

SPRING 2025

IN COLLABORATION WITH
Engage + Innovate
SDSU's Research, Scholarship
and Creative Activities Magazine

SDSU

MAGAZINE

A NEW ERA OF RESEARCH

SDSU is having a moment.
Its recent designation as
a top university for research
and graduate education opens
up endless possibilities.



inside

FEATURES

10 A NEW ERA

SDSU is R1! This solidifies its reputation among the top universities for research in the country.

12 A LIVING LABORATORY

At the Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve, mountain lions are just one aspect of research.

18 A GLOBAL ENTERPRISE

SDSU's research impact around the world.

20 LISTENING IN THE DARK

In the early morning hours, researchers work to care for farmworkers' hearing.

24 IN SDSU'S OWN BACKYARD

For SDSU, local research matters.

26 THE INTERSECTION OF ART & AI

Is generative AI friend or foe? See what the School of Art and Design says.

IN THIS ISSUE

04 ZOOM

Aztec superfan couple, teachers Carla ('97, '02) and Tim Kriss ('03, '18)

06 GO AZTECS

Can you guess the Aztec colors in 1922?

07 TELL ME A STORY

From Aztec QB to Minnesota Vikings franchise leader: Kevin O'Connell ('07)

08 AZTEC OWNED

Sand Cloud: Brandon Leibel ('12) and Steven Ford ('12)

CLASS NOTES

30 WHY WE GIVE

Jeffrey Partrick ('73) and Truette Claves

32 ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Cody Barbo, Cesar Padilla ('95) and Ronald Williams II ('03)

34 A GIFT OF PRESERVATION

Christopher "Kit" ('60, H '19) and Karen Sickels give to strengthen SDSU's legacy.

35 THROWBACK

Meet Terry O'Donnell ('68), the talent behind the Hardy Memorial Tower bells.



ON THE COVER

The SDSU world is a small one. When we approached renowned illustrator **Brian Stauffer** (on right) to create art for this R1-themed issue, he replied with an enthusiastic yes! Turns out his son **Julian** is a sociology senior here. Lucky us!

VISIT US ONLINE
SDSU.EDU/MAGAZINE

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF BRIAN STAUFFER

SDSU

MAGAZINE

Rebecca Nordquist

Editor in Chief

Linda Pouder, Merryall Studio

Art Director

Editor Jeff Ristine

Senior Copy Editor **Kathryn Sherer Brunetto**

Contributing Writers

Mike Freeman, Michael Klitzing ('05), Seth Mallios, Melanie Patton, Peggy Pico, Bryana Quintana, Tobin Vaughn, Paulina Castellanos Wade, Sumaia Wegner ('24)

Contributing Photographers

Cheli Clayton, Matt Furman, Sandy Huffaker, Sophia Price, Arturo Rivas ('24), Derrick Tuskan ('06)

Contributing Illustrator **Brian Stauffer**

Multimedia Production Coordinator

Scott Hargrove

Multimedia Production Specialist **Kynan Marlin**

Multimedia Production Assistant **Jenna Dorr**

Lead Marketing Intern, ZIP Launchpad

Taylor Schreiner

Editorial Operations **Christian Rogers**

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Adela de la Torre

President

Brittany Santos-Derieg

Chief of Staff

La Monica Everett-Haynes

Associate Vice President of Strategic Communications and Public Affairs and Chief Communications Officer

UNIVERSITY RELATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

Adrienne Vargas

Vice President

Tammy Blackburn ('94)

Senior Director of Marketing and Communications

DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Hala Madanat

Vice President

Sarah White

Director of Research Communications

CONTACT INFORMATION

SDSU Magazine

Strategic Communications and Public Affairs

5500 Campanile Dr.

San Diego, CA 92182-8080

magazine@sdsu.edu, sdsu.edu/magazine

ADDRESS CHANGES

San Diego State University

5500 Campanile Dr.

San Diego, CA 92182-8045

alumdata@sdsu.edu

Periodical postage paid at San Diego, CA

Volume 32, No. 1, copyright 2025

San Diego State University

Circulation: 20,000

Opinions expressed in *SDSU Magazine* are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the university administration nor those of The California State University Board of Trustees.

