

Bruce Appelgate Appointed to Lead Scripps Ship Operations

Marine geology and ocean technology expert to manage Scripps fleet

January 30, 2008

Mario Aguilera

Bruce Appelgate, a research scientist and leader in ocean technology and seafloor mapping, has been named associate director for Ship Operations and Marine Technical Support at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego.

Appelgate joins Scripps from the University of Hawaii's Institute of Geophysics and Planetology. Most recently he served as an associate research specialist and director of the Ocean Technology Group, part of the university's School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology.

"Scripps is an established leader in expeditionary oceanographic research, and my job is to make sure the Scripps research fleet continues to provide scientists with the best possible access to the sea," said Appelgate.

Appelgate will oversee Scripps' four research vessels, which make up one of the largest academic fleets in the world. He also will administer the Scripps Nimitz Marine Facility, the support and management center for the Scripps fleet in San Diego's Point Loma community. The Shipboard Technical Support unit of Scripps, providing seagoing technical expertise and systems on Scripps and other research vessels, also falls within Appelgate's purview.

"Exploring and investigating the world's oceans through our research vessels is a vital component of Scripps' mission and I'm thrilled that Bruce Appelgate will be leading our ship operations," said Scripps Director Tony Haymet. "With our planet facing crises such as environmental pressures on our oceans and ocean resources, it's more important than ever that Scripps' ships and the entire academic fleet receive the investment and leadership that are commensurate with the scientific payback they deliver to science and society."

The Scripps fleet, which conducts scientific operations around the planet, includes the flagship global-class research vessel (R/V) *Roger Revelle*, named after the former Scripps director and founder of UC San Diego; the R/V *Melville*, a global-class ship that circumnavigated the globe from 2002-2004; the R/V *New Horizon*, an intermediate-class vessel that operates primarily in the eastern Pacific Ocean; and the R/V *Robert Gordon Sproul*, a regional class vessel that conducts short missions off the U.S. West Coast.

The Nimitz Marine Facility also provides support to the Floating Instrument Platform, or FLIP, a one-of-a-kind spar buoy (operated by Scripps' Marine Physical Laboratory) designed as a stable platform for certain oceanographic research operations. The facility serves as home port for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ship *David Starr Jordan* and hosts visiting research vessels from other institutions.

As part of his new appointment, Appelgate will play an active role in the University-National Oceanographic Laboratory System (UNOLS), a 61-member organization of academic institutions and laboratories involved in oceanographic research. UNOLS coordinates oceanographic ship schedules and research facilities.

"My job here is as a manager, to coordinate with state and federal agencies and help both facilitate the pursuit of science and the dissemination of scientific results," said Appelgate. "In a larger context, research vessels play an important role in current studies of climate change, an idea that was born here at Scripps. The observations we make from ships help us understand how such processes are affecting us now and what's going to happen to us next."

Appelgate, who grew up in the city of Poway east of San Diego, said his first experience in oceanography was in elementary school during a class field trip taking samples off a ship on San Diego Bay. After graduating from Poway High School, Appelgate received his bachelor's degree in geology in 1985 from Humboldt State University. He earned a master's degree in oceanography in 1988 from Oregon State University and his Ph.D. in 1995 in marine geology and geophysics from the University of Hawaii.

He said he was drawn to research ships through an avid interest in ocean technology. "As much as I enjoyed conducting my own scientific research, I enjoy technology's role in the pursuit of scientific discovery even more," said Appelgate.

Appelgate takes over duties from Robert Knox, a research oceanographer who served as associate director for Ship Operations and Marine Technical Support since 1991.

Appelgate has authored or coauthored research papers in publications including *Geology*, *the Journal of Geophysical Research* and *Marine Geology*. His awards and honors include a National Science Foundation Fellowship, a National Research Council Resident Research Associateship, the J. Watumull Merit Scholarship and several Society of Exploration Geophysicists Foundation Scholarships.

He is a member of several scientific organizations, including the American Geophysical Union, the Geological Society of America and the UNOLS Research Vessel Technical Enhancement Committee.

Media Contact: Mario Aguilera or Cindy Clark, 858-534-3624



