



# Mississippi College

A CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

2 May 2016

*Department of Biological Sciences*

Dr. Jaime Cantera  
Department of Biology  
Universidad del Valle  
Apartado Aéreo 25360  
Cali, Colombia

Dear Dr. Cantera,

Congratulations to your university and to the Department of Biology in reaching this important point in your history. I also commend the university and department for the proposed recognition of Maria del Carmen Zúñiga, a much treasured colleague.

I first met Maria in 1991 at the International Stonefly Symposium in Wisconsin, and had the opportunity to discuss the work she was doing in Colombia and to compare it with results I had obtained in Costa Rica and Panama. These discussions led to subsequent collaborations as she visited my lab at Mississippi College on several occasions and we were able to collect at remote sites in the United States with other colleagues. It became obvious that she is dedicated to our science and that she is a careful and tireless field worker.

Her primary systematic and ecological research is based in Colombia and nearby regions of Ecuador. Through the course of her career she has co-authored more than 10 journal articles (and 1 book) in which she co-authored more than 30 previously unknown stonefly species (to say nothing about her extensive work with other taxa and with stream ecology). In most cases she and her colleagues in Colombia were also the collectors of specimens on which these articles and new species were based.

I esteem Maria for her generosity, work ethic, the great eye she has for detecting subtle variations with microscopy and the great courage she has displayed in collecting valuable samples under dangerous and harsh conditions. Throughout her travels she has been an important and gracious ambassador for her country, her university and her department.

With best wishes,

Bill P. Stark  
Sadler Professor of Biology  
Mississippi College