SDSU | San Diego State University



FROM THE PRESIDENT

WHEN I ARRIVED AT SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY IN 2018, WE SET ABOUT CREATING A STRATEGIC PLAN THAT WOULD CHART THE GROWTH AND ASCENSION OF THE UNIVERSITY ON THE NATIONAL STAGE. A pillar of that plan was becoming a premier public research university. As of this spring, thanks to the incredible dedication and diligence of our faculty, students and staff, I am proud to say mission accomplished!

In February, SDSU officially earned classification as an R1 research institution from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the American Council on Education. It's the highest possible research distinction in higher education, held by less than 5% of institutions—or 187 of the roughly 4,000 colleges they classify in the U.S. These unique institutions are where the bulk of the world's new knowledge is created.

Importantly, SDSU's research activity extends across all academic disciplines and benefits every member of our campus community—both past and present.

As an academic institution, R1 status enhances our reputation and helps us attract faculty and scholars at the cutting edge of their fields, including in areas such as public health, artificial intelligence, engineering, business and the fine arts. In reaching this goal, our faculty improve the ways our students learn and lead in an increasingly complex world. We also become better positioned to successfully compete for both private and public funding to tackle some of the greatest opportunities and challenges of our region and our global society.

The growth of SDSU's research activity goes hand in hand with enhancing career-readiness for our students. Both undergraduate and graduate students have more opportunities to participate in important hands-on learning, often in collaboration with prominent public agencies and private companies that supply our research grants and contracts. And for our alumni, the respect and prestige of a degree from an R1 institution enhances the value of every SDSU diploma.

In the pages of this magazine, you will see some of the amazing work being done on and beyond our campuses. I have immense gratitude for our faculty leading these efforts and never cease to be impressed by the talents and capabilities of our students. I'm also thankful for the generosity of our many donors who help support our research endeavors. This is truly a team effort.

When you add R1 classification to the many other recent, notable accomplishments at SDSU—including record-setting enrollment, graduation rates, community support and athletic achievements—I feel very confident in saying we are at the pinnacle of SDSU's rich 128-year history. What a great time to be an Aztec! ●

Adela de la Torre

ADELA DE LA TORRE, PH.D.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT HARGROVE



Carla and Tim Kriss, alumni educators and proud SDSU parents, aren't shy about their love for SDSU. It's on display in their respective elementary school classrooms.



SDSU

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATT FURMAN

A POINT OF RED AND BLACK PRIDE

Step into the third grade classroom of Carla Kriss ('97, '02) and her affinity for SDSU is hard to miss. The proud alumna teaches at Ella B. Allen Elementary in Bonita, California, surrounded by Aztecs posters, pennants, foam fingers and bobbleheads.

Her husband and fellow educator, Tim Kriss ('03, '18), insists the SDSU theme in his fourth grade classroom at Salt Creek Elementary in Chula Vista is even better—a notion Carla playfully scoffs at. What they do agree on, however, is that SDSU swag has become popular as prizes for scholastic achievement and good behavior among their students. "They love it," Carla says. "It keeps them motivated."

Carla estimates that there are 13 SDSU alumni staff members at her school, including teachers, a school counselor, a school psychologist and a nurse.

Yet it's hard to imagine anyone more spirited. She and her family are fixtures at SDSU sporting events, and their two daughters, Sierra ('21) and Sequoia ('24), both now work at the university.

For the Kriss family, SDSU is just a way of life. —*Michael Klitzing*

Editor's note: Shoutout to Aztec teachers Juliette Solis ('00), Kelly Murphy ('92) and Shannon Kelly ('91) at Marvin Elementary in San Diego, my son's past three teachers and the inspiration for this story.



