

Groundbreaking Ceremony
Science and Technology Center for Microbial Oceanography Research and Education
University of Hawaii at Manoa
Remarks by Dr. W. Lance Haworth, Office of Integrative Activities, NSF
15 April 2009

Good morning everyone.

Senator Inoue, President McClain, Chancellor Hinshaw, Professor Karl, dignitaries and guests:

It's a special pleasure to congratulate all of you and all of C-MORE's many partners on this groundbreaking for C-MORE Hale, the future home of C-MORE. I bring you warm greetings from NSF's Director Arden Bement – and I'm truly sorry he wasn't able to join us here. This is a great day!

As you may know, NSF supports 17 Science and Technology Centers. This is a flagship program for the Foundation. The Centers address topics that run the gamut of fundamental science and engineering, ranging from Space Weather to Nanobiotechnology to Water Purification. And C-MORE is the only NSF Center devoted to microbial oceanography - "connecting genomes to biomes". This bold endeavor epitomizes the Science and Technology Centers program. It takes on a little-known frontier of science, and it bears on several grand challenges of our times – biodiversity, energy and climate change, to name just a few.

The Wikipedia entry on C-MORE reminds us that we know more about the surface of the moon than we do about the world's oceans. Marine microbes are the most abundant form of life on earth – they make up 98% of the biomass in the ocean. What are they? What do they do? What impacts do they have?

Isaac Newton said famously that "...I seem to have been only a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

What a wonderful challenge C-MORE has defined, quite literally to explore that "ocean of truth".

Today's groundbreaking is the result of the vision and leadership of many people here today. It also symbolizes the power of partnership and cooperation at a very critical time in our national history. C-MORE's success demands partnership at many levels – across many disciplines, among many institutions, across many states, among hundreds of people, and across academia and various levels of government.

NSF is committed to this partnership. It is NSF's mission to enable discovery and to explore the unknown, with potential impact on all of our lives and our grandchildren's lives – to support the education of new generations of scientists, to create opportunities for students and teachers, to bring the excitement of science to every citizen. And C-

MORE is fully engaged in all of this. We can't achieve it without all of you. But together, and only together, we can do it.

Again, congratulations, and *mahalo!*