

360

THE CAM AIGN

FOR...



ALLISON • ROBERT • HADEL • MARKESE • TENILLE

360

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**SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Leadership Starts Here

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Photo: Wesley Beights/Daily Aztec

We are now in the middle of the academic year, and I am reminded that each generation of Aztecs is also, metaphorically, in the middle. We inherit the university from our predecessors, and we hold it in trust to give to our successors.

For 117 years, our community has been blessed with an aspirational spirit that strives to advance our university and build its legacy.

As SDSU president, I am grateful for the leadership shown by my predecessors Brage Golding, Tom Day and Stephen Weber, and by all of their faculty, staff and administrative colleagues over the last four decades.

In this edition of *360 Magazine*, we celebrate reaching the \$500-million milestone in The Campaign for SDSU and look at the many ways we can leave a legacy.

Buoyed by the generosity of our alumni and friends, our Campanile Foundation Board voted unanimously to extend the campaign to a goal of \$750 million.

In this phase of the campaign, we have an extraordinary opportunity to build a

legacy that will affect thousands of lives. We can do this by endowing scholarships and professorships, building our research endowment, endowing our Honors College and constructing a new Engineering and Interdisciplinary Sciences Complex.

These are ambitious goals, and our bold desire to leave a legacy for others continues our aspirational tradition.

You will read a number of stories in this edition that reflect this Aztec spirit: students and faculty improving urban sustainability; graduate student Eileen Natuzzi working to eradicate disease in the Solomon Islands; biology professor Sanford Bernstein launching the careers of young scientists; and Phillips Claud making the lead gift to fund a new 50-inch telescope that, literally, sees into the heavens.

I hope you enjoy this edition of *360: The Magazine of San Diego State University* and that it will inspire you to continue to build your Aztec legacy.

Elliot Hirshman

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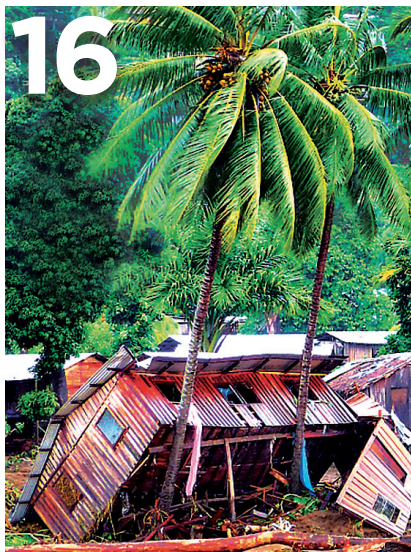
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Compass





Animal crossings

State Route 67 in eastern San Diego County is experiencing a serious uptick in traffic with population booms in Lakeside and Ramona. That means a higher risk for local wildlife crossing the busy highway to find food, shelter and mates.

SDSU biologist Megan Jennings is using a network of motion-activated cameras to study these animal crossings in a project funded by the California Department of Transportation. Animals such as bobcats, coyotes, deer and ringtails traverse the road both by scrambling across the surface and by scurrying through drainage culverts beneath the road.

Jennings and CDOT are trying to protect the wildlife by exploring which characteristics make it more likely for animals to use the safer culverts to cross beneath the highway rather than run across the road and risk injury or death.

Photo: Megan Jennings



Photo: Hallie Jacobs

Seeds of success

At the new College Area Community Garden, you'll find corn, tomatoes, squash, onions, garlic, peppers, and much more. You'll also find SDSU staff, students and neighborhood residents all tending to their individual plots. Of the 80-plus raised planter beds, more than half are reserved for people affiliated with SDSU.

The collaboration between SDSU gardening enthusiasts and neighborhood gardeners has received financial support from San Diego Gas and Electric, the San Diego Urban Corps, the City of San Diego, San Diego County, and more than 15 other private and corporate sponsors.

The garden will also serve as a living laboratory for SDSU botany classes and research projects.

Empowering pride

A new center has opened on campus to provide information, education and awareness about issues related to sexuality and gender. The Pride Center is a hub for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and ally communities at SDSU, offering resources and support services in addition to sponsoring events like the Pride Parade.

The center is just the latest initiative in SDSU's quest to be an inclusive, empowering place for its students. For the fifth year in a row, the university was recognized by the nonprofit Campus Pride as one of the country's top LGBT-friendly universities.



Eight-legged wonders

The Amazing Harvestman-Man just doesn't have much of a ring to it. Maybe that's why these close relatives of spiders are understudied

despite filling an equally important ecological role. The arachnids—some of which are better known as “daddy longlegs”—are similar to spiders in that they have eight legs, but they don't spin webs and there's no clear distinction between their thorax and abdomen.

SDSU biologist Marshal Hedin is the university's resident arachnid researcher (his pet tarantula is pictured above). Now he has received a \$500,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to discover new species of harvestmen and further describe known species.



Did you know?

**SDSU HAS CLIMBED
34 SPOTS IN THE
LAST FOUR YEARS
IN THE *U.S. NEWS
AND WORLD REPORT*
ANNUAL RANKING OF
BEST COLLEGES.**

Joyful noise

Do you hear the people sing? With more than 200 students participating in SDSU's largest-ever musical production, you should. The School of Theatre, Television and Film and the School of Music and Dance have teamed up to present “Les Misérables,” Dec. 4–7, at the Don Powell Theatre.

In addition to student actors and musicians, the production will also feature Broadway performer Ivan Rutherford in the role of Jean Valjean and SDSU choral studies professor Patrick Walders as his nemesis Inspector Javert.

“Given the size of our symphony and the scale of the concert choir, this performance of Les Mis might literally blow the doors off the Don Powell Theatre,” said theatre school director D.J. Hopkins.



Start me up

San Diego State University has been recognized by *Forbes* magazine as one of the country's top spots for entrepreneurs, placing 18th in the magazine's ranking of "America's Most Entrepreneurial Universities."

Forbes recognized SDSU for its "entrepreneurial ratio," which calculates the percentage of students and alumni who identify themselves as company founders and business owners. The magazine called attention to Ralph Rubio, '78, founder of Rubio's Grill, which has more than 190 restaurants nationwide.

"The *Forbes* ranking is recognition of the efforts of many people across campus to embed entrepreneurship into the DNA of SDSU," said Bernie Schroeder, director of programs at SDSU's Lavin Entrepreneurship Center.



Dressing with friends

High-end jewelry, like fashion, walks a thin line between art and wearability. The ability to achieve both earned SDSU School of Art and Design Professor Seth Papac a \$20,000 grant from the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation. He was one of 30 artists to receive this recognition, and the only jeweler.

For the competition, Papac submitted eight photos of original wearable art pieces inspired by friends, family and colleagues.

He elaborated: "The pieces are portraits of people I know but in the form of jewelry objects."



Gutsy science

There's likely a virus living in your gut that was unknown to science until just this year. It was discovered by SDSU biologist Robert A. Edwards who, along with colleagues at SDSU and around the world, developed a new tool to suss out novel viral DNA.

Named crAssphage after the cross-assembly software program used to discover it, the virus replicates inside bacteria. Research by Edwards and colleagues reveals that it's present in more than half the world's population.

