

JERRY M. MERZ

AWARD OF MERIT FOR SERVICE

The Academy's transition into the age of electronic communication and dissemination of knowledge is due to the tireless efforts of one individual—Dr. Jerry M. Merz, Senior Research Scientist in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at Oklahoma State University. His efforts on behalf of the Academy were formally recognized at the 90th Annual Technical Meeting on November 2, 2001 at Cameron University when Immediate Past President Ronald J. Tyrl presented him with the Academy's Award of Merit for Service.



Jerry has served as the Academy's webmaster since it went on-line in 1994. Worthy of note is the fact that OAS was among the very first academies, if not the first, to have its own website, and it has served as a model for those of other academies. Because of Jerry's imagination and diligence, individuals throughout the United States, and even through-out the world, access the activities of OAS. This claim is not hyperbole, but based on the requests for information from individuals who cite the website as their initial point of contact.

Because of Jerry's work "behind the scenes," many society activities that we are now starting to take for granted have occurred. Illustrative of his work are the present: (1) on-line registration for field and technical meetings, (2) on-line submission of titles of papers presented at technical meetings, and (3) electronic links to the Academy's *Proceedings* and other scientific websites. In addition, communication among the Academy's officers is facilitated by his creation and maintenance of a mail exchange. These examples are just a few of the many ideas that he has proposed;

undoubtedly all will eventually be incorporated into the workings of the Academy.

Jerry cites a technical meeting of the Academy with influencing his decision to work in the disciplines of animal physiology and biochemistry. While he was earning his BS in biology at the University of Tulsa, he was invited by a faculty mentor to present a paper on the results of his study on bat carpels. A conversation with Calvin Beames, moderator of the session in which Jerry presented, led to his becoming a graduate student

working with Beames at Oklahoma State University. He earned his MS in 1969 and his PhD in 1977. Sandwiched between completions of the two degrees was research for the U.S. Navy on the cardio-pulmonary physiology of deep submergence. Following completion of his doctorate, he became a research scientist in the Department of Biochemistry at OSU and is the author of numerous research publications. In addition, he has become the department's resident "computer wizard" and maintains its three research and teaching computer laboratories, the department's network, and the individual systems of his fellow scientists. Not surprisingly, two recent publications have dealt with the use of computers in collecting data in scientific research.

The Academy is most fortunate that Jerry has volunteered his expertise and time to create a website that provides the world access to OAS. His endeavors have greatly advanced the its mission of promoting science and disseminating scientific knowledge. The 2001 Award of Merit for Service is formal recognition of the Academy's appreciation and thanks.