



# University-National Oceanographic Laboratory System 2010 Annual Report

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*Crew lift a box core aboard the R/V Pelican in the Gulf of Mexico. The R/V Pelican spent much of 2010 conducting science in response to the Deep Horizon oil spill (photo credit: Chris Berkey).*

## *Message from the UNOLS Chair*

### *Progress and Challenges - The Year in Review and a Look Forward*

The past year in UNOLS has been highlighted by progress in a number of areas. They include:

\* UNOLS and NOAA vessels carried out research cruises in the Gulf of Mexico in response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and demonstrated the importance of a versatile academic fleet to address problems of national importance.

\* UNOLS, NSF Office of Polar Programs, and NSF OCE have been working towards their goal of enhanced collaboration between their organizations: 1) UNOLS is carrying out a Science Mission Requirements (SMR) Refresh for a new polar research vessel, 2) UNOLS institutions responded to NSF's solicitation to identify an institution that would provide dedicated cruise planning and steward science equipment onboard *Healy*, and 3) the possibility of sending a UNOLS Regional Class vessel to the Antarctic for science operations is being explored.

\* A new outreach program was initiated to provide training to marine scientists in the early stages of their careers for pursuing oceanographic fieldwork. Two training cruises aboard the R/V *Wecoma* were an integral part of this program.

Considerable progress was made on fleet renewal. With the recognition that the fleet needs new vessels to address the needs of the oceanographic community over the next thirty years, UNOLS, federal agencies, and a number of operator institutions have worked hard to address this critical infrastructural need. This year construction of the ice-strengthened R/V *Sikuliaq* began, operators for two Ocean Class vessels were selected with the construction award to begin in fall 2011, and plans for three regional vessels continued to be developed.

Although this progress is very encouraging, there are both short and long-term challenges to address that will affect fleet renewal. In the short term, funding and construction of the Regional Class vessels will be critical. Funding issues will be a long-term challenge, as well. The current budget discussions in Washington, D.C. suggest leaner budgets for many federal agencies, including those focused on the oceans. With the need for fleet renewal, the launch of the Ocean Observatories Initiative, and continuation of the Integrated Ocean Drilling Program, the ocean science community will need to make careful decisions on how to fund infrastructure and ocean science in the future. A capable and diverse fleet of research vessels will be critical, and continuing fleet renewal is central to maintaining this capability.

Regards,  
Bruce Corliss, Chair



*Bruce Corliss, UNOLS Chair  
Duke/UNC Oceanographic Consortium*



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## *Meeting Minutes:*

### **November 2009**

- Research Vessel Technical Enhancement Committee - University of Washington, Seattle, WA

### **December 2009**

- Arctic Icebreaker Coordinating Committee Meeting - ISCG Integrated Support Center, Seattle, WA
- Deep Submergence Science Committee Meeting - Fall AGU Meeting, San Francisco, CA
- Marcus Langseth Science Oversight Committee Meeting - Fall AGU Meeting, San Francisco, CA

### **February 2010**

- Scientific Committee for Oceanographic Aircraft Research Town Hall Meeting - Ocean Sciences, Portland, OR

### **March 2010**

- Fleet Improvement Committee Meeting - University of Southern Mississippi, Stennis, MS
- UNOLS Council Meeting - University of Southern Mississippi, Stennis, MS

### **April 2010**

- Research Vessel Operators' Committee Meeting - University of Rhode Island, Narragansett, RI
- Arctic Icebreaker Coordinating Committee Meeting - Consortium for Ocean Leadership, Washington, DC

### **May 2010**

- Deep Submergence Science Committee Meeting - Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Woods Hole, MA

### **June 2010**

- Council Meeting, via Teleconference
- Scientific Committee for Oceanographic Aircraft Research Meeting, - Center for Interdisciplinary Remotely-Piloted Aircraft Studies, Marina, CA

### **September 2010**

- Ship Scheduling Committee Meeting - National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA

