

VIEW FROM THE CANOPY



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UC SANTA CRUZ AND UC IRVINE ESTABLISH PERMANENT MEMBERSHIP

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For many institutions, membership in OTS is viewed as an extension into the tropics for their own graduate and undergraduate programs in biology and related fields; a research base for their students, postdocs, and faculty; a source of scholarships and fellowships in the tropics; and a means of recruiting graduate students to their institutions. Leading research-oriented institutions of higher learning also benefit from membership in OTS by being part of an elite group of institutions that share interests in tropical education, research, conservation, and the responsible use of natural resources. In fact, OTS provides more monetary benefits to its member institutions – in terms of lower tuition and station fees and scholarships and fellowships alone – than it receives in annual dues. Nonetheless, given the struggling economy and the shrinking budgets faced by many institutions of higher learning, paying the annual dues

has become an increasing challenge for many OTS member institutions.

To address this concern, the OTS Board of Directors adopted a new Permanent Membership option for institutions. Permanent Membership requires a payment of 16 times the annual dues level, which ensures full benefits for the institution permanently. For 2011-12, this option is \$153,600. The benefits of this option are numerous. Establishing a permanent membership negates the annual stress of paying dues; ensures that, even in difficult financial times, opportunities through OTS will be available to students; provides a discounted membership over time; creates an opportunity for donors at the home institution; and provides an opportunity for planned giving bequests, especially for faculty and alumni who have benefited from OTS.

UC Santa Cruz Shows their Commitment

This past year, University of California-Santa Cruz faced the possibility of not being able to pay annual dues and removing themselves as members of OTS. According to Assembly of Delegate member Dr. Greg Gilbert, "Everyone at UCSC recognized the value of OTS membership, but because UCSC graduate students that benefit from OTS come from a diversity of departments and divisions, every year the OTS delegates spent hours justifying why OTS dues should get priority over any of a number of other worthy programs. With increasing economic pressures, each division had many more needs than funds to go around. In many years, the UCSC Center for Tropical Ecology,

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THE MELLON CHALLENGE:

EDUCATION ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN BUILDS A SOLID FOUNDATION

It is with great pleasure that we announce the completion of the challenge grant awarded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation back in June of 2007. The Foundation agreed to match every dollar OTS raised for the OTS Education Endowment up to \$1.5 million, with the goal of having a \$3 million dollar endowment in place by June 30, 2011.

Gifts from a number of key individuals and families, including the Rowe Family, Jay Savage and Rebecca Papendick, and the estates of Andrew Starrett and Joan Slatkin Barton, enabled us to meet the Mellon Challenge by the end of this past June. Most importantly, the gifts to the Donald E. Stone Memorial Endowment fund and the matching gift from Beverly Stone and the Stone Family were part of the Mellon Challenge and enabled us to establish a significant graduate scholarship fund in the memory of our former executive director and CEO.

The new education endowment will focus on strengthening the organization's core training programs and provide scholarships for U.S., Latin American, and South African students. We acknowledge the wonderful opportunity the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has given us to put this endowment into place. The A.W. Mellon Foundation has been a long-standing supporter of our educational programs and, in challenging us to establish this endowment, has provided permanent fund for our training programs after nearly three decades of support.



The OTS Membership Committee is pleased to announce the third annual OTS Outstanding Student Paper Award. We invite nominations for a \$500 cash prize for excellence in research via an outstanding publication in tropical biology written by a student.

Eligibility and Nomination:

At the time of the nomination deadline, the paper must be published or accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal and reporting work completed within the tropics. To be eligible:

- 1 the author must have been a student (undergraduate or graduate) when the research was completed, and,
- 2 satisfy at least one of the following three criteria:
 - nominee is an alum of an OTS course
 - work was completed at an OTS research station (La Selva, Las Cruces, Palo Verde)
 - nominee is (was) a student at an OTS member institution. Institutional members may be found here: <http://www.ots.ac.cr/>

In addition, the nominee must be the first author and the paper must be published no more than 36 months before the award deadline. Self-nominations or nominations by research advisors or colleagues are invited.

If you have questions, please email Dr. Lena Struwe at: struwe@aesop.rutgers.edu.

Announcement of Award Recipient will be made at March 2012 OTS Assembly of Delegates Meeting and will be recognized at the ATBC meeting.

Selection Criteria:

Applications will be reviewed by an Awards Committee formed by a subcommittee of the OTS Assembly of Delegates. Papers will be judged upon the paper's contribution to the field including originality, study design, and potential impact on the field of study.

Nomination packets should consist of a single pdf document and include:

- 1 A nomination letter briefly describing the paper and outlining the qualification criteria from the list above.
- 2 A copy of the paper.
- 3 A brief letter from an advisor, colleague or scientist in a relevant field of study describing the impact of the paper on the field (optional, but strongly suggested).
- 4 A CV from the nominee

Submitting Applications

Send nomination packet electronically as a pdf to the chair of the Awards Committee, awards.ots@gmail.com

Application Deadline

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2011



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UC SANTA CRUZ AND UC IRVINE ESTABLISH PERMANENT MEMBERSHIP

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Agriculture, and Development (CentTREAD) had to raise private donations to meet the shortfall."

Dr. Gilbert and several of his colleagues felt that permanent membership would be an ideal solution for UC Santa Cruz. He began the process by working with an anonymous donor who recognized the value of OTS for the university. "I worked with our donor to get a significant commitment to launch the effort. I then approached UCSC Professor Emeritus Jean Langenheim, a long-time OTS supporter, who generously offered another large donation towards the effort. CentTREAD, with the help of our anonymous donor had put together an OTS nest-egg over a few years, Professor Ingrid Parker rounded up some funds she controlled from the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department, and I contributed funds from the Pepper-Giberson Chair that I hold. All together we had pulled together about \$95,000 to go to the Deans and central Administration. They quickly saw we were serious about the importance of permanent membership, that a one-time investment on their parts would be a great contribution to scholarly opportunities for UCSC students and faculty in the tropics."

