



University of Washington
College of Arts and Sciences

Professor Billie J. Swalla
Biology Department

Saturday, October 26, 2019

Re: Motivation Letter for my Candidacy as a member of the Scientific Council of the SZN

Dear President of SZN,

Please accept my motivation letter to become a candidate for the Scientific Council of the Stazione Zoologica Anton Dohrn of Naples. I am currently the Chair of the Research Committee in the Biology Department of the University of Washington. I recently spent nearly seven years as the Director of Friday Harbor Laboratories, a marine lab on San Juan Island, part of the College of the Environment at the University of Washington.

Higher education and marine labs have been my passion throughout my career. As a graduate student, I spent three summers at the MBL in Woods Hole, MA, taking Embryology and then doing summer research in subsequent years. I began using marine embryos to look at the processes of evolution and development, studying the evolution of chordates. This has continued to be my research focus, studying both tunicates and hemichordates (marine invertebrates) for their importance to chordate evolution. This has led to the opportunity to travel to many countries and participate in courses, teaching students, and learning different cultures and how they do science. I have been to the SZN several times to give lectures and to teach, and have collaborated with several of the scientists there on ascidian research.

My research in evolution and development ranges from molecular to organismal and I am passionate about all types of science and communicating those results to the public. I would enjoy the opportunity to serve on the Scientific Council of SZN.

Best Regards,

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