The Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) in Woods Hole, Massachusetts has had a long and celebrated history of biological research. In 1971 Holger Jannasch of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution initiated the Microbial Diversity Summer Course at MBL, the beginning of an annual tradition of intensive and immersive study, lectures, laboratory exercises, and student-initiated independent research. The course begins each year with an evening trip to the Devil’s Lane cedar swamp to recreate the Volta experiment, lighting up the woods with flares of methane produced by anaerobic microorganisms. Participants often describe the course as “life changing.” Student research has yielded important discoveries and many participants have made significant contributions to microbiology.

The American Society for Microbiology is pleased to designate the MBL Microbial Diversity Course at Woods Hole, MA as a Milestones in Microbiology Site in recognition of its important role in microbiological research and education.

Presented by the American Society for Microbiology  June 22, 2013