The Charles Lambert Memorial Endowment
at the UW Friday Harbor Laboratories

This Endowment provides assistance to graduate and undergraduate students at FHL to conduct research or to be enrolled for a class or workshop in marine sciences and was established in memory of Charles Lambert, 1935 – 2011.

Charles C. Lambert (Charley), Emeritus Professor of Biological Science at California State University Fullerton and ascidian biologist of international renown, was born in Rockford, IL, but grew up in La Jolla, CA. Following graduation from La Jolla High School, he served 4 years in the Navy as a musician, playing tuba in Navy bands around the world. He then earned his BA and MS degrees from San Diego State University. Charley and I met at the Friday Harbor Labs in 1964 when we were attending summer classes; we married a few months later, transferred to the Univ. of Washington, and Charley received his Ph.D. from UW in 1970. He carried out his NIH-funded doctoral research at the Friday Harbor Labs on Genetic Transcription During the Development and Metamorphosis of the Tunicate Ascidia callosa. Dr. Arthur Whiteley was his graduate advisor and remained a lifelong friend.

Charley joined the Biological Science faculty at CSUF in 1970, where he taught for 28 years before retiring in 1998. He excelled in engaging undergraduate and graduate students in projects that explored early developmental processes in marine invertebrates. Many led to student co-authored posters presented at professional meetings and peer-reviewed publications. He received the CSUF Outstanding Professor Award in 1986 and the Outstanding Health Sciences Professor Award in 1992. He returned most summers to the Friday Harbor Labs for research, and taught comparative embryology of marine invertebrates course five times. Charley was widely respected internationally for his work on ascidians, a small group of marine organisms considered the ancestors of the chordates. Over the course of his career, he discovered important signaling pathways associated with the early events of fertilization in both sperm and egg cells from ascidians. His significant discovery during his first sabbatical leave, at Hopkins Marine Station, of early morphological changes that occur in the ascidian sperm cell, led to numerous grant awards for his research. After retirement he continued to travel to marine labs around the world to do research, teach workshops and give
seminars. Charley organized a number of symposia on asidian biology and was co-organizer of the First Intl. Symposium on the Biology of Ascidians, Sapporo, Japan, 2000, and the 4th Intl. Symposium on the Molecular and Cell Biology of Egg- and Embryo-Coats, Ise-Shima, Japan, 2004. He was a longtime member of the Western Society of Naturalists, serving as president in 1982, and also a member of American Society of Zoologists, Society for Developmental Biology, and American Society for Cell Biology.

Charley loved bicycling, and continued to play the tuba throughout his college and professional career. He was the tubist for the La Mirada Symphony for 16 years while at CSUF, and after retirement was a member of Brass Band NW for several years and the Seattle Symphonic Band for the past 13 years. Photos and tributes can be seen at http://charlesclambertmemorial.shutterfly.com/, and we welcome additions to the website.

Charley authored or co-authored 64 publications, including two this year; a number of them we published together. A complete list can be seen at http://depts.washington.edu/ascidian/. Since 1975, we published the Ascidian News, an international newsletter on all aspects of asidian biology. We could not have attended FHL in 1964 (and thus would not have met!) without the scholarship funds we received. Our family wishes to extend this help to future students by means of the Charles Lambert Memorial Endowment at Friday Harbor Laboratories.