

# MBL SPECIAL LECTURE SERIES

Monday, July 11, 2011 at 9 AM • Speck Auditorium



## *The Richard G. Kessel Lecture in Embryology*

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### 150 years of ascidian embryology, from cell lineages to molecular mechanisms

ROBERT W. ZELLER, *San Diego State University*

Dr. Robert W. Zeller is an associate professor of Biology at the San Diego State University, California. He graduated *Summa Cum Laude* with Distinction from Boston University with a B.A. in Biology and spent his senior year in residence at the Marine Biological Laboratory studying ascidian development with Dr. J. Richard Whittaker. He obtained his Ph.D. in Developmental Biology from the California Institute of Technology where he studied the molecular mechanisms of sea urchin embryo development with Dr. Eric Davidson. Dr. Zeller returned to study ascidian development as a postdoctoral fellow with Dr. Michael Levine and Dr. John Newport at the University of California, San Diego. Since joining the faculty at San Diego State University in 2001, Dr. Zeller has focused his attention on the development of the ascidian nervous system. He has been involved with the Embryology Course since 1992, first as a teaching assistant and then as a faculty member since 1998.

#### ABOUT THE RICHARD G. KESSEL LECTURE IN EMBRYOLOGY

Native Iowan Richard G. Kessel has long been fascinated by the ocean, and has devoted much of his career to the study of the diversity and development of marine organisms. After receiving his B.S. in Chemistry from Parsons College in 1953, he entered the University of Iowa as a graduate student in Zoology. While a student there, Dr. Kessel studied the fine structure and physiology of insect pericardial and subesophageal body cells. During his graduate training, an invertebrate zoology course stimulated his curiosity about marine organisms.

Dr. Kessel received his Ph.D. in 1959 and accepted a position in the anatomy department at Wake Forest Medical School. In 1961, he returned to the University of Iowa, where he moved through the ranks to professor. In 1997, after 36 years of teaching, research, and service, Dr. Kessel retired from the University.

Dr. Kessel spent the summer of 1957 in Woods Hole, as a participant in the MBL's Embryology course. He was a graduate student at the time, and the curriculum and seaside setting dovetailed with his flourishing interests in the ocean and marine organisms. He enjoyed the discussions and interactions that occurred in the course and published the results of his course project in the journal *Experimental Cell Research*.

Dr. Kessel has published more than 120 research and review articles, and is the author of five books on subjects including histology; scanning electron microscopy; and specialized techniques related to cell, tissue, and organ microscopy.



Biological  
Discovery  
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