

## *Early Achievement Award*

*Michael Van Helden, P.Eng., Ph.D.*



Michael Van Helden is a gifted young Geotechnical Engineer who has accomplished more in his early career than many will achieve in a lifetime. Michael is a Principal and founding partner in a new consulting company, TREK Geotechnical Inc., and very recently completed his Ph.D. in Geotechnical Engineering at the University of Manitoba.

Michael has been recognized with many national awards and honors he has received as well as publications in international refereed technical publications he has authored. At the same time he has also been actively involved in the Consulting Engineers of Manitoba, technical societies, and community groups giving his time as a volunteer.

Michael recently submitted his dissertation in pursuit of his Ph.D. where he has specialized in the use of probabilistic methods for slope stability, a new and critical area of geotechnical engineering practice. His thesis involved the development of a probabilistic site investigation using the Cone Penetration Test using a case study on existing infrastructure for Manitoba Hydro. He has presented his thesis results in numerous venues, including locally sponsored professional development events, three national conferences and at an international conference on soil mechanics in Alexandria, Egypt.

Due to Michael's exceptional technical abilities, he was invited to join TREK Geotechnical as a founding partner in 2009 and has been an instrumental element of TREK's growth and expansion to 14 technical and administrative staff. Michael serves as the secretary to the board of directors and has played an integral role in the marketing and brand development of the company. His professional maturity and technical growth are exceptional for a professional member of his age and experience.

Michael has always been involved in extra-curricular activities and continues to contribute to technical and other engineering societies. Currently, he sits on the organizing committee for the upcoming Canadian Young Geotechnical Engineers and Geoscientists Conference as well as the Annual Golf Tournament organizing committee for the Association of Consulting Engineers of Canada (Manitoba Chapter). He has served on the organizing committees of local short courses and the national Canadian Geotechnical Conference held in Winnipeg in 2013.

He has also been involved in fundraising for other community benefit events, including the annual Manitoba Marathon, the MS Bike Tour, the annual Walk for the Cure supporting breast cancer research, and the Winnipeg Humane Society Paws in Motion walk. Michael and his family currently fund the Karel Van Helden Memorial Bursary at Red River College, providing financial assistance to students pursuing Power Engineering. Michael has had numerous other volunteer roles over the years, and plans to continue his contributions to the profession and community throughout his career.

The Association is pleased to present the Early Achievement Award to an exemplary individual - Michael Van Helden, P.Eng.