



# report of the director and ceo



Gary G. Borisy

I am honored to have been selected to serve as Director and CEO of the Marine Biological Laboratory. The MBL is a very special place, and I am pleased to be a part of this important institution at what I think is an especially exciting time in the laboratory's history.

The past nine months have been a wonderful whirlwind for me and my wife, Sally Casper. Since arriving in July, we've had the pleasure of meeting many members of the MBL family at a number of events in Woods Hole, on Cape Cod, and around the country. Everywhere I go I hear the quintessential MBL "story": how someone fell in love with doing science (or their future spouse) at the MBL; how an MBL course changed a student's life; how a certain scientific interaction or collaboration at the MBL changed a career. I know from my own personal experience just how transforming the MBL can be to a scientist, regardless of age or professional rank.

In addition to traveling and talking with MBL stakeholders at all levels of the institution, much of my time in recent months has been spent learning about the complexities of day-to-day operations, attending seminars, visiting courses and conferences, meeting with staff and faculty, and developing a financial, programmatic, and fundraising plan for the next decade.

## Setting the Stage

Before my tenure began, considerable work had already been completed to position the MBL for continued success. I owe a great debt of gratitude to my predecessor, Bill Speck, for all his efforts over the past several years, especially in the area of strategic planning. The Strategic Plan that he, John Dowling, and many members of the MBL Community worked on so tirelessly has provided an important roadmap for the institution's future. I congratulate everyone for their efforts and heartily endorse the plan.



Many of the recommendations outlined in the plan were already in the process of being implemented before my arrival: the expansion of the Board of Trustees, the appointment of a Chief Academic and Scientific Officer, the creation of a joint graduate program and affiliation with Brown University, and the development of a campus master plan.

Another major recommendation, the renovation of the Whitman building, was also on the drawing board. In April of 2006, the MBL borrowed \$34 million at extremely favorable rates, enabling us to retire both a 2000 bond and an old note and providing approximately \$18.8 million to spend on new capital projects. About \$11 million of that has been spent this past year on the renovation of the Whitman building, which opened its doors this May. The renovation process went remarkably smoothly, given that our contractors had a mere nine months to gut and renovate a 34,000 square foot building. Our director of facilities and special projects, Richard Cutler and his staff are to be congratulated for their efforts to keep the project on track and within budget. The remaining bond funds have been used to support other capital projects at the MBL including the renovation of laboratory space in Lillie, the renovation of the Swope Center dining hall, the upgrading of cottages at Devil's Lane and Memorial Circle, and the reconstruction of a portion of the Lillie seawall.

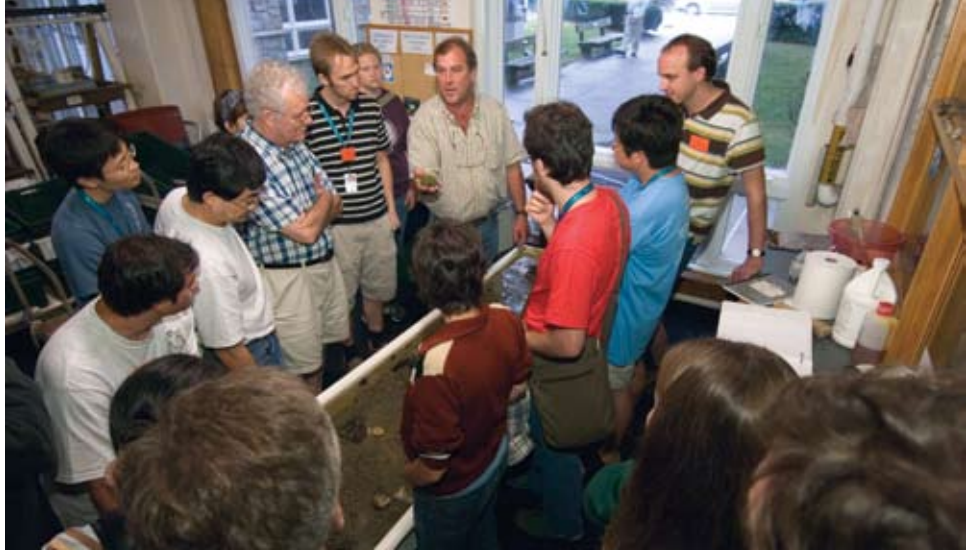
The MBL also spent a great deal of time over the past two years refining its communications efforts and retooling its portfolio of print and electronic publications. In the past year we launched a new four-color magazine, *MBL Catalyst*, which will be published twice a year. The magazine, which is distributed to 15,000+ MBL constituents, has been extremely well received. We also began sending quarterly electronic newsletters to Corporation members, faculty, and alumni, providing a regular behind-the-scenes update on the activities of the laboratory. Most recently we refreshed our website, [www.mbl.edu](http://www.mbl.edu), making it more graphically pleasing and easier to navigate. Initiatives like these are extremely important as we prepare to present the MBL to a wider, often non-scientific audience.

One of the most exciting developments in the life of the MBL happened as I was ratified in my appointment. Our new Chairman of the Board, John W. Rowe, announced at the May 2006 meeting of the Board of Trustees that he and his wife Valerie would make a gift of \$5 million to the MBL to build capacity. This transformational gift may be used at the discretion of the director to enhance existing, and create new, programs. It is the largest gift made by an individual in the history of the institution, and I am grateful to Jack and Valerie for their commitment and support.

In honor of this far-sighted gift, I'm delighted to announce that the newly renovated Whitman building will be rededicated the Rowe Laboratory at a ceremony that will be held on August 3, 2007, the same day as the annual meeting of the MBL Corporation. I hasten to add that the Whitman name will continue to hold a special place at the MBL as it will now be attached to our oldest and most distinctive building, the Candle House.



*Artist's rendering of the completed Rowe Laboratory*



### Moving Forward

Although much progress has been made towards implementing the strategic plan, two areas need special attention: strengthening and expanding our resident research programs and developing a robust and sustainable financial plan for the future.

MBL senior staff and I have been analyzing the financial strengths and weaknesses of the MBL's various research, education, and housing/dining/conferencing sectors. It is clear from this analysis that we need to build our endowment in all areas, increase our revenues where appropriate, and explore ways our already lean institution can further streamline expenses.

I have also been consulting with scientists both at the MBL and elsewhere and giving much thought to how best to strengthen and expand our resident research programs. Our programs in microbial diversity and ecosystems ecology are outstanding. Finding opportunities to leverage the strengths of both these programs to create new, differentiable, and exciting areas of research at the MBL are critical as is developing other areas of research that can be done uniquely or to special advantage at the MBL.

One new area that we are considering is regenerative biology, exploiting the exceptional properties of marine organisms, taken together with the powerful new tools of genomics, advanced imaging, and systems physiology.



As we all know, developing new programs and recruiting and retaining the best scientists is a costly endeavor. And building vital endowment for existing as well as new programs is a challenge. Success in these areas will require a major fundraising initiative over the next five to ten years. To this end, and in conjunction with the financial plan, we are developing a preliminary document that describes our proposed areas of growth and investment at the MBL. We are beginning to share it with stakeholders as we take the first steps in assessing the institution's readiness to undertake a major fundraising campaign.

The MBL has enjoyed a celebrated past and I believe that even greater things lie ahead. The path forward will be challenging, but with a commitment from everyone who cares about this laboratory, we can accomplish great science and continue to imbue the next generation with a passion for discovery.

I am proud and honored to have been chosen to serve this renowned and venerable institution and look forward to working with you in the future.

—Gary G. Borisy