

# Eugene F. Stoermer Diatom Scholarship

The Eugene F. Stoermer Diatom Scholarship was established by Gene's family, friends, and colleagues following his passing in 2012. Part of the endowed scholarship was raised by students and colleagues at the 2013 North American Diatom Symposium held in Bar Harbor, Maine. A single \$500 scholarship will be awarded annually to an advanced student or researcher participating in the Ecology and Systematics of Diatoms course at Iowa Lakeside Lab.

Dr. Eugene Stoermer was born in 1934 in Gillette Grove near Lakeside Lab. His childhood included summers at the family cottage on Miller's Bay on West Lake Okoboji. After high school he matriculated at Iowa State University, but his undergraduate studies were interrupted by military service. His military service was cut short when he was injured in an accident, and Gene returned to Iowa State University to complete his degree in Geology. In his senior year, needing just one credit to graduate, he was encouraged by professor, Dr. John Dodd, to do an independent project on diatoms. Intrigued by his introduction to the diatoms, he applied for and received a prestigious McHenry Fellowship at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia (ANSP) where he studied under the preeminent diatomists Dr. Ruth Patrick and Dr. Charlie Reimer. Gene returned to Iowa State University for graduate study where his research focused on the paleolimnology of West Lake Okoboji.

In 1963, shortly after completing his doctoral degree, Gene's advisor, Dr. John Dodd, suggested he teach a special "Diatom Clinic" at Iowa Lakeside Laboratory. At the time, few people and fewer institutions were supporting the study of diatoms. The Clinic was designed to encourage students and researchers to gather annually at Iowa Lakeside Lab in a collaborative atmosphere where learning took place not only in the environs around Lakeside but through participants interacting in the class. Dr. Stoermer taught the Clinic for three years before he was hired as a Research Phycologist at the University of Michigan, Great Lakes Research Division. The reins for the diatom class were handed to Dr. Charlie Reimer from the ANSP who taught the class each summer from 1966 through 1989. In 1990, Gene returned to Lakeside to teach the class, now called Ecology and Systematics of Diatoms, through 2000. Each summer he loaded his vehicle with computers, microscopes, cameras, and literature to share his passion for diatoms with the students and visiting researchers from around the world. He transformed the class to include digital photography, research microscopy, and computer databases. Although he formally stopped teaching the diatom class in 2000, Gene was a regular visitor

each summer where he shared his stories and expertise with students and visitors. From that vision of his diatom class in 1963, students still gather each summer for "Diatom Camp" at Lakeside.

## **Application Process**

The Eugene F. Stoermer Scholarship is awarded annually to support a student or visiting researcher in the Ecology and Systematics of Diatoms class at Iowa Lakeside Laboratory. Please prepare a 1-2 page statement describing your background, qualifications, and motivation for taking the diatom class.

Email your essay and a CV to the Lakeside Director at [Mary-Skopec@uiowa.edu](mailto:Mary-Skopec@uiowa.edu). Deadline for application receipt is **April 1** each year. The recipient will be chosen in collaboration with the Ecology and Systematics of Diatoms course instructors.