



Thank you Professor Ramon Alcubilla

UPC Professor, ICFO pioneer and NFL advisor back to climbing

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As ICFO has progressed from its foundation in 2002 in rented rooms on the UPC campus to the institute that it is today, it has had the great privilege of receiving support from friends and collaborators who have contributed their knowledge, energy and passion to the ICFO dream. Ramon Alcubilla, professor of optoelectronics at the UPC and for several years head of its clean room facilities, offered our institute invaluable advice on key nanofabrication projects during the early days of our institution. Today we offer him a very special thanks as he decided to retire from the UPC at 60 and go back to one of his long-time passions: mountain climbing.

A state-of-the-art clean room facility is a prerequisite for much of the frontier advances produced by ICFO researchers whose work relies on the fabrication and characterization of nanostructured photonic devices. Prof Alcubilla played a decisive role in launching ICFO's NFL existing facilities. Together with Dr Goncal Badenes, who during many years was the NFL Facility Chief Scientist, they designed and put into action ICFO's current NFL facility, which

became operational in 2006.

Through his teaching at the UPC and participation in the Master in Photonics program offered by the UPC, UAB, UB and ICFO, that he himself helped launch, he has made a mark on academic careers of many young scientists through the years. Likewise, he has often offered advice that has helped to shape what we are today.

ICFO Director Lluís Torner reflects, *“Ramon's contribution to ICFO's early days was enormous. We started talking about it and dreaming about in the early 90s during the long trips to climb in the Pyrenees and Alps - we used to leave for Chamonix on Friday evening right after teaching, drive during the whole night, do the job and drive back to arrive on time for teaching on Monday. Long trips, long talks, far-fetched dreams. Eventually we lobbied together to get ICFO approved and I asked Ramon, together with Goncal, to be in charge of the NFL facility that has served us so well during these years. I am profoundly grateful to Ramon for his contribution and friendship. I know he has not waited even a day to go back to our loved outdoor passion ...”*

Ramon shared the following departing message with ICFOnians. *“A few months ago, I retired. Almost 40 years dedicated to university teaching and research. Probably the best job in the world. Having helped Lluís Torner in the early stages of ICFO is among the good memories. At that time, the ICFO model was groundbreaking in this country and I am proud to see its success. A word of advice to young people: If you have dreams, follow them and do not compromise much. Hereafter, I plan to follow my own advice.”*

While Prof Alcubilla has helped to prepare a key part of our institute for the scientific challenges we tackle, we wish him the best of luck as he turns his sites to his beloved mountains and cliffs, where there are quite different frontiers to conquer.