### **October 2010**

- Fleet Improvement Committee Meeting - National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA
- UNOLS Council Meeting - National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA
- UNOLS Annual Meeting - National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA

### ***Other Items of Interest:***

- Message from the UNOLS Chair - Dr. Bruce Corliss, Duke/UNC Marine Consortium
- Foreword - Jon Alberts, UNOLS Executive Secretary
- 2010-2011 Important Issues and Objectives
- UNOLS Committee News
- UNOLS Charter
- Council and Committee Members
- Contacts and Ship Information: Marine Operations, Ship Scheduling, and Technical Managers Points of Contact



# Acknowledgements & Disclaimer

*The UNOLS Office would like to acknowledge the continued support of the following federal agencies:*



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# Foreword & UNOLS Information

## Foreword

The UNOLS Consortium successfully met the challenges and demands of an ever-changing climate in 2010 on many fronts. We have kept very busy on a multitude of projects, meetings, and community-wide efforts as our role continues to expand. We added a new standing committee, the Ocean Observing Science Committee (OOSC), to represent the science user in plans for the Ocean Observatories Initiative. We organized a new committee to conduct a project refresh for a polar research vessel with a focus on identifying future polar region science questions and the science mission capabilities needed to answer these questions. The Technician Recruitment and Retention Pilot Program made great strides forward, and various UNOLS committees and members provided extremely valuable input and advice on fleet renewal, in particular the Ocean Class and Regional Class vessels. With funding from the federal agencies, our scientists, crews, technicians and ships were able to respond to the Gulf of Mexico Deepwater Horizon spill research programs. This is just a snap shot of the varied efforts we worked on, there are dozens more.

This ability to step forward and take on new challenges with skill, expertise, and flexibility, further endorses the UNOLS model. The backbone of UNOLS is the volunteer efforts of the ocean science community. The UNOLS office provides the structure and it is the contributions of everyone who bring this all together.

We are ever grateful to the federal agency representatives at the National Science Foundation, Office of Naval Research, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Geological Survey, and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation, & Enforcement for their continued support.

The UNOLS organization will celebrate our 40th Anniversary in 2011 and the UNOLS Office looks forward to many more years of supporting the oceanographic research community.

*-Jon Alberts, UNOLS Executive Secretary*

## What is UNOLS?

The University-National Oceanographic Laboratory System is an organization of 61 U.S. institutions that have academic research and education programs in the ocean sciences and an interest in promoting the best possible national shared-use facilities to support these programs. Sixteen of the UNOLS institutions are operators of these major shared-use facilities, including research vessels, submersibles, aircraft and major instrumentation. Facilities are owned either by one of the Federal Agencies or by individual institutions. UNOLS serves in an advisory role to the facility operators and to the supporting institutions.

**UNOLS Vision** - A healthy and vigorous United States research and education program in the ocean sciences with broad access to the best possible mix of modern, capable, efficiently run, and well-operated research vessels, aircraft, submersibles and other major shared-use facilities.

**UNOLS Mission** - UNOLS provides a primary forum through which the ocean science research and education community, research facility operators and the supporting Federal Agencies can work cooperatively to improve access, scheduling, operation and capabilities of current and future academic oceanographic facilities.

## UNOLS Goals and Priorities for 2011

- Promote broad, coordinated access to oceanographic research facilities
- Support continuous improvement of existing facilities
- Plan for and foster support for the oceanographic facilities of the future
- Explore options for the establishment of a UNOLS Speaker Series

## *The following persons were elected to terms on the UNOLS Council at the October 2010 Meeting:*

Dr. Peter Ortner, University of Miami - Elected as UNOLS Chair-Elect

Dr. Nancy Rabalais, Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium - Re-elected to a 2nd term as At-Large Representative

Dr. John Morrison, University of North Carolina at Wilmington - Re-elected to a 2nd term as Non-Operator Representative