Now researchers are trying to find medicinal applications for the virus and others like it—known as bacteriophages—in hopes of mitigating diseases such as obesity and diabetes.

"This could be a key to personalized phage medicine," Edwards said. "We could isolate your particular strain of the virus, manipulate it to target harmful bacteria, and then give it back to you."

White House Calling SDSU joins the national conversation on school counseling.

By Natalia Elko

The moment a high school senior clicks “send” on a college application is one of the most terrifying and pivotal in their fledgling academic careers.

That’s why Trish Hatch has made everything leading up to that click her life’s purpose.

Hatch directs the school counseling program at San Diego State University. For three decades she has provided training, grant writing, evaluation and consultation for school counselors, administrators and districts around the country.

“School counselors can make a real difference in the lives of their students,” Hatch said. “They can help students discover opportunities, find new paths and ultimately reach their goals.”

Together with assistant professor Laura Owen, who joined SDSU this fall, Hatch works to create meaningful, systematic change within the school counseling profession—change they both agree is long overdue.

This year, their tireless efforts brought a White House initiative straight to the Mesa.

CHANGING THE LANGUAGE

President Barack Obama’s College Opportunity Agenda was designed to improve access to higher education, remove barriers to innovation and competition and ensure that student debt remains affordable.

An important initiative, Hatch said, but lacking recognition of what inspires students to reach for higher education.

“There was no mention of school counselors or the important role they play in helping students to access higher education,” Hatch said. “Laura and I knew we had to change this so we reached out to the U.S. Department of Education.”





Shortly afterwards, First Lady Michelle Obama announced her Reach Higher Initiative, which aims to inspire every student in America to earn a college degree.

This initiative did include support for high school counselors, acknowledging their role in helping students get there.

When senior White House staff convened a session on school counseling, they invited Hatch and Owen to discuss current challenges and opportunities facing counselors as they strive to support students' college aspirations.

Hatch and Owen saw it as a prelude to a larger conversation.

"We know school counselors need training in the college application and financial aid processes and guidance on how to educate students to navigate the transition into higher education," Owen said.

But counselors can do more than just advise; they can become students' champions, Hatch added.

"What they also need are the tools to become leaders, advocates and change agents," she said. "We have to educate and empower them to resolve the access and opportunity gaps that exist."

NEXT STOP: SDSU

A July 2014 meeting at Harvard moved the agenda forward, and the White House asked for volunteers to host a follow-up session in November.

Owen and Hatch seized the opportunity.

"The next steps in the conversation aligned perfectly with what we knew needed to happen," said Hatch, "and that was to incorporate a social justice mission similar to the one in SDSU's school counseling program. There was strong support for this from our department, chair, dean, provost and president, so we thought, 'Why not us? Why not bring these leaders and commitment makers to SDSU?'"

And that's exactly what they did. Centered around President Obama's "North Star" goal—that by 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world—White House officials and education leaders gathered at SDSU to create measurable action plans for improving school counseling preparation, programs and practices that will increase college access for all students.

So when high school seniors click "send" on their college applications, they can feel confident of a future in higher education and beyond.

Painting the A REMODEL FOR NATION

WANTED: Resourceful, forward-thinking city for mutually beneficial partnership. Must be ready for commitment. Apply to San Diego State University.

You won't find this ad in any classified section, but the relationship it frames is playing out in what could become a prototype for environmentally friendly city planning.

National City, San Diego County's second oldest municipality, has teamed up with SDSU students and faculty to explore ideas for smart, sustainable growth in line with the city's strategic plan.

It's all part of the Sage Project, an SDSU initiative enabling students, through their coursework, to tackle real-world projects that improve the quality of life in San Diego.

Project director Jessica Barlow modeled SDSU's program on a successful University of Oregon initiative. The only one of its kind in California, the Sage Project has earned kudos from Environmental Protection Agency officials eager to see it replicated throughout the state and the country.

Last year, marketing and health communication students partnered with National City to develop plans for corner store "conversions" featuring fresh, healthy food; finance students created a long-term property management plan for the city; and art students designed wayfinding systems from repurposed and recycled materials.

More than 750 SDSU students from 21 classes currently work with the Sage Project

in this second year of collaboration with National City. The students are aspiring city planners, climate change scientists, graphic designers, nutritionists and professionals in the child care, real estate and tourism sectors. What they share is an eagerness to take their classroom learning into the community.

It's a community David Sevilla knows well. He grew up there in the 1990s, when poverty and violence lived alongside mom-and-pop grocery stores and pickup soccer games. There's a more gentrified vibe in the city these days, he said, and a receptiveness to environmentally friendly development.

Sevilla is one of 30 undergraduate and graduate students involved in the Sage Project through Land Use Analysis, a geography class led by Diana Gauss Richardson. She's been teaching the course since 2001, but its integration within the Sage Project adds



Watch the video at
sdsu.edu/sageproject

Town Green

AL CITY? SDSU IS ON IT.

By Coleen L. Geraghty

authenticity and gives students access to top decision-makers.

Brad Raulston, executive director in the city manager's office, and Robert "Dukie" Valderrama, the Port of San Diego commissioner representing National City, are occasional speakers in Richardson's class.

They'll also be in the audience at the end of the semester when one or two student groups present final development plans.

For Richardson's students, the work begins with a site visit. On a steamy Saturday in September, the class gathered in the marina district for a walking tour with principal planner Martin Reeder, a student of Richardson's in 2003.

In class the students had studied virtual maps, but on this morning, they could see up close the arbitrary juxtaposition of commercial, industrial and maritime land use within the 41-acre study site.

Thirteen percent of National City's area is classified as "water." Of that, 440 acres comprise

the National City Marine Terminal, co-managed with the Port of San Diego, and the entry point for one of every eight cars imported into the United States.

"The natural tendency in redeveloping older areas is to remove or relocate 'dirty' land uses such as industrial businesses," said Reeder. "But to compete economically, the city needs to foster all types of business. Parks and trails are nice to have and are required to a degree, but they don't generate income for the city."