1920s
SAN DIEGO STATE
TEACHERS COLLEGE
TRACK AND FIELD
UNIFORM

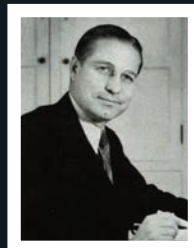
A CENTURY AGO—WHEN SAN DIEGO

State University was called San Diego Normal School—student-athletes competed in colors that would surprise today's red-and-black loyalists.

The school started with white and gold in 1897 and added blue in honor of absorbing San Diego Junior College in 1921. The next year, it inexplicably switched to purple and gold as shown here. This uniform belonged to George Dotson (1925, 1926); he later became the registrar at San Diego State in 1936.

The five-year run of the purple and gold scheme was tumultuous. Fans strongly disliked that the colors mirrored both a local high school (St. Augustine) and a conference rival (Whittier College), and noted that the colors looked particularly “swampy” when soaked with sweat.

Today's iconic red and black would win a schoolwide color vote in 1928, but the story of the many hues of red that SDSU has donned since is a tale for another time. —Seth Mallios



GEORGE
DOTSON IN 1942

PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNA DORR; INSET COURTESY OF SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

From 2004 to 2007, SDSU alumnus Kevin O'Connell ('07) led the Aztec football team as its quarterback and captain. He had a short stint as a player in the NFL, but his career would end up being defined in a different way: as a coach. On Feb. 6, just shy of three years after being named Minnesota Vikings head coach, O'Connell was named Associated Press NFL Coach of the Year.

AZTEC TURNED VIKING

BY KEVIN O'CONNELL AS TOLD TO TOBIN VAUGHN

IN THE 2008 NFL DRAFT, I WAS THE NEW ENGLAND

Patriots' third-round draft pick and a backup quarterback for Tom Brady. While I never had a winning record at San Diego State University, I was a four-year captain. That meant something to Bill Belichick, then the head coach.

I got some playing time, but by my third season with various teams, NFL coaches were saying, “You're not going to be a player. You're going to be a coach.” Turns out, they were on to something.

I didn't have much time to prepare for my first interview for an NFL head coach position, but I remember walking out feeling like everything I said was authentic. Everything came from my heart and a lifetime of football experience that I was naturally comfortable discussing. So when I got the Minnesota Vikings job in 2022, every day since, my goal has been to be authentic to who I am and to be a relationship builder.

As a quarterback, the satisfaction is figuring out how you can play to help the other 10 guys in the huddle be better. Coaching is not that much different, but I sometimes think it's more gratifying. It's almost like being a dad and seeing your kids having success at something they care about. I'm able to form unique relationships with players at all different positions and guys doing totally different jobs—but with one goal. Accomplishing that unbelievable goal of winning a Super Bowl will be something that we'll all remember for the rest of our lives. And it's really cool to be in a position to help them do that.

During my time as a student-athlete at San Diego State, great people had huge effects on me. They helped show me the importance of always learning, adapting, improving and trying to become the best version of myself for the greater good of others, which is what I think true leadership is really all about. •



In 2004, Kevin O'Connell became the first player in Aztec history to pass and rush for more than 100 yards in the same game.

COURTESY MINNESOTA VIKINGS, INSET, COURTESY PHOTOGRAPH BY ERNIE ANDERSON FROM “100 SEASONS OF AZTEC FOOTBALL”

SAND CLOUD

Friends Brandon Leibel ('12) and Steven Ford ('12) landed in the insurance industry after graduating from San Diego State University. An idea for a beach towel altered their career plans in a big way.
By Sumaia Wegner

SAND CLOUD STARTED WITH A SIMPLE idea: a beach towel with a built-in pillow. The original concept soon evolved into what is now the company's signature product: a lightweight towel that resists sand and dries quickly.

