



WOODS HOLE
OCEANOGRAPHIC
INSTITUTION

Peter de Menocal, President & Director

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Dear Andy,

Congratulations on your 40 years at WHOI! It was fitting (and entertaining) that Bob reminisced about your early days at WHOI at the Employee Appreciation event last week. Of course, Bob didn't even scratch the surface of the many profound contributions you have made to DSL, WHOI, the oceanographic community and – not an understatement – the well-being of our planet.

It is no coincidence that your 40-year career and the state of the art of undersea vehicles are linked. In one way or another, your fingerprints are on every vehicle in the “family tree” you are fond of showing. You helped bring Alvin from a utilitarian sub to its current high-tech iteration, which remains the most advanced, productive and (still) iconic HOV in the world. Your work on ROVs, from the first Jason to Jason Jr to today's workhorse has enabled amazing science. Never satisfied with the “state-of-the-art,” you pioneered Nereus, “fathered” its descendants Nereid HT and NUI, and are now spawning mROV, soon to be ubiquitous on the RCRV and other smaller platforms. And you have stewarded autonomy, too, with the successful entrance of Sentry and later a waveglider into NDSF. This is a body of work!

And you are no arm-chair technologist – you and your tools go to sea and get important work done. NDSF is a remarkable example of efficiency and productivity, with hundreds of days of operations each year, made possible by your leadership and the behind-the-scenes complex engineering, logistics and skilled teams. You have played key roles in Deepwater Horizon, El Farro, OTZ, and many other projects from the tropics, to the arctic, the Med and the Challenger Deep – to explore, support science and respond to critical societal needs.

Another talent, perhaps less well recognized, but no less important, is your ability to establish and maintain great, long-lasting relationships which are critical to secure funding and sustained innovation. The most obvious (besides Bob!) is Brian Midson at NSF – that relationship is exemplary – built on mutual trust and respect; I'm sure his success at NSF is do in a large part to the consistent performance of NDSF under your leadership. You played a key role in attracting Ray Dalio to WHOI. Your long-standing relationship with Jim Cameron has resulted in numerous opportunities and collaborations; the donation of the DeepSea Challenger, philanthropy from the Avatar Alliance and the many contributions of Maria Wilhelm to our board can be linked back to your connection with Jim.

Perhaps, above all, are the qualities you bring to work every day: creative, articulate, and thoughtful, you happily share your knowledge and perspective to colleagues and the next generation of engineers alike, as a mentor, teacher and leader. I've also heard you even can be a little sentimental and that you are assembling a history of deep submergence as a legacy project – no one is better placed to do that since you have been a leading contributor to a transformative time in ocean technology.

On behalf of WHOI and a grateful community, thank you and congratulations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Peter de Menocal".

Peter B. de Menocal