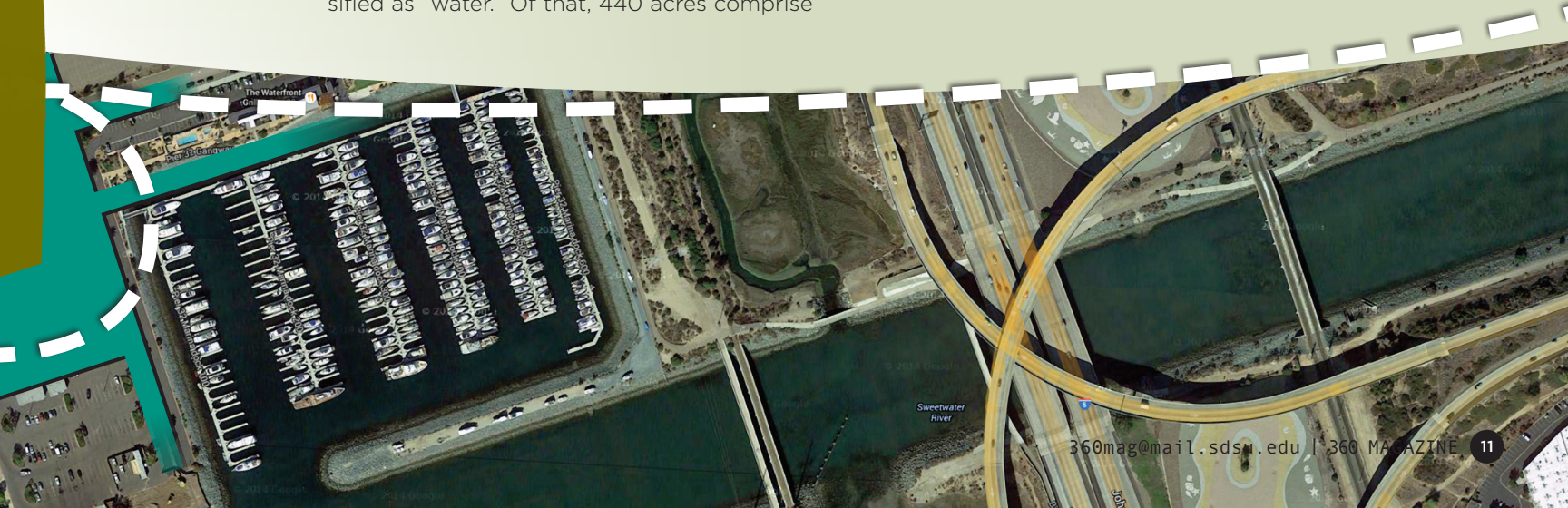
Students need that reality check as they think about adding recreational features such as walking trails, a farmers market, a dog park and small retail shops within National City's marina district. City planning is a delicate balance of competing interests.

Shannon Mulderig sees the give-and-take firsthand as an intern in the city manager's office. In Richardson's class last year, Mulderig worked with a group whose redevelopment plan earned praise from National City officials as well as internships for several of the students.

"This experience has shaped my career goals," Mulderig said. "I've learned that city projects take time because there's a lot of public input. The city planners want to get it right."

So do the faculty, staff and students involved in the Sage Project. Success in National City will strengthen SDSU's community engagement and could create career opportunities for students.

Barlow is already accepting letters of interest from potential partner cities for the 2015-2016 academic year—and the field is wide open.



You couldn't ask for a much better spot for gazing into the heavens than the Laguna Mountains in eastern San Diego County. At 6,100 feet above sea level, you're above a good chunk of the ground-level atmosphere that occludes a telescope's view. The weather is clear most days of the year, and the calm westerly winds keep the air smooth, like the surface of an undisturbed pond. It's far enough away from civilization that light pollution is minimal, yet San Diego State University's Mount Laguna Observatory is only about an hour's drive from the main campus.

"I would argue that in the continental United States, we have the best astronomical site," said Allen Shafter, professor and chair of the SDSU astronomy department.

What has always been an outstanding site for astronomical research just got even better, thanks to the addition of the brand new 1.25-meter (about 50-inch) Phillips Claud Telescope. The \$1.5 million state-of-the-art instrument was made possible by a gift from the late amateur astronomer and philanthropist Phillips L. Claud Jr., who funded more than half of the telescope's cost.

The Claud Telescope is a reflecting telescope, meaning it uses precisely polished curved mirrors to reflect light and form an image. There is no magnifying lens. While it can't compete with the world's largest reflecting telescopes, which measure around 10 meters in diameters, the Claud Telescope is about 10 inches larger in diameter than the 40-inch instrument that was formerly the observatory's largest.

New Eye in the Sky

A new telescope will let SDSU astronomers see farther into the universe than ever before—from the comfort of their own labs.

By Michael Price

Because a telescope's light-gathering power grows exponentially with the surface area of its primary mirror, the new telescope is approximately 50 percent more powerful than the older 40-inch telescope.

In other words, it's a dramatic upgrade for the Mount Laguna Observatory, one that will allow SDSU's astronomers to see farther and more clearly into the night sky than before, as well as encourage students to hone their stargazing skills.



SDSU's astronomy department is one of only a handful of universities around the world that operates its own mountaintop observatory. Including the Claud, the observatory has four operable telescopes, two of which are considered to be "research-grade."

A couple of rustic, cabin-like apartments are available to guests, but most researchers and graduate students stay overnight in a windowless fireproof bunker, complete with a science fiction library, a spartan collection of VHS tapes (including,



