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John Orcutt is a Distinguished Professor of Geophysics in the Cecil H. and Ida M. Green Institute for Geophysics and Planetary Physics (IGPP) at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego and a member of the Executive Committee and Distinguished Scholar at the San Diego Supercomputer Center (SDSC) at the University of California San Diego.

Orcutt's major areas of research are marine seismology applied to both crustal and mantle structure, particularly seismic tomography; long-term ocean observations and wireless networking related to observations; theoretical seismology; and applications of seismology to monitoring of nuclear tests. He has been the chief scientist on more than 20 oceanographic expeditions.

He is past president of the 65,000-member American Geophysical Union (AGU). He was appointed to the Science Advisory Panel for the President's Ocean Policy Commission. He has served on several National Research Council studies and Chaired several. The most recent published study (for which he was Chair) was "Tsunami Warning Preparedness: An Assessment of the U.S. Tsunami Program and the Nation's Preparedness." He is presently work on a new report: "Fukushima, Lessons Learned."

Orcutt is a Secretary of the Navy/Chief of Naval Operations Oceanography Chair at Scripps. He has been a member of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Underground Facilities; chair of the Consortium for Ocean Research and Education (CORE) Public Affairs Committee; and

president of Joint Oceanographic Institutions. As a member of MEDEA, he worked on the declassification of U.S. Navy environmental data including GEOSAT and marine magnetics and continues to work on climate issues illuminated by national technical means.

Orcutt also has served as a member of the NRC Ocean Studies Board (twice) and was chairman of its Navy Committee for three years. He is the PI for the NSF Ocean Observatories Initiative (OOI) Cyberinfrastructure Integrating Operator (IO).

Orcutt received a bachelor's degree from the U.S. Naval Academy, an MSc from the University of Liverpool (Fulbright Scholar), and a Ph.D. from UCSD/Scripps.

He has authored more than 160 peer-reviewed publications, and more than 45 in AGU journals, and has received numerous academic honors and awards. He was named UC San Diego Alumnus of the Year and is one of 100 Most Influential UCSD graduates.

He is the former director of research and associate vice chancellor for marine sciences and Director of IGPP. He received the prestigious Marine Technology Society's Lockheed Martin Award for Excellence in Ocean Science and Engineering and was awarded the Maurice Ewing Medal by the U.S. Navy and AGU. He is a member of the the National Academy of Engineering (NAE), a member of the American Philosophical Society (the oldest learned society in the United States devoted to the advancement of scientific and scholarly inquiry), a Fellow of the AGU and a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society.