



**CFES**  **FCST**  
Canadian Federation of Earth Sciences | Fédération canadienne des sciences de la Terre

### **ACCEPTANCE - John F.H. Thompson**

This is a wonderful award and I couldn't be more pleased and honoured.

I would like to thank Scott Swinden and the Canadian Federation of Earth Sciences, Shoufa Lin and the awards committee, and Greg Dipple and Andrew Davies who organized the support for my nomination.

I have been fortunate to receive a number of awards in my career but this one is so special because it comes from my students, colleagues, peers and friends. Please excuse the sporting analogy but this award reminds me of the so-called "players' player" award in British soccer- football – an award that is more appreciated by the players than all of the other media awards and hoopla because it comes from their peers! I am touched by the response from the people who collectively nominated me for this award.

Ironically I have always been slightly skeptical of formal mentoring programs although I totally recognize that they often provide the first point of contact for a mentee, arguably the most difficult step. That said, I believe completely in mentoring – we should all do it as much and as often as we can! Some of my best mentoring opportunities have been in the field or in a long truck drive to the field. Shared experiences, especially when uncomfortable, are the perfect backdrop for serious and sometimes difficult conversations. For me, mentoring is about being open and willing to listen, but mentoring goes much further including sponsoring, advocating, supporting and seeking opportunities. It involves opening doors, but not going through them with ones mentees – it's not management, training or human resource planning.

I enjoy mentoring and get immense satisfaction out of seeing people succeed, but I honestly do not regard myself as an expert and I certainly fall well short of a counselor. The difference between a mentor and a counselor may seem subtle, but it is critical! It is therefore particularly gratifying to discover that many people who I have been involved with in various ways through my career think that I have helped them in some way. I want to thank all of them and point out that I have learnt as much from them as vice versa. And lastly – I would like to thank the numerous mentors who have helped me during my career – I wouldn't be here today without them.