Watch the video at
sdsu.edu/claudelescope

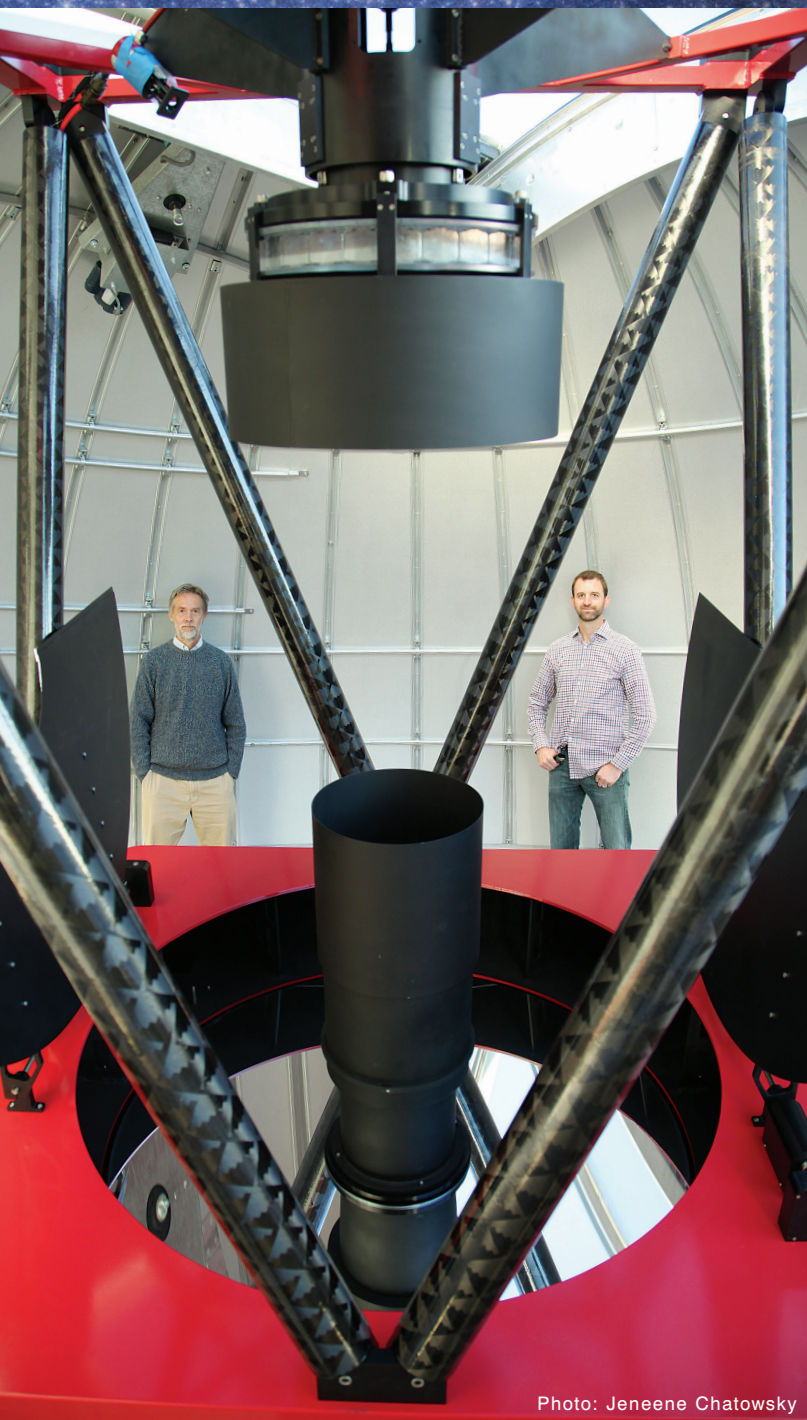


Photo: Jeneene Chatowsky

Allen Shafter (left) and Robert Quimby will use the new Claud Telescope to observe several star systems per night.

naturally, the original Star Wars trilogy), and a Nintendo Entertainment System.

The dome for the Claud Telescope was originally built to house an experimental “ULTRA” (Ultra Lightweight Technology for Research in Astronomy) telescope using a polished carbon-fiber mirror. Around 2005, it became apparent that this speculative technology just wasn’t

going to work. Wanting to advance SDSU’s astronomical research capabilities—and not wanting to waste a perfectly good building and dome—Shafter and others in the department, including former department chair Paul Etzel, sought funding for a new telescope, which led to the Claud.

One of the biggest strengths of the new telescope is that it is designed to be robotic and remotely operable. That means astronomers won’t have to physically be up at Mount Laguna to point the telescope and collect data.

“Having a remote facility enables us to have a modern observing campaign,” said Robert Quimby, associate professor of astronomy and the observatory’s newly hired director.

The young astronomer is notable for having discovered several of the brightest supernovae ever observed, as well as for his ongoing research into why some of these supernovae are up to 100 times brighter than average.



Remote, robotic capabilities make it easier for Quimby and his colleagues to do longitudinal astronomical studies, which are important for many cutting-edge lines of research. For example, with Quimby’s supernova research, he doesn’t need to watch the same point in the sky for hours at a time.

He would rather observe a single point for a couple minutes per day over the course of a few months, freeing up the telescope for other astronomers who want to observe their own coordinates. The Claud Telescope makes this possible, although it will be some time before the instrument becomes fully robotic.

“Limited observing time simply is not an issue here, unlike at some other facilities,” Shafter said.

Shafter and Quimby said that although the Claud Telescope probably isn’t large enough to beat bigger telescopes in detecting any new secrets of the galaxy, it can pay closer attention to discoveries that the world’s enormous telescopes just don’t have the time to follow up on.

“To do quality research, you don’t have to look deeper and further than the other guys,” Quimby said. “You just have to be there at the right place and the right time.”

A Lineage of Success

By Michael Price



SANFORD BERNSTEIN studies how molecular deficiencies in the muscle cells of fruit flies affect their ability to fly. Understanding how these molecular connections break down, and what can save them, helps scientists better understand damage and disease in human muscles.



Photo: Natalia Elko

Sanford Bernstein's influence in the field of biology reaches far and wide.

are only slowly coming around to today: If you want students to be successful in biology, they need exposure to careers outside academia.

"That's one place where SDSU has been ahead of the curve," Bernstein said. "We've always promoted going into industry as an acceptable, desirable career path. There's no stigma attached to not going into academia."

A long legacy

Looking over the list of master's students, doctoral students and postdoctoral scholars mentored by Bernstein in his 31 years as an SDSU professor, it's easy to see that his philosophy has paid off. Several of his postdocs and Ph.D. students rank among the top executives and senior scientists at major biotechnology firms around the country and world.

Bernstein's very first mentee was a graduate research assistant assigned to him as part of his hiring package. Patrick O'Donnell was a gifted scientist and lab hand, but

For as long as there's been a molecular biology program at San Diego State University, Sanford Bernstein has been at its center. The soft-spoken fruit fly researcher was recruited to join SDSU in 1983 as an assistant professor of biology, and the university tasked him and colleague Judith Zyskind with helping to build productivity and competitiveness in biological research.

Bernstein remembers the first class he ever taught at SDSU was Recombinant DNA Technology. The class was part of a certificate program that eventually morphed into the modern Certificate in Biotechnology. The program's description from 1984 notes that "[s]tudents are required to do an internship in a local biotechnology company or in a research laboratory on campus."

Bernstein recognized then something that many top-tier biology programs

RICHARD CRIPPS

University of New Mexico
"It was great fun working with Sandy. He has a quiet and subtle sense of humor. I came in as a cocky Ph.D. and one of the things he taught me was patience."



ANTHONY CAMMARATO

Johns Hopkins Heart and Vascular Institute
"Sandy has been the most influential investigator I've ever worked with. I consider myself fortunate to have had the privilege to work with and learn from him."

PATRICK O'DONNELL

San Diego Police Department Crime Lab
"I was Sandy's first graduate student. I wouldn't be where I am in my career if it hadn't been for his mentorship and support."



KEVIN EDWARDS

Illinois State University
"I'd read about Sandy's work in *Science News*, and that's what made me want to go to SDSU. I'd planned on a career in industry, but I stayed in academia because of his influence."

in some slice of science. He also co-directs the National Institutes of Health-funded Initiative for Maximizing Student Development program for undergrads from underrepresented backgrounds. It's a history of achievement few can match, but Bernstein is humble about his role in the successes of his academic progeny.

"In the end, I can't take all the credit," Bernstein said. "It's the lab environment, it's students' mentalities and it's the expectation that SDSU puts on them."

from his lab work, but over the years he has learned to embrace this side of academic life.

"In the beginning, I had a rather staid academic approach to teaching," he said. "I hate to say it, but I had the mindset that I did teaching so I could do my research. That changed as I learned to make presentations more engaging, to speak louder, and to use visual aids."

Today, he has directly mentored nine postdocs, eight doctoral students and 26 master's students, the great majority of whom have found success

PROFESSOR BERNSTEIN'S

students and post-docs have gone into academia, industry, and public service.

he wasn't fascinated enough by the science to devote his career to studying fruit flies.

"One day I got a call from the San Diego police department," Bernstein said. "They were looking for a scientist to start their new DNA forensics unit. I highly recommended Patrick."

Today, O'Donnell supervises the DNA unit of the San Diego police department's crime lab. But Bernstein's influence didn't end there. A few months ago, a talented SDSU master's biology student, Roxanne Kotzebue, asked Bernstein for advice in applying for an open position in the crime lab. He recommended her to O'Donnell, and she was eventually hired as a criminalist working under his supervision.

Rising to the challenge

Bernstein said he didn't take to the classroom immediately. At first, he saw it as a chore that took time away



Photo: Anthony Bransby

PARADISE IN PERIL

One student crusades to keep a WWII landmark afloat.

