

UW-MADISON EMERITUS PROFESSOR IS AWARDED *HONORIS CAUSA* PH.D. DEGREE FROM MEXICO'S SECOND LARGEST PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

Hugh H. Iltis, Emeritus Professor and Director of the Wisconsin State Herbarium at the Department of Botany of the University of Wisconsin-Madison was awarded this past Wednesday 28 February 2007, an *Honoris causa* Ph.D. degree from the University of Guadalajara, in the state of Jalisco, Mexico. With close to 180,000 students, the University of Guadalajara system is the second largest education institution in Mexico and one of the largest in Latin America. Participants in the event were the Rector General, Jose Trinidad Padilla Lopez, Executive Vice-Rector, Raul Vargas, the Secretary General Carlos Briseno and the Rector of the Centro Universitario de la Costa Sur campus, Mtro. Enrique Solorzano. During the ceremony Dr. Gonzalo Halffter, one of the historic leaders of UNESCO's Biosphere Reserve program was also awarded an honorary doctorate.

Hugh H. Iltis was born in Brno, Czechoslovakia, emigrated to the United States in 1939, and received his Ph. D. from the Missouri Botanical Garden- Washington University, St. Louis, in 1952. He has devoted his life to the study of the flora of Wisconsin, the Neotropical species of the Caper Family (Capparaceae), and *Zea*, the genus of the cultivated maize and the ancestral teosintes. As co-describer of the fourth known species of *Zea*, namely *Z. Diploperennis*, Iltis became godfather to the establishment of the Sierra de Manatlan Biosphere Reserve in Western Mexico. A strong advocate of Biophilia, the gene-based human need for contact with nature and natural patterns, and a well-known fighter for nature preservation and population control, he was a professor of botany at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the director of the herbarium from 1955 to 1993. Now emeritus, he is still active in the herbarium. For his contributions in the fields of plant taxonomy and nature conservation Dr. Iltis has received numerous awards including the Presidential Certificate of Merit (1987, Mexico); recognition by the Conservation Council of Hawaii (1990); Sol Feinstone Environmental Award (1990); National Wildlife Federation Merit Award (1992), Society for Conservation Biology Service Award (1994); University of Guadalajara's Luz Maria Villareal de Puga Medal (1994); Asa Gray Award (1994); Merit award (1996) and Centennial award (2006) from the American Society of Botany, among others.

Dr. Iltis was the initiator in 1979 of the academic cooperation program between the University of Wisconsin- Madison and the University of Guadalajara, first through his botanical research initiatives and later, in 1988, by promoting a formal institutional cooperative agreement. This collaboration later grew with the participation of the Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies and the Department of Wildlife Ecology. More recently, in March 2005 UW System President Kevin P. Reilly and Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle, signed a memorandum of understanding for implementing the "Jalisco-Wisconsin Consortium" promoted by UW-Madison's Global Health Program, through the School of Medicine, the Animal Studies Program, and the University of Guadalajara's Centro Universitario de los Altos led by Dr. Armando Macias. Wisconsin and Jalisco formally maintain a "sister state" relation since 1990. More than 35 and 20 faculty members from over 12 departments and institutes of the University of Wisconsin have participated for the past two decades in the successful international academic cooperation program.

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