

2008 Annual Report: Academic Programs

The education program achieved some major milestones in 2008. The MIT-WHOI Joint Program celebrated its 40th birthday with two events: a reception at the Ocean Sciences meeting in Orlando, Florida in the spring, and a science symposium at MIT in the fall. Both events attracted many WHOI scientists, MIT faculty, JP students and alumni. Joint Program alums presenting scientific papers at the symposium were Alex Techet (MIT), Peter Franks (Scripps), Eli Tziperman (Harvard), Dan Sigman (Princeton), and Carol Arnosti (UNC). Dr. Howard Johnson, former MIT President, who along with former WHOI Director Paul Fye signed the original MOU creating the Joint Program in 1968, gave opening remarks. Joint Program alum Jay Cohen, Undersecretary for Science and Technology of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, gave the closing remarks. Both the spring reception and fall symposium were very successful and proved to be a fine way to celebrate the 40th.

We celebrated another important anniversary in 2008 as the Geophysical Fluid Dynamics (GFD) Program marked its 50th year. To mark this important occasion, WHOI hosted a reception in Woods Hole Village, which was attended by six of the seven GFD Program founders and many past and present fellows and staff. We were honored to see GFD founders selected by their peers as the 2008 recipients of the American Geophysical Union's Excellence in Geophysical Education Award.

During the 2007-2008 academic year, the MIT-WHOI Joint Program awarded 28 masters and doctoral degrees in ocean science and engineering. As of fall 2008, the Joint Program has awarded 813 degrees. Twenty new students enrolled in the program in 2008, and the total fall enrollment was 134.

Thirteen Postdoctoral Scholar Fellow awards were made (7 women and 6 men) which includes one postdoc who also received an external NOAA/UCAR award. In addition to the WHOI- and USGS-funded scholars, fellows arrived with support from: the European Union, Brazilian National Council for Scientific and Technological Development, Organization of American States, Office of Naval Research, Greek Secretary of Research and Technology, National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, NOAA/UCAR Climate and Global Change Office, Norwegian Research Council, Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research, Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology, Spanish Ministry of Education and Sciences, the Fulbright Program, Swiss National Science Foundation, and the University of Potsdam - Leibnitz.

The topic for the 2008 GFD summer program was "Perspectives and Challenges in GFD." Staff members used this opportunity to examine past developments in the field, and then considered the future by describing concurrent and new avenues for research. Ten fellows (7 men, 3 women), 8 guest students, 72 staff members and 5 guest lecturers participated in the program.

Twenty-seven Summer Student Fellows (SSF) representing 25 colleges and universities were chosen from a record high 241 applicants. These undergraduates and a few recent graduates spent 10-12 weeks in the summer working on research projects with WHOI scientists, attending lectures and workshops, and enjoying themselves on Cape Cod (time permitting!) The SSF program is enthusiastically supported by WHOI scientists, who enjoy working with the undergraduates and appreciate how much they contribute to WHOI research programs. Many SSF students later apply for graduate school in the Joint Program.

Students and postdocs bring energy, enthusiasm and new ideas to WHOI's research portfolio and help us move in new directions. It's a privilege to oversee these fine education and training programs.

—[James Yoder](#), Vice President for Academic Programs & Dean



[Enlarge Image](#)

Maya Bhatia, a doctoral student at WHOI, took hundreds of water samples the summer of 2008 to learn about water chemistry during seven weeks of research in western Greenland. Bhatia, who works with WHOI scientists Sarah Das and Liz Kujawinski, camped on the edge of a glacier that flows into a fjord. This remote area is uninhabited by people, but does have plenty of swarming insects. "It was stunning, absolutely gorgeous," Bhatia said. "But oh my gosh, the bugs. Terrible." (Photo courtesy of Maya Bhatia, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution)

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[» From *Oceanus* magazine](#)

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