By Coleen L. Geraghty

The first time Eileen Natuzzi visited the Solomon Islands, she was keeping a family promise.

The second time, she was trying to save lives.

There was a third time, and a fourth, and before long, Natuzzi's life was

bound to the islands as tightly as the sutures bound the incisions she stitched up during surgery.

Natuzzi is not your typical San Diego State University student. She finished medical school before most of her classmates—in the Graduate School of Public Health—had learned to read. Since then, she has lived with one foot on her home turf and the other on a Pacific island nation largely forgotten by the United States.

As a kid, Natuzzi heard family stories about the people of the Solomon Islands, who healed and harbored American and

other Allied servicemen stationed in the Pacific during World War II. Among the thousands of soldiers who didn't make it home was Natuzzi's uncle, William "Billy" Moore Stack. He perished aboard the USS Quincy near Guadalcanal.

A desire to honor Billy first brought Natuzzi to the Solomon Islands with two other family members in 2004. They arrived with a watertight capsule containing letters from Billy's siblings and a promise to commemorate his service. In 2006, the family formed the non-profit William "Billy" Moore Stack Foundation to promote education in the islands.

At least twice a year since then—funded by the foundation—Natuzzi has led American and Australian medical teams to the Solomon Islands. They bring in textbooks and equipment, and train local physicians in performing life-saving procedures and surgeries.

She also mobilized health care professionals from SDSU and other U.S. universities in a collaboration with the Stack Foundation and the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy. They formed the Solomon Islands Living Memorial Project, dedicated to improving standards of care by training local doctors at the country's sole surgical hospital in Guadalcanal.

Natuzzi's work saved lives, but she grew dissatisfied with an end-game approach to intervention. An endoscopy study by the Living Memorial Project found exceptionally high rates of *Helicobacter pylori*, a chronic bacterial infection known to cause stomach ulcers, bleeding and cancer.

"The only way ahead for me was to shift to a prevention strategy," Natuzzi said. She enrolled

A New York native, Eileen Natuzzi came to the West Coast for her surgical training in early June 1989.



Helicobacter pylori contamination of drinking water in the Solomon Islands leads to unacceptably high rates of gastrointestinal disease, often requiring surgery.

in SDSU's public health program.

Last year, with only her thesis left to write, Natuzzi applied for a research Fulbright to build health care capacity in the Solomon Islands. She knew it was a gamble—only two Fulbright researchers in the last 50 years had received grants to work there. The awards routinely fund research in higher profile countries like China, Japan, South Korea and Indonesia.

In the end, Natuzzi was an alternate, but she regards the Fulbright process as a positive step. "I was able to increase awareness of the Solomon Islands through the screening process, and that was one of my goals," she said.

Then in April, disaster struck. Tropical Storm Ita pummeled the islands, destroying hundreds of homes and displacing thousands of people.

A witness to the devastation, Natuzzi wrote an article for *The Diplomat*. In it, she suggested the Solomon Islands as a model for multinational initiatives to protect small Pacific nations from extreme weather events and the deadly infectious diseases spawned by them. To her surprise, the U.S. State Department noticed.

Natuzzi provided information about the Solomon Islands to the office of

Natuzzi's family launched the William Moore Stack Foundation to fund scholarships for rural youth.



Secretary of State John Kerry, and on Aug. 13, Kerry became the first-ever U.S. Cabinet-level member to visit the Pacific nation.

With Prime Minister Gordon Lilo, Kerry toured the flood damage and laid the groundwork for a renewed relationship between the two countries.

Natuzzi continues to work with Washington and the Solomon Islands to mitigate the effects of climate change and strengthen health systems. She is determined to keep U.S. foreign policy focused on the southwestern Pacific as keenly as it was when her Uncle Billy served.



WOULD LIKE TO
TEACH IN AN MFA
PROGRAM SOMEDAY.



“GET TO

Novelist Matt de
la Peña runs with
Elmore Leonard’s
classic advice.

By Michael Price



SUSPECTS HIS
APPROACH TO WRITING
FEMALE CHARACTERS
WILL CHANGE NOW
THAT HE HAS A
DAUGHTER.

Attending college, on a basketball scholarship, Matt de la Peña didn't yet think of himself as a writer. But he was an observer. He noticed the stories of his teammates and classmates, their shared ambitions, dreams and fears. When he enrolled in San Diego State University's Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing program, those stories came exploding out of him.

Today, de la Peña is recognized as a rising star in young adult fiction. His characters primarily navigate issues of mixed-race identity. His best-selling book "Mexican WhiteBoy" can be found on high school and college reading lists, and his book "Ball Don't Lie" was made into a major motion picture starring Ludacris and Rosanna Arquette. 360 talked to de la Peña about his craft.

THE GOOD STUFF™

How necessary is an MFA degree to becoming a successful writer?

It's not necessary for everyone, but for somebody like me, it was pivotal. When I came to writing, I hadn't read enough. I didn't have enough books under my belt. SDSU is where I learned to be a good reader. I had great professors who led me down paths to books I never would have read otherwise. The MFA took my passion and helped me figure out how to structure it.

Also, I'd never been in a community of other writers before. You get this competitive feeling and you want to keep up with your colleagues. That's helpful.

Which writers have influenced you?

Cormac McCarthy is my favorite writer. I carry his

books with me wherever I go. I could never write like him, but I want to soak it in. Junot Diaz is another big influence on me. Then there are a lot of Hispanic authors like Gabriel García Márquez and Sandra Cisneros. African-American literature was also influential when I was young—Alice Walker, Toni Morrison.

What's the best writing advice you've received?

Elmore Leonard had this rule for writing: "Get to the good stuff." And I've always loved that.

What was it like seeing one of your books turned into a movie?

It was surreal. When you're in an MFA program, you never think beyond the little story you're writing alone in a room. Then you go to a set and there's all these guys

carrying cables and there are craft service tables and there's Ludacris, and you think, "I can't believe my little story is employing all these people."

How did you decide to become a YA author?

It was sort of an accident. I was writing young protagonists during my MFA because I loved the coming-of-age story. But I'd never heard of Young Adult as a genre until my first book sold as Young Adult. My agent said, "Hey, your book is going to be purchased as a Young Adult novel," and I had to Google the term. I'd never heard of it.

How do you approach writing for a young audience?

There's incredible, literary, interesting stuff being written in YA. But if you go into

writing it thinking about YA, you're in trouble. A mistake that a lot of first-time authors make is they think they're handing a book down to teen readers, and that's the worst thing you can do. Teen readers are savvy, and they can smell a rat. You've just got to write a good book.

What are the major themes of your work?

The biggest one is the working class male's inability to deal with emotions and vulnerability. I love to deal with blue-collar kids figuring out what to do with their sadness and their shame. I'm always viewed as someone who writes about race, but I'm more interested in class. That's the thing I think about most as a writer: "What about this character's neighborhood changes the way he interacts with people?"



LIVES IN BROOKLYN NOW, BUT MISSES THE PACIFIC OCEAN AND GOOD MEXICAN FOOD.

Aztecs in Motion

First name
is Jaleel

A Simple Twist of Fade It's what's under the hi-top that counts.