For fans of the reality TV show "Shark Tank," this may sound familiar. San Diego State University alumni Brandon Leibel ('12) and Steven Ford ('12) along with business partner Bruno Aschidamini successfully pitched the product on a 2017 episode.

The Sand Cloud owners walked away with \$200,000 to fund their enterprise, and by 2018, the business had grown to \$7 million in annual revenue. Sand Cloud had found its niche as a beach lifestyle brand with a mission to help conserve marine life. Fast-forward to today, after opening a store in Pacific Beach in August and with more on the way, it continues to grow with more product offerings.

"Authentic is a good word to describe them," says Dean Rosenberg, a 1998 SDSU alumnus and one of Leibel and Ford's mentors. "I don't think they aspire to be the next Roxy or Billabong; I think they aspire to be the next Sand Cloud."

Out of college, Leibel, a theatre arts major, and Ford, a finance major, took the traditional route. Both took jobs at a life insurance company. During that time, they created a prototype for a beach towel with a built-in pillow. Aschidamini, who was a coworker at the time, became Sand Cloud's first customer—and eventually the company's third partner. The trio left the insurance world behind, moved in together and invested everything they had into the business.

First, they needed customers. The young business



In August, Sand Cloud owners (from left) Bruno Aschidamini, Steven Ford ('12) and Brandon Leibel ('12) opened a store in Pacific Beach, the town where their business was born.

owners targeted friends, college students and even sororities at SDSU. During that time, as the business continued to develop, the trio was applying for a spot on "Shark Tank." By 2017, after two unsuccessful attempts, Leibel, Ford and Aschidamini found themselves on national TV pitching the idea that was

born from the beaches of San Diego.

"Take every failure as an opportunity to learn and refine as you continue on the path," says Leibel, who now lives in Colorado with his family. "Don't be afraid to stub people's toes to disrupt an industry. Everyone just reinvents what's already been done—you just need to bring your creativity and personal touch to it."

Sand Cloud also recognizes the importance of giving

AZTEC-OWNED BUSINESSES

It's practically summer year-round in San Diego, so it's no surprise that several Aztec entrepreneurs have founded beach-ready businesses. Here are just a few.

Blenders

AZTEC OWNER
Chase Fisher ('10)
blenderseyewear.com
(for more locations)
Eyewear for sun and snow

Pacific Beach
4683 Cass St.
San Diego, CA 92109

Encinitas
587 S. Coast Hwy, 101
Encinitas, CA 92024

Everyday California

AZTEC OWNER
Christopher D. Lynch ('08)
everydaycalifornia.com
Ocean adventure and lifestyle brand

2261 Avenida de la Playa
La Jolla, CA 92037

Native Shoes

AZTEC COFOUNDER AND SHAREHOLDER:
Thomas Claypool ('01)
nativeshoes.com
Environmentally conscious, lightweight footwear

Rip Tie Hair

AZTEC OWNER
Sarah Fox ('23)
riptiehair.com
Tangle-free hair ties

Seaesta Surf

AZTEC OWNER
Julia Wheeler ('04)
seaestasurf.com
Sustainable swimwear

Sandborn Swim

AZTEC OWNER
Stephanie Wise
sandbornswim.com
Handmade bikinis inspired by surf, sand and art

Sovrn Republic

AZTEC OWNER
David Elliott ('13)
sovrnrepublic.com
High-quality carry-on backpacks built for adventure

Surf Locos

AZTEC OWNER
Louise Maurisset ('17) and Naomi Smithwa ('17)
surflocos.com
Ethically sourced and inclusive surf products

Tan Madonnas

AZTEC OWNER
Patricia Phithamma
tanmadonnas.com
Swimwear for every surfer girl

Wayra Beachwear

AZTEC OWNER
Karen Perez ('22)
wayrabeachwear.com
Sustainable swimwear

back to the ocean environment that enables its success. Sand Cloud donates a portion of profits to partner organizations that protect, rescue and study marine mammals, restore coral reefs, and much more. To date, it has donated more than \$1 million.

