries. Other ACs in the future may differentiate differently, but we looked for quality peer-reviewed articles, impact of the research and the ability to generate research funds or programs. Multi-authored and/or interdisciplinary articles were considered a 'plus' where appropriate in the research field. We also looked for trends in career development. It is expected that the early

stages of a career would result in several papers between a PhD student and their mentors. Researchers may continue collaboration with their mentors periodically for their entire careers, but we looked for evidence that the researcher had also developed an independent leadership role in research activities. This AC also considered the resources available to the researcher during their initial years – for example did she/he have to put basic research infrastructure in place.

In the next competition, nominations will be made through the electronic membership platform (eMP) to ensure consistency of nominations in terms of length of nominations and the type of material that can be submitted. The Ippen and Yalin Awards are seldom won on the first submittal and we encourage nominations that were not successful this year to be resubmitted in the future.

We would like to thank all the Committee (formerly Section) Chairs and individuals who invested time in preparing a strong set of nominations. It is your effort that maintains the prestige and integrity of the process.

“ We encourage all Committees and individual IAHR members to consider nominating colleagues who are making major contributions in your area. ”