

2018 Recipient:

Michael J. Oesterling

Class of 1966

In 1970, Michael Oesterling earned a bachelor of science degree in biology at the University of Miami, followed by a master of science degree in zoology in 1976 from the University of Florida. After holding several positions with the University of Florida, Oesterling affiliated with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science in 1981. There he established the migratory patterns of the Blue Crab. He led the development of the softshell crab shedding system, adding to the profitability of the industry and became a leading authority in bivalve aquaculture development. He has served as a consultant to companies and governments in the United States, Brazil, Nicaragua, Australia, Ecuador, Chile, Venezuela, and Mexico. Oesterling's work has led to successful sea farming of oysters, clams, scallops, and mussels. He has authored several dozen reports and publications on a variety of aquaculture topics, from procedural and site selection guides to histories of the industry and from research results to seafood cooking instructions. Oesterling's work has had an impact on everything from domestic commercial seafood farming to aiding the economies of coastal communities in developing countries.