

The Lázaro Cárdenas award is named after General Lázaro Cárdenas because, during his tenure as President of Mexico, the institution was opened. He is therefore recognized as the founder of the IPN. This medal is awarded each year during the Polytechnic Day (May 21) and is the highest expression of appreciation for the work of the IPN community to encourage excellence by its members, past and present.

IPN alumni who are awarded the prize have made, or are making, outstanding professional performance and significant contributions at the national level, either in public service, senior management of private companies, or in science, technology, or teaching relevant to the development of Mexico.

Many of these graduates who have been previously honored with this award achieved high positions in the Federal Government, are university presidents, or general managers of industrial complexes.

Dr. Alfredo Ortega Rubio is a researcher who has spent his entire career in Baja California Sur. He received the National Award for Nature Conservation in 2003; the National Merit Award for Forestry and Wildlife in 1993, the International Award of the Americas of the journal *Interciencia* in 2007, and the Merit Medal and Scientific and Technological award of the State of Baja California Sur, Mexico in 2011.

Since 1985 he has been a member of the National System of Researchers of Mexico and was designated a member at the highest level in 2001.

Dr. Ortega is a graduate of the National School of Biological Sciences of IPN in Biology, also received a MSc in Biology, and was the first doctoral graduate in ecology of the IPN.

Dr. Ortega is the author of 156 original research articles. He has edited 17 books and conducted 117 research projects and services including those that helped create and develop the Biosphere Reserves of the Sierra La Laguna, Vizcaino Desert, and Revillagigedo Archipelago. He is an advisor of 14 international organizations and member of the editorial board of six international journals. He directed 49 graduate theses (25 doctorates, 19 masters, and 5 undergraduates). Since 2004 he holds the academic rank of researcher level E, which is the highest category that is attainable at the research centers of CONACYT (Mexico National Science and Technology agency).