As a business built on innovation, Sand Cloud has expanded beyond the beach. It has developed bath towels, shower curtains and mats, sheets, blankets, bags, and, most recently, ponchos and cover-ups. It's also about to open its third California location in Irvine. The first was Venice in 2022, followed by the Pacific Beach store in 2024.

Sand Cloud isn't limiting growth to just California. In the next five years, Leibel, Ford and Aschidamini hope to operate seven more stores nationally and continue to expand into Australia, Canada and South America. The products can also be found in retail stores across the nation.

No matter how far Sand Cloud ventures into the world, Pacific Beach will always be a significant part of the story. "It's the starting point from where the soil came about," Ford says. "It is one of our biggest markets. It's an area that we always want to stay as relevant as possible." •



Sarah Fox wears one of her Rip Tie Hair bands.



Visit the Aztec-Owned Restaurants Guide or the Aztec Network business directory to support SDSU business owners.

A NEW ERA

BY REBECCA NORDQUIST AND SARAH WHITE
ILLUSTRATION BY BRIAN STAUFFER AND LINDA POWDER

PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY RECEIVED the first doctoral degree—an honorary degree—from San Diego State College in 1963. Four years later, Robert Metzger earned the college's first-ever Ph.D. through a joint doctoral program in chemistry. He later became a professor emeritus at the university.

Since then, more than 60,000 alumni have earned master's and doctoral degrees. Many are now training the next generation as SDSU professors themselves—and are featured in the following research-themed stories.

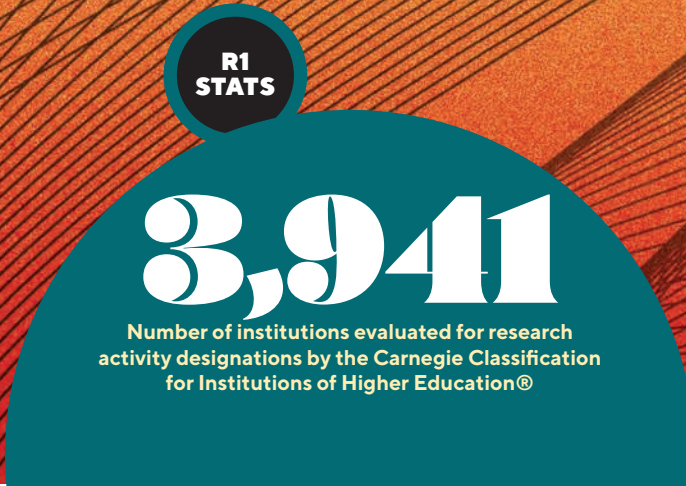
These scholars were a cornerstone in helping SDSU earn Research 1 status. This R1 designation, a classification granted by the Carnegie Foundation and American Council on Education, solidifies SDSU's reputation among the top universities for research in the country. It's awarded to

universities that benchmark for research spending and number of doctoral students graduated. Other notable universities include Harvard University, Yale University and University of California San Diego.

But SDSU is its own kind of R1—see the illustration here as proof—and it's entering a new era with game-changing developments on the horizon, including a new life sciences building at the San Diego location, the SDSU Mission Valley Innovation District and the Sciences and Engineering Laboratories at SDSU Imperial Valley.

Here's to all the faculty, staff, students and donors who helped usher SDSU to this historic, celebratory moment—and to those who will continue in their footsteps for decades to come. Let the bragging commence!

When all of the stats are whittled down, SDSU is the only public R1 HSI in California with nationally recognized DI sports teams. It's also the first—and only—California State University to achieve R1 to date.



DATA AS OF APRIL 2025 FROM THE FOLLOWING SOURCES: NCAA DIVISION I MEMBER SCHOOLS FOR 2024-2025 ACADEMIC YEAR; CARNEGIE CLASSIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION® AND HISPANIC ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES 2024 FACT SHEET BASED ON DATA FROM 2022-2023 INTEGRATED POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION DATA SYSTEM



A Living Laboratory



The Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve crew
(from top): David Lipson, director and SDSU biology professor; Pablo Bryant, reserve manager; and Jamie Bourdon, researcher and grove manager.

