

Scripps Oceanography Building Honors Late, Legendary Oceanographer Fred Spiess

Scripps campus building to be rededicated as Spiess Hall during a ceremony at 2 p.m., Jan. 23

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UC San Diego Chancellor Marye Anne Fox along with Scripps Institution of Oceanography Director Tony Haymet will rededicate the existing Scripps Nierenberg Hall Annex (NTV) building as Spiess Hall. The naming of the building recognizes the exceptional career and life of late, legendary Scripps oceanographer Fred Noel Spiess. The building rededication will take place outside Nierenberg Hall/Keck Center on the Scripps Oceanography campus (8851 Shellback Way, La Jolla, CA 92093-0213) at a ceremony to be held at 2 p.m., Jan. 23, 2009.

Spiess, who died in 2006, had been affiliated with Scripps Oceanography since 1952 and was a distinguished scientist and former director of Scripps. At the time of his death, Spiess was a professor emeritus of oceanography at the Scripps Marine Physical Laboratory and had a successful scientific career that spanned more than 50 years. During this period, he had an enormous impact on ocean sciences as a sea-going researcher who led an average of two major oceanographic expeditions a year for more than 40 years.

Spiess was widely known for his contributions to the development of innovative ocean technology. He was tireless in defining new ways to look at the deep ocean and seafloor. He designed and built instruments, took them to sea for deployment and led numerous expeditions to investigate the deepest parts of the world's oceans. He was also co-inventor of the one-of-a-kind research platform called FLIP, the Floating Instrument Platform, almost 50 years ago. FLIP, which is still in use today, is towed out to sea, then ballast tanks are flooded, causing a 90-degree horizontal-to-vertical flip. This vertical orientation creates a stable platform for conducting research at sea.

The current NTV building was built in 1999 and many of its occupants are members of the Marine Physical Lab, which Spiess helped establish.

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