Started 54 of his 56 career games, which includes 31 Mountain West starting assignments.



At San Diego State, JJ O'Brien has never been The Man.

He's been a best supporting actor on a winning cast that starred Xavier Thames last season and Jamaal Franklin the year before.

But when O'Brien walks around campus, he gets star treatment anyway. That's what happens when you're 6-foot-7 with a hi-top fade 'do and have helped the basketball program go 54-16 the past two seasons with a trip to the NCAA Tournament Sweet 16.

"Yeah, I'm easily recognizable," said O'Brien, laughing. "If you see the hair, you know who it is."

Though the hair got plenty of attention last season—from fans, the media and even Christopher "Kid" Reid, the Kid 'n Play star who helped make the hi-top fade a thing in the 1990s—it's what's under the follicles that counts.

Head coach Steve Fisher has called O'Brien "one of the smartest players I've ever coached." O'Brien does the

little things that add up to big wins, executing the perfect pass, getting a big rebound or making a key defensive stop. He knows great defense can be more significant than a thunderous dunk.

He's been that type of player since starring at Alta Loma High in Rancho Cucamonga. He's the school's all-time leading scorer but also learned to play every position on the floor.

"I took it upon myself to do a little bit of everything," he said. "I just

Has an uncle, Sean Rooks, who played in the NBA for 12 seasons with eight different teams.



Played against the Aztecs three times as a true freshman at Utah before transferring to SDSU.

Photos: Ernie Anderson

had a natural ability to do it: rebounding, passing, playing defense, scoring.”

Plus, he’s been a student of the game, soaking up information from coaches and his mom, a former high school standout and college player who watches all his games.

“Growing up I watched a lot of basketball. It wasn’t just fun to play, it was fun to study,” said O’Brien, who wants to coach at some point in his career.

Going into his last season—the senior has his degree in communications and is working on a master’s in educational leadership—O’Brien wants to play an even bigger role and share his basketball IQ. He knows Fisher’s systems inside and out and wants to be “a leader by example.”

Last season, O’Brien played 35 of 36 games, averaged 7.8 points, 4.7 rebounds and was an all-conference honorable mention. Now he’s hoping both he and the team can improve enough to get to the Aztecs’ first Final Four.

And why not? SDSU has five straight NCAA Tournament trips, consecutive sell-out seasons at Viejas Arena and the new Jeff Jacobs JAM Center practice facility that will open in 2015.

Being a part of it all has been sweet.

“It’s nice to see that the hard work you’ve put in is paying off with great crowds and the new facilities,” said O’Brien. “It’s just adding to the prominence of San Diego State basketball.”

—Doug Williams

AFTER SUCCESS, *a Focus on Legacy*

Tenika



In September, San Diego State University celebrated a milestone in its 117-year history.

The university's first comprehensive fundraising campaign met its goal of \$500 million, and a new goal of \$750 million was announced.

Through Oct. 30, 2014, The Campaign for SDSU raised \$525 million, including 97 gifts of \$1 million or more and \$49 million from current and former faculty and staff. Sixty percent of those who have supported the campaign are first-time donors.

Backed by these numbers, The Campaign for SDSU is a force with the power to impact every member of the Aztec community.

For students, there are more scholarships, more research opportunities, more internships, more faculty to teach them, mentors to guide them and resources to help them find their place in the academic and cocurricular community.

For faculty and staff, the campaign has created new positions, new degree programs and new funding to seed innovative projects; plus new centers and institutes for research and exploration.

And for alumni, the campaign's success adds prestige to a degree whose value continues to rise along with San Diego State's national rankings and its aspirations to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the leading public research institutions.

Building the endowment

The last phase of the current campaign—during which SDSU will raise another \$250 million—presents an opportunity to create a legacy of academic excellence, research advancement and deep social commitment.



Jennifer

THE CAMPAIGN FOR ... RAMONA, DANIEL, WENDY, RALEIGH, CASEY,



Karen

John

Building endowments (gifts invested for future growth) and enhancing campus facilities are the priorities, with a focus on four objectives:

- **Endowing the University Honors College** to serve an increased enrollment of 1,200 students and develop challenging new curriculum for the larger SDSU community
- **Building a research endowment** of \$15 million to support faculty and students committed to solving complex problems that require new approaches and cutting-edge technology
- **Creating additional endowed scholarships and professorships** to help students meet financial challenges and to support the hiring and retention of new tenure-track faculty
- **Constructing an Engineering and Interdisciplinary Sciences Complex** where faculty can build integrative partnerships in bioengineering, computer engineering and other emerging fields.

SDSU has set a goal of building its \$185-million endowment to \$300 million in the next three years, and eventually, to \$500 million.

"The Campaign for SDSU has been extraordinarily successful, and we are deeply grateful to our generous donors, as well as all of the members of the university community who contributed to the campaign's achievements," said SDSU President Elliot Hirshman.

"Looking forward, reaching our ambitious goal of \$750 million is critical to providing the resources that will support our continuing development as a leading public research university."

The Campaign for ...

The Campaign for SDSU is getting personal. Each gift makes an impact on individual Aztecs. The students, faculty, staff and recent alumni on these pages are examples of people whose lives have already benefited from the success of the campaign. To read their stories and learn more about The Campaign for SDSU, visit campaign.sdsu.edu.



Casey

Amita

LEON, KAREN, HADEL, ISAAC, ERIC, TENIKA, DAN, ROBERT, ALLISON



PORTAL — *to* — TOMORROW

"I believe that we will win," the trademark rallying cry of Aztec basketball fans, could also be the slogan of repeat donors to The Campaign for SDSU.

First-time donors give for any number of reasons, but those who make multiple gifts do so because they've observed the campaign's positive impact on student achievement, faculty research and campus initiatives like leadership programming.

That's the case with several donors who recently increased the planned gifts they made early in the campaign. Planned gifts, or legacy gifts, build the university's endowment, a key to growth and stability.

Mary Curran, '82, a board member of SDSU's philanthropic auxiliary, the Campanile Foundation, said she was impressed by the university's "rapid progress in elevating itself" among public research institutions.

"I became more involved and more invested in SDSU's success," she said. "With 290,000 alumni, many of whom live in San Diego, the school plays a critical role in the success and health of the region."

Before retiring as an executive vice president with MUFG Union Bank, Curran also helped arrange a large gift to SDSU from her employer.

Bill and Robin Sinclair increased their planned gift to SDSU this year. Although neither is an alumnus, the Sinclairs are loyal supporters of Aztec Athletics. They know they're supporting a winning academic team, as well as championship athletics.

"We believe that we're giving to something truly important," Robin said.

Bill compared building an endowment to building a sports team—a steady stream of new recruits maintains the program's strength.

"Legacy giving will keep the university growing and guarantee its future," he said.

GIFTS OF
\$1 MILLION
OR MORE

94



28,435
FIRST-TIME DONORS
NEARLY 60% OF ALL CAMPAIGN DONORS



289
NEW SCHOLARSHIPS
CREATED



OVER \$106 MILLION
TO SUPPORT STUDENTS THROUGH
SCHOLARSHIPS, FELLOWSHIPS
AND INTERNSHIPS

Thanks to You!

