

## Mölg Receives 2009 Cryosphere Young Investigator Award

Thomas Mölg received the 2009 Cryosphere Young Investigator Award at the 2009 AGU Fall Meeting, held 14–18 December in San Francisco, Calif. The award is for a significant contribution to cryospheric science and technology.

PAGE 175

### Citation

Thomas Mölg is a truly outstanding young scientist. Trained initially in glaciology, he has broadened his scientific background significantly as a postdoctoral researcher and, to date, has published in fields as diverse as boundary layer processes over glaciers, mesoscale meteorology with a focus on mountain-atmosphere interactions, and large-scale dynamics of coupled atmosphere-ocean systems.

Thomas came into my life when he did his M.S. thesis and skillfully managed to explain the unusual recession patterns of glaciers in the Rwenzori Mountains of East Africa. In 2002 he started his doctoral research with the goal of revealing climate-glacier interactions on Kilimanjaro, and it took me a couple of months to convince him that this would be a great project, as he had a different life schedule at that time. From there on, however, he developed into an independent scientist and pursued the intelligent approach of starting with idealized models first before advancing to technical details and sophisticated simulations. As time progressed he perfectly understood that mass balance studies are not enough to unravel these interactions, and he did not hesitate to open toward atmospheric and climate-science methods. This approach—to my mind—can lead cryospheric sciences to a new level of understanding, and Thomas demonstrated

impressively how to implement it. His efforts have produced a major result in 2009: the quantification of high-altitude climate change from glacier recession on Kilimanjaro (*J. Clim.*, 22(15), 4162–4181) and associated complexity of multiscale linkages in the climate system.

In summary, because of his broad skills in methods as well as his ability to approach scientific issues in a creative and systematic way, I deem Thomas an ideal candidate for the Cryosphere Young Investigator Award. I hope this is just one benchmark in a very promising career, which I hope to accompany further for a while.

—GEORG KASER, University of Innsbruck, Innsbruck, Austria

### Response

I want to thank the Cryosphere Focus Group for this recognition, and the National Snow and Ice Data Center for sponsoring the award. I am really honored! There are many people who have helped me over the past years, but I would like to emphasize three of them. Georg Kaser undoubtedly formed me as a student. I did not anticipate to any degree that my walk into his office, asking him to supervise my M.S. thesis, would end on the world stages of science. His talent in illuminating creative concepts has been most inspiring and continues to motivate me. Douglas R. Hardy (University of Massachusetts) and Nicolas J. Cullen (University of Otago) are two further key personalities who have influenced my research vitally. I also



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want to acknowledge funding from the Austrian Science Foundation; Kurt Cuffey and Mathias Vuille, who wrote supporting letters for the award nomination; and my awesome research group at Innsbruck.

The scientific work over the past few years was truly intense, and sticking my fingers into new fields sometimes created bittersweet experiences. But in the end a feeling of fun always overwhelmed the bitter elements. This is very important yet cannot unfold without the joy and love evoked by the people behind the scenes: my family (Helena, Harald, Irma, and Sigrid) and my wonderful friends. I think these two in concert, fun while doing research and warmth and impulses from outside the scientific world, yield the balance needed for doing good science and for following clear concepts. I am privileged to build on this balance, and receiving an AGU award at this age is fantastic! Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

—THOMAS MÖLG, University of Innsbruck, Innsbruck, Austria