

Emilie Hooft

Research Associate, Geological Sciences, University of Oregon, emilie@uoregon.edu

Two events led me to become a marine geophysicist. I was an undergraduate in physics and astronomy when a friend convinced the chairman of the physics department to send us both to the Canadian Undergraduate Physics Conference. There I saw a movie of people throwing scientific instruments overboard; I was attracted by the idea of doing physics while at sea. Then, during the next summer I got a job and went on a seismic cruise to the Juan de Fuca ridge. I was enticed by discovering what lay at the bottom of the ocean.

I became a marine geophysicist and study volcanism at mid-ocean ridges and oceanic islands using passive and active source seismology. I enjoy applying physics to earth processes, which are more tangible to me than the stars. I relish the hard work, group effort and adventure of going to sea to collect data. I have also worked in Iceland and the Galápagos; in both places the geology is spectacular and the culture interesting. Oceanography involves exchanges across boundaries; at mid-ocean ridges, material and energy are transferred between Earth's mantle, crust, and ocean. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of our science I interact with different colleagues. I enjoy working with people who appreciate me and with those who I value.

I came to Oregon because my husband is a professor here. Recently, I have been working half-time; we have a girl of 4 1/2 and boy-girl twins of 2 1/2. About a year ago I felt that it was hard to keep my career going after the disruption in publications and grants caused by having 3 children in 22 months. But, by working consistently, things have been picking up. We are fortunate that my husband has tenure. My ideal is a half-time tenure track position in the same location as my husband. Life is both short and long. In the present moment, I immerse myself in what I am doing and try not to worry. At the same time I look forward to the future, its promise and possibilities. Women tend to blossom later in their careers than men, says my husband. This idea gives me support and a positive view toward the future. Balancing life and science is a challenge but also rewarding. I highly value my work as a scientist; I enjoy having a family as well.



Emilie installing a seismometer in the Galápagos islands.