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2009 Annual Report: Academic Programs

During the 2008-2009 academic year, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology/WHOI Joint Program awarded 33 masters and doctoral degrees in ocean science and engineering. As of fall 2009, the Joint Program (JP) has awarded 843 degrees. Nineteen new students enrolled in the program in 2009, and the total fall enrollment was 120.

Ten Postdoctoral Scholar awards were given (seven women and three men) with a 50:50 split between U.S. and foreign nationals. At any given time, WHOI averages about 65 to 70 postdoctoral Scholars, Fellows and Investigators in residence.

The topic for the 2008 Geophysical Fluid Dynamics (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), eight guest students, 72 staff members and 5 guest lecturers participated in the program.

Twenty-eight Summer Student Fellows (SSF) representing 26 colleges and universities were chosen from a record-high 212 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 students go on to apply for graduate school in the JP and other ocean science graduate programs.

Our office participated in 2 new education programs in 2009. Along with the other five science organizations based in Woods Hole that are partners with us in the Woods Hole Diversity Initiative (WHDI), we joined in a new summer program entitled Woods Hole Partnership Education Program (PEP). PEP is a summer diversity program for undergraduates that specifically encourages applications from students from minority populations under-represented in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fields. The 2009 PEP class consisted of 16 students from 11 universities. The students took a for-credit course during their first month, which included instruction in physical and chemical oceanography from 2 JP students. The rest of the summer, the students worked with science mentors from the WHDI institutions—five of the students worked with WHOI scientists.

The second new program, supported by the A.V. Davis Foundations, is a winter internship program for undergraduate students attending liberal arts colleges. Four students from 3 colleges participated in the first winter of the program and were on the WHOI campus for 3 weeks. The students received one hour of instruction per day on basic concepts in oceanography taught by senior JP students, and spent the rest of the day working in the laboratories of the WHOI scientists who hosted them.

Students and postdocs bring energy, enthusiasm and new ideas to WHOI’s research portfolio and help us move in new directions. We appreciate the support we receive from individual donors and foundations that support these fine education and training programs.

—*James Yoder, Vice President for Academic Programs & Dean*

Enlarge Image

While her Oberlin classmates accepted their diplomas at a graduation ceremony in Ohio, Summer Student Fellow Eleanor Bors was aboard the R/V *Kilo Moana* along with her advisor, WHOI biologist Tim Shank. The voyage marked the first deployment of the robotic vehicle *Nereus*, which successfully dove to Challenger Deep—the deepest part of the ocean—on May 31, 2009. Back in Woods Hole, Bors worked on genetic methods for larval identification as part of a study of how worm communities recolonize after hydrothermal vent eruptions. Read more about her experience as a fellow in the blog, "In an Octopus's Garden." (Photo by Timothy Shank, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution)

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An article from *Oceanus* magazine highlighting WHOI's Summer Student Fellowship.

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A Summer of Science on the Sea

WHOI Summer Student Fellowships offer a taste of research life
The WHOI Summer Student Fellowship program celebrated its 50th year of bringing bright, talented students to Woods Hole to learn more about ocean science, conduct independent research alongside world-class scientists, and get a better understanding of what studying for a Ph.D. and being a professional scientist are all about.

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