WE EXCEEDED OUR GOAL OF \$500 MILLION

MORE THAN
2,000
STUDENTS STUDYING
ABROAD EACH YEAR



40
GUARDIAN SCHOLARS,
FORMER FOSTER YOUTH WHO HAVE
GRADUATED FROM SDSU SINCE THE
PROGRAM'S INCEPTION IN 2007



181
NEW ENDOWMENTS ESTABLISHED TO
SUPPORT FACULTY POSITIONS, ACADEMIC
PROGRAMS, STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS AND
GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS



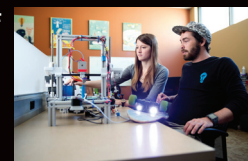
NEARLY \$49 MILLION
CONTRIBUTED FROM CURRENT AND
FORMER SDSU FACULTY AND STAFF

\$53.1 MILLION
FOR PROGRAMS AND SCHOLARSHIPS
SUPPORTING OVER 500 STUDENT-ATHLETES



18

RANKING ON THE 2014 FORBES LIST OF
"AMERICA'S MOST ENTREPRENEURIAL
UNIVERSITIES" LED BY THE LAVIN
ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTER AND
THE ZAHN INNOVATION CENTER.



1ST
STUDENT VETERANS RESIDENCE
IN THE U.S.

3,000

STUDENT VETERANS, ACTIVE DUTY, RESERVISTS
AND DEPENDENTS SERVED EACH YEAR

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

2014 - 2015

ALUMNI BOARD of ADVISORS

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Immediate Past President: Tim Young '91

Liaison to the Campanile Foundation: Bill Earley '86

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Vice President, Alumni Recognition:

James Newland '88, '92

Vice President, Finance: Alan Dulgeroff '92

Every Any Every Liaison: Leo Morales '09

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Stephanie Dathe '95; Lindsey Dixon '02; Ileana Ovalle
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Mark Mays '69; Channelle McNutt '13; Steve Nelson '96;
Chris Parks '92; Todd Vitale '86; Stacey Wolfson '10

PAST PRESIDENTS:

Immediate Past President: 2013-2014 Tim Young '91

First President: 1931 Vesta Muehleisen

For a full listing of past presidents, visit:

sdsualumni.org/pastpresidents

NON-ELECTED ADVISORS:

President: Elliot Hirshman; Vice President, University
Relations and Development: Mary Ruth Carleton;
University Senate Chair: David Ely; Associated Students
President: J. Cole; Aztec Athletics: Mandy McKinley

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT STAFF

Assistant Vice President: Jim Herrick

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Electronic Solicitation Manager: Dan Majors '03

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Assistant Director, Affinity Groups: Dion Akers '08

Career Development Liaison: Diane Barragan Marin

Program Coordinator: Jen Ranallo

Alumni Engagement Coordinator: Christy Andrade

Communications Specialist: Tobin Vaughn

Data Control Technician: Robin Breen Rust

Student Assistants: Riffat Rahman, Abby Sterk

1970s

'75 **Richard Robbins** (English) completed 28 years of directing the Good Thunder Reading Series at Minnesota State University. He continues there as director of the creative writing program.

'78 **Eric Steen** ★ (marketing) is CEO of InfuSystem Holdings, Inc., a publicly held healthcare services company.

'79 **Bonnie ZoBell** (English) has published "What Happened Here: a novella and stories," available from Press 53.

1980s

'85 **Raymond Wong** (social work; '89 M.S. counseling) has written "I'm Not Chinese: The Journey from Resentment to Reverence" (Apprentice House, 2014).

'86 **Khaled Al-Saif** (electrical engineering) is vice chairman and CEO of National Petroleum Services in Kuwait.

'88 **Carey Priebe** (computer science), a professor at Johns Hopkins University, was awarded a National Science Foundation grant for his work exploring the brain's circuitry.

2000s

'00 **Brody Smith** (political science), employed with Bond, Schoeneck & King PLLC, was featured in the 2014 Upstate New York Super Lawyers Rising Stars.

'01 **Lisa Andonovska** (psychology) was sworn into the Foreign Service and will be posted to the U.S. Embassy in Uzbekistan; **David Cordero** (management), staffer for The Spectrum & Daily News in St. George, Utah, won three first-place awards from the Utah Society of Professional Journalists; **Laurel Nathanson** (MFA jewelry/metalworking) had her work featured on the cover of *Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist* this fall.

'06 **Walter Osuna** (international business) joined the Jacob Fuchsberg Law Firm as an associate. He graduated from Fordham Law School in 2011.

'08 **Jacqueline Brown Pavlicek** (criminal justice) joined Callison Tighe & Robinson LLC as an associate. She graduated from the South Carolina School of Law in 2012; **Genevieve Ruch** (political science) joined Kirby Noonan Lance & Hoge as an associate attorney. She attended the University of San Diego Law School.

2010s

'13 **Domingo Chris Longoria** (M.S. rehabilitation counseling) was recognized by the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs for his work with the California State Department of Rehabilitation; **Katie Martin** (ISCOR) is employed on a USAID global health contract in Washington, D.C.; **Claudia Santana** (psychology) is a Fulbright Program Coordinator in Colombia, where she was a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in 2013-14.

'14 **Emily Issler** (psychology) received a national fellowship from Mortar Board. She is currently enrolled in SDSU's master of social work program.

Please send your news to the SDSU Alumni Association, aluminfo@mail.sdsu.edu. | ★ = life member

Campaign Celebration

September 19, 2014

Photos: diFranco Photography



SDSU President Elliot Hirshman, Conrad Prebys, SDSU President Emeritus Thomas Day



Dorothy Codling, '66, Peggy Ruzich, '58, Margo Kasch, '67



Glen and Betty Broom, faculty emeritus



Cathy Stiefel, '92, Keith Behner, '71



"SDSU is a place with a can-do attitude from bottom to top."

Bonnie Scott,
professor emerita

"SDSU means a sense of pride and accomplishment. It's great to be an Aztec for Life!"

Bruce Urquhart, '78



Diane, '62 and Neal Denkler



LaVerne and Harold Brown, '59



Leo Morales, '09, Elsa Romero, '97, Jeff Marston, '77



Christopher (Kit) Sickels, '60, at the podium



Frank Cuenca, '71, Dena Varnam



Howard and Jill Singer



Lee and Frank Goldberg



Jan, '73, and Tom Darcy, '73

Ask an Aztec

Helen Griffith, '05, '12



Helen Griffith, Ed.D., is executive director of e3 Civic High, a charter school within the new San Diego Central Library. During her 25-year career, she has specialized in coaching and mentoring urban school principals. She holds a master's degree in educational technology and a doctorate in educational leadership from SDSU.

What are the highlights of your professional career?

A personal highlight is that I am the only African-American female to have opened three new schools in the City of San Diego. The school I opened in September 2013, e3 Civic High, is, to our knowledge, the only school in the nation to coexist within a nine-story, \$185-million public library. This new school offers a 21st-century education focused on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) in a project-based learning environment in the heart of downtown San Diego.

What is your proudest achievement?

