

Marine Benthic Ecology and Biodiversity Symposium 20 - 21/11/08

Colleagues from around the world honored J. Frederick Grassle at a symposium at IMCS on November 20-21, 2008. The organizing committee for the Symposium consisted of Rich Lutz, Jim Miller, Judy Grassle, Rose Petrecca, Paul Falkowski and Gary Taghon. The following entities were formal Sponsors for the Symposium: Center for Deep Sea Ecology and Biotechnology, Department of Marine and Coastal Sciences, Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences (IMCS), New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES), School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (SEBS), Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, Office of Naval Research (ONR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Census of Marine Life (CoML), National Undersea Research Program (NURP), Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve (JC NEER), and Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS).

Susan Avery, Director of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution summarized the symposium: Last week there was a special international symposium held at Rutgers in honor of Fred Grassle, who is stepping down as director of the Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences to resume his research. Fred has a long history with WHOI and has been a major figure in the fields of benthic ecology, hydrothermal vent biology, and global biodiversity. More than 40 speakers from as far away as France, Germany, and Mexico presented their work in the field and reflected on Fred's impact on it. WHOI was well represented by Dudley Foster, George Hampson, Andy Solow, Larry Madin, Dana Yoerger, Rudi and Ami Scheltema and Lauren Mullineaux, as well as a number of former WHOI staff members. Fred worked at WHOI from 1969 to 1991 and, as the chief scientist on the 1979 multi-institution expedition to the Galápagos vent sites, organized the first team of biologists to ever examine how animals thrive in an environment that seemed so harsh. He described that experience in a 1998 *Oceanus* article, which can be read [HERE](#). The Rutgers Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences - the house that Fred built - continues to be a research partner for WHOI, most recently on two new proposals to NOAA for cooperative institutes. A special edition of the journal *Deep-Sea Research* will be published from the symposium proceedings with a tentative title "Marine Benthic Ecology and Biodiversity: A Compilation of Recent Advances in Honor of J. Frederick Grassle."

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