This effort included critical input from over 15 key individuals, but the result has created stability for UCSC and future graduate students. When asked what if he had any

advice for other institutions considering permanent membership, Dr. Gilbert said, "I think the most important aspect at UCSC was to show that those of us pushing for OTS permanent membership were willing to do the legwork up front and bring something significant to the table. That caught the attention of administrators who are constantly juggling urgent and important requests for funding, and help move us to the front of the priority list."

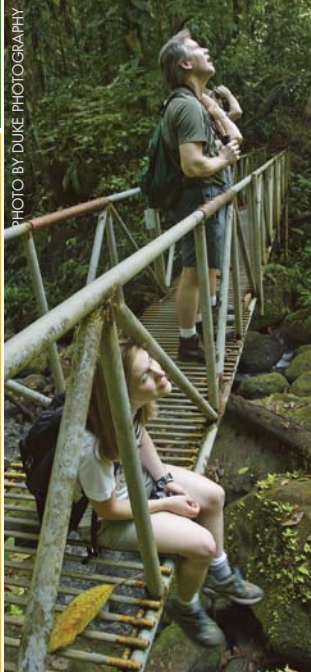
UC Irvine Raises Funds Through Ongoing Campaign

Dr. Kailen Mooney at University of California-Irvine was facing a similar situation. With increasing fiscal pressures to cut their budget, finding the money for annual dues was so difficult that the OTS Delegates and campus supporters had begun to accept that they would need to put their OTS membership on hold for a while. Nevertheless, as the UCI delegate to the OTS Assembly Dr. Mooney asked Dr. Elisabeth Losos to visit their campus to raise awareness of the benefits of OTS membership, and if nothing else, hopefully solidify that a hiatus would only be short term. During her visit and meetings with the Dean of Biological Sciences, Dr. Al Bennett, and other campus personnel, Dr. Losos discussed the benefits of permanent membership. Dean Bennett, a former OTS faculty member, saw the opportunity to fold this into

a UCI Capital Campaign; given that the amount is within the ability of many donors to afford. "Ironically, while it was it was nearly impossible to internally scrape up \$10K that year, it seemed more plausible to garner a donation of \$150K," said Dr. Mooney. Shortly after the vehicle of permanent membership was established, Dean Bennett approached an anonymous donor who has previously been generous to Biological Sciences and who, as an undergraduate, worked in the lab of Lynn Carpenter (an OTS alumna, OTS Delegate, and long-time researcher near Las Cruces Biological Station, Costa Rica). This donor was very enthusiastic and committed to paying the full fees for lifetime membership and named the membership in Dr. Carpenter's honor. As Dr. Mooney puts it, "In short, a fiscal crisis on campus forced us to look off campus for a more permanent solution, and at every step our ability to secure the funds for lifetime membership came through a chain of individuals that had history and commitment to OTS."

If you would like more information about how your institution can establish a permanent membership with OTS, please contact the Chair of the Institutional Membership committee, Dr. Cindy Sagers, at csagers@nsf.gov or Dr. Elisabeth Losos, OTS President and CEO (elosos@duke.edu).





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About OTS

OTS is a non-profit consortium of over 50 research institutions, colleges and universities from the United States, Latin America, Africa and Australia. OTS' mission is to promote education, research, and the responsible use of natural resources in the tropics.

The View from the Canopy is produced by the OTS Development Office. To submit comments or news items, please contact Cathleen Lemoine at 919-684-6969 or via e-mail at cathleen.lemoine@duke.edu.



OTS GRADUATE COURSES IN COSTA RICA 2012-2013

Nothing can replace the hands-on experience of a field-based course in the tropics! This is what OTS offers through its broad range of Tropical Biology and Ecology graduate level courses in Spanish or English in Costa Rica. OTS graduate courses are open to students enrolled in graduate degree programs, with preference given to students at OTS member institutions.

Traditional Courses 2012 and 2013 (5-8 week courses)

Ecología Tropical y Conservación (in Spanish)

January 12 – February 21, 2012
 *Application Deadline: June 30, 2011
 January 10 – February 19, 2013
 *Application Deadline: June 15, 2012

Tropical Biology: An Ecological Approach

January 23 – March 12, 2012
 *Application Deadline: October 7, 2011
 June 7 – July 29, 2013
 *Application Deadline: March 1, 2013

Tropical Plant Systematics

June 6 – July 9, 2012
 *Application Deadline: March 1, 2012

Sistemática de Plantas Tropicales (in Spanish)

June 28 – July 31, 2013
 *Application Deadline:
 November 1, 2012

Specialty Courses 2012 (2 week courses)

Behavior, Ecology and Diversity of Neotropical Social Insects

March 17 – 31, 2012
 *Application Deadline:
 October 15, 2011†

Tropical Lichens and Forest Health: a Multidisciplinary Approach

May 21 – June 1, 2012
 *Application Deadline:
 February 1, 2012†

Diversity and Systematics of Coleoptera (Beetles)

June 6 – 19, 2012
 *Application Deadline:
 February 13, 2012†

Inquiry in Rainforests: an in-service program for teachers

July 11 – 24, 2012
 *Application Deadline:
 April 12, 2012†

Tropical Fungi and Fungal-likes

August 3 – 13, 2012
 *Application Deadline:
 March 9, 2012†

* Notification date is within 30-45 days after the application deadline

† Rolling Admissions

For more information, please visit us online at www.ots.duke.edu.

All courses will maintain open enrollment past the original deadline date until filled