



## 2025 UPEI Inspiring Young Alumni Award

### Dr. Derek Schipper (BSc 2006)

Dr. Derek Schipper began his remarkable academic and prolific research journey as a standout chemistry student at UPEI between 2002 and 2006.

In addition to being named to the Dean of Science Honours list each year, he received numerous high-profile awards, including two NSERC Industrial Undergraduate Student Research Awards, the Dean of Science Award of Merit in Chemistry, the American Chemical Society Undergraduate Award in Analytical Chemistry, and the Honourable Gordon L. Bennett Award.

Continuing his academic journey at the University of Ottawa, Dr. Schipper earned multiple NSERC Scholarships, the University of Ottawa Excellence Award, and ultimately his PhD in chemistry in 2011. He went on to complete a postdoctoral fellowship at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he worked with world-renowned scientist Dr. Timothy Swager.

In 2013, Dr. Schipper joined the Faculty of Science at the University of Waterloo where he works today as Associate Professor in Chemistry. He held the title of Tier II Canada Research Chair in Organic Material Synthesis from 2014–2024.

Having secured more than \$2.7 million in funding, he is a prominent figure in organic materials synthesis and catalysis research. His extensive publication record includes more than 40 peer-reviewed articles in top-tier academic journals with more than 1,900 citations.

His innovative research has led to groundbreaking methods in organic materials synthesis and catalysis including development of a technique to make conjugated polymers using a dehydration reaction. The result is a cheaper, more sustainable plastic semiconductor, and the only by-product is water.

With practical and commercial applicability, Dr. Schipper's research has the potential to lead to technological breakthroughs enabling lower cost, lighter weight, and more sustainable electronic devices.

Outside the laboratory, Dr. Schipper has founded ventures to commercialize his research. He also helps to advance science and serve the broader academic community by organizing conferences, delivering conference keynotes and invited lectures, and collaborating with other researchers from around the world.

As an educator, he has shown his dedication to mentoring the next generation of scientists by supervising numerous undergraduate and graduate students while also developing innovative teaching methods to make complex concepts more accessible to them.

In recognition of his inspirational and award-winning academic and research success, the UPEI Alumni Association is proud to present Dr. Derek Schipper, BSc 2006, with a 2025 Inspiring Young Alumni Award.