

The 2006 Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund Conservation Heroes

The Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund (DWCF) has selected eight DWCF Conservation Heroes from applications submitted by environmental organizations working in partnership with communities around the world. The award was created to bring attention to the fact that conservation programs are successful because of the people involved with the initiative. The DWCF Conservation Heroes program rewards the dedication of individuals who, often at the risk of personal safety, work tirelessly to save animals, protect habitat and educate the people in surrounding communities. To honor each hero's work, the DWCF presented the nominating organizations a cash award of \$1,000 to be shared with the recipients to be used at their discretion. The following 2006 heroes represent an international effort to conserve wildlife and wild places, and have worked to protect such animals as gorillas, sea turtles, and bats.

Don Jorge Olivo- University of California



Don Jorge Olivo has made many contributions to conservation in Latin America as a field researcher, an educator, and a community leader. Since 2003, Mr. Olivo has been working full time as a field biologist and environmental ambassador as part of a conservation project on Long-wattled Umbrellabird run by the University of California (UCA). His salary, equipment, and per diem have been funded through grants from the Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund (DWCF). With a deep and extensive knowledge of local flora, fauna, and ecology, Mr. Olivo has made outstanding contributions to the success of the research on endangered species such as the Long-wattled Umbrellabird. He

has been a dedicated learner becoming adept at techniques including radio tracking, mist netting, field-based observations of ecology and behavior, and data entry. He is committed to the research he does and often stays at the field site working extra days, intent on finding an individual's nest or gathering more telemetry data. At the community level, Mr. Olivo's understanding of conservation principles, his dedication to conservation, his charisma and prestige within local communities, make him a skillful educator. Mr. Olivo organizes visits to the study site by local school groups and adults to give local residents a chance to learn more about conservation and ecology of local forests and watersheds. He also arranges numerous visits by the UCA research group to schools to instruct students on these same topics. Additionally, he has contributed directly to the design and implementation of a local education program, which reaches over 350 area school children. With support from the DWCF, Mr. Olivo has leveraged his role as a community leader to encourage and develop a local conservation ethic. He has arranged and made formal PowerPoint presentations at more than a dozen local communities carrying a generator, fuel, a laptop, and digital video projector through dozens of kilometers of rainforest to give the presentations in remote areas. Mr. Olivo is a conservation hero who uses his respect in the community to get conservation messages out to local residents in a way that an outsider could not replicate.