My proudest achievement is to have followed in the footsteps of three generations of educators. My grandmother was a teacher in the Deep South during the turn of the 19th century. My mother, Mrs. Bennye Kate Seraile, retired as a principal within the San Diego Unified School District after serving for more than 35 years. In addition, my mother was the first African-American teacher to sign a teaching contract within the Oceanside Unified School District in 1956, breaking the color barrier. She taught thousands of students

over the course of her career, and I'm proud to have the opportunity to impact lives just as she did.

Do you have a favorite college memory?

My favorite college memory was travelling to Beijing, China, on a study tour that created a bridge from the American educational system to the Chinese educational system. It was a life-changing experience that strengthened my resolve to return and prepare our students to successfully compete as global citizens.

Who was your favorite professor?

What made a professor and class a favorite was the connection to my daily work in education. I was blessed to have many favorites, but the overall award would go to Dr. James Marshall, who taught educational technology, my first course in the master's program. He forever changed my teaching practice and later, my supervisory practice, as his class allowed me to master the ability to develop and teach the skill of writing clear, measurable performance and instructional objectives. He made the rigors of learning phenomenal for me, even after an 8-hour workday.

What advice do you have for current students?

Study to become a subject-matter expert, who will spend the rest of your life giving back to the world in order to leave it far better than you found it.

What are you passionate about?

Leaving the world better than I found it!

What is your motto?

Don't ever get tired of doing what is right. If you don't give up, you will receive a harvest of rewards: Just don't quit.

If you won the lottery, what would you do with the winnings?

After retiring my school loan debt, I'd donate the rest to start an endowment for the school I run, e3 Civic High.

If you knew you could not fail, what would you attempt?

I'd become the U.S. Secretary of Education and attempt to create engaging, high performing, pre-K-12 schools for every American student and make a college education an affordable civil right for all who qualify to attend.

The 2014 Faculty Monty Award Winners

Seven exceptional San Diego State University faculty members have received the 2014 Alumni Association Awards for Outstanding Faculty Contributions. SDSU bestows the annual honors—known as the “Faculty Montys”—to one outstanding faculty member from each of its colleges.

College of Arts and Letters • Esther Rothblum, Ph.D.

Esther Rothblum is a professor in the Department of Women's Studies whose research and writing focus on women's mental health and relationships. An editor of more than 20 books on gender, sexual orientation and international issues, she is also editor of the *Journal of Lesbian Studies* and the current advisor for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender studies at SDSU.

College of Business Administration • Mehdi Salehizadeh, Ph.D.

Mehdi Salehizadeh professor and chair of the Department of Finance, teaches and researches in the field of international finance. His course topics and latest research projects include: currency movements and forecasting foreign exchange rates; short- and long-term capital flows between the United States and its major trading partners; hedging strategies for multinational corporations; and the pricing of U.S.-based country funds.

College of Education • Ian Pumpian, Ed.D.

Ian Pumpian is a professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and is also president and chief educational officer at the San Diego Unified School District's Health Sciences High and Middle College. He focuses on organizing urban educational institutions to improve student achievement and effectively prepare and support educators and other professionals for careers in culturally diverse urban areas.

College of Engineering • Yusuf Ozturk, Ph.D.

Yusuf Ozturk is a professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering whose current research projects include low artifact brain-computer interfaces, wireless power transfer for deeply implanted sensors, and closed loop residential energy pricing. He has received several patents and authored more than 60 book chapters, refereed conference publications and articles in refereed journals.

College of Health and Human Services • Melbourne Hovell, Ph.D.

Melbourne Hovell, a professor in the Graduate School of Public Health, focuses on the etiology of health-related behavior following the Behavioral Ecological Model. This includes studies of classic risk practices, such as diet and physical activity, and of clinicians' service delivery. He also addresses how changes in culture can be achieved to establish healthy practices in whole populations.

College of Professional Studies and Fine Arts • George Dionisopoulos, Ph.D.

George Dionisopoulos is a professor of communication with research and teaching emphasis in the areas of argument theory, public argument, media criticism and political communication. He is a double SDSU alumnus, having earned his undergraduate and master's degrees in speech communication in 1976 and 1980 respectively. He contributed an essay to “The 2008 Presidential Campaign: A Communication Perspective.”

College of Sciences • Gary Girty, Ph.D.

Gary Girty has supervised completion of 78 masters' and 96 senior theses while publishing 71 papers and eight guidebooks in the 30 years he has taught structural geology and field methods in the Department of Geological Sciences. He also studies the compositions of sandstones and argillites, and the sedimentological and structural origins of Paleozoic/Mesozoic rocks of the Western Cordillera.



By Degrees

David Estrin

HOMETOWN: San Diego, California

DOUBLE MAJOR: Business, Film Production

You are a sophomore this fall. What was the highlight of your freshman year at SDSU? Playing trumpet with the Marching Aztecs was a fantastic experience. I met about 50 people during band camp, which helped my transition into SDSU. Upper class band members gave me good advice on classes, teachers, and how to succeed from Day One. Another freshman turned out to be my next-door neighbor at Maya Hall, and we became great friends. I've encouraged other musicians to join.

What were some of the other memorable experiences you had last year? I met many wonderful people at our campus Hillel. I've taken on a leadership role as social co-chair and joined the Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity. Hillel provided me with the opportunity to go on an incredible 10-day Birthright trip to Israel with other college students. My favorite memories are touring Jerusalem, staying in Bedouin tents and lying in the Negev desert looking at thousands of stars.

As a student in the University Honors College, I really enjoyed living in the Honors Residential College at Maya Hall. It connected me with a group of highly motivated students dedicated to excelling academically. We studied together and collaborated on projects, and even jammed on guitar. This year, I'm a resident adviser at Maya. I want to pay back the wonderful experience I had last year.

You're a San Diego native. Did you think about going farther afield to college? I had a number of acceptances, but SDSU offered what I wanted—the combination of a great television, film and new media program and a great financial services program. Before I decided which school to attend, I took a campus tour of SDSU and met Jessica Savalla, who introduced me to the exciting Honors College. This truly sealed the deal for me!

Photo: Gary Payne



It's Better to Give and Receive

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ensure fixed income for life and leave a lasting gift to San Diego State University?*

A Charitable Gift Annuity can help you achieve that goal while avoiding capital gains tax. If you are like many individuals who own appreciated assets, you recognize that selling the assets would result in high capital gains tax. There is a solution.

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To learn more, contact Amy Walling at 619-594-0286 or awalling@mail.sdsu.edu

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as of January 1, 2014

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80	6.8%
75	5.8%
70	5.1%
65	4.7%



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THE CAM AIGN FOR MARKESE

MARKESE JORDAN IS A GUARDIAN SCHOLAR, ONE OF 155 SDSU STUDENTS WHO HAVE SUCCESSFULLY TRANSITIONED FROM THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM TO OUR UNIVERSITY CAMPUS. THE CAMPAIGN FOR SDSU HAS RAISED MORE THAN \$8.5 MILLION TO PROVIDE TUTORING, YEAR-ROUND HOUSING, MENTORING AND SIGNIFICANT SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT FOR GUARDIAN SCHOLARS.
VISIT CAMPAIGN.SDSU.EDU