



## OTS' Deedra McClearn awarded the ASM's Joseph Grinnell Award

**Guest contributor: Dr. Robert M. Timm, University of Kansas**  
**(Photo credit: Ceci Coen)**

Each year the American Society of Mammalogists (ASM) recognizes

excellence in education with its Joseph Grinnell Award. The Grinnell Award was established to honor individuals who have made outstanding and sustained contributions to education in the broadest sense, and it encompasses not only the traditional roles of teaching undergraduate and graduate students in academic institutions but also educational activities that have truly impacted the lives of others.

This year's ASM recipient of the Joseph Grinnell Award is OTS' own Deedra McClearn. Deedra was recognized for her impact on graduate and undergraduate students throughout the world. She coordinated, led, and served as resource faculty on tropical biology field courses in Costa Rica for more than 15 years, developed OTS' semester-long undergraduate program in South Africa, helped to establish Duke's international education program in China, and in "retirement" she continues to play an active role in OTS' scientific and educational programs. One of her current projects is to assemble, evaluate, and archive many of the long-term data sets that are associated with the OTS sites. Several letters of support noted Deedra's dedication to always promoting local communities, one stating she was a fierce "champion of efforts to support and include local students, educators, and researchers into the study abroad programs."

In recent years, she has been a leader in developing assessment tools for academic programs. She has developed workshops helping educators to implement dynamic, active, and inquiry-based learning into courses that continue to influence generations of students. Deedra remains heavily involved in education, working with an international team to develop innovative modules for tropical biology courses that will be freely available on-line for any educator to use. One nominator's letter said, "She has touched our lives in very powerful ways, setting us up for success as graduate students, continuing as a supportive and instructive mentor when we were post-docs, maintaining an active role in our lives, and now in the lives of our own students."

Congratulations to Dr. Deedra McClearn, who is truly one of the world's leaders in education!