Mountain lions, steelhead trout and scarlet monkey flowers. Through conservation, research and partnerships with local tribes, SDSU works to protect threatened species and Indigenous traditions alike—all at the **Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve**.

BY BRYANA QUINTANA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATT FURMAN

IT'S 6 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING, and Jamie Bourdon steps through spiny branches to access a narrow path invisible to untrained eyes. He casually approaches a camouflaged trail camera, beginning the first to-do item on yet another normal day as a researcher and grove manager at the Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve.

Bourdon reviews the footage with awe, watching as a mountain lion he's tracking for research purposes appears on the screen. The lion takes Bourdon's bait, a frozen deer carcass he had strategically dragged across rugged mountain terrain just days before, and feasts all night. Suddenly, in the early morning, its head jolts up, hearing something. The lion scampers off, and Bourdon's mouth falls open as he sees himself appear on the video just 10 seconds later.

A near brush with a powerful predator, but one Bourdon, a cat lover, would welcome. His mission is to gather DNA from mountain lions and collar them to study breeding and migration patterns. The end goal? Conserve the species by illustrating the critical need for a wildlife crossing system over Interstate 15, which divides the Peninsular Ranges between the Santa Ana Mountains to the west and Palomar Mountain in the east.

This freeway barrier particularly affects mountain lions and other large mammals that can't easily traverse busy roads that smaller rodents and insects can more easily navigate. Obstructed from their routes, the lions are cut off from potential mates and from their primary food source, Southern mule deer.

"Mule deer are the only way the mountain lions survive," Bourdon says. "Throughout the U.S. and areas of Canada, we're seeing population islands where mountain lions are getting genetically isolated, unable to go to other areas."

DAVID LIPSON, PH.D., reserve director and biology professor, and Pablo Bryant ('94), reserve manager, round out the San Diego State University crew responsible for looking after the Santa

MANY HANDS MAKE light work. With just a three-person staff at the Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve, Bourdon (on left) and Bryant (third from left) defy that adage. There’s always plenty to do for these two on this approximately 4,300 acres of mostly wild land, which includes the Santa Margarita River.



Margarita Ecological Reserve. This uniquely wild, over 4,300-acre stretch of land is a relatively small speck of natural wildlife among the sprawling mix of Southern California’s suburban and farming country. Located in Temecula, about 50 miles northeast of SDSU’s San Diego location, the reserve is a patchwork of untamed swaths of land dotted with avocado and orange groves, grapevines, designated areas for research and sacred Indigenous sites.

“The pristine opportunity that exists in this small area is so rare in this country,” says Bourdon, who has lived on the reserve for 12 years. “San Diego County has more endangered species than anywhere else in the country, and this reserve in itself is a kind of microcosm, a concentrated portion of that.”

Collaring and studying mountain lions is a mere fraction of the duties performed by the team. The biodiversity of the region not only makes the reserve a perfect laboratory for conservation research but it also reflects the need to protect the land, the species and the Indigenous cultural ties.

Bryant, an SDSU biology alumnus who plans to retire from his 30-year career at the reserve in December, says conservation land

management in such dense urban areas gets harder every year. “We’re trying to get to a place where this land can be managed properly for the protection of biodiversity and culture for as long as possible,” he says.

FOR SDSU’S BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT, the reserve is a critical research tool to explore environmental solutions.

“Every day, the reserve, people around it and people involved in it are at the forefront of every issue we could talk about, whether it is climate change, housing, food security or water security,” Bourdon says.

Exemplifying this is a National Science Foundation-funded project investigating how the scarlet monkey flower, a native California species, responds to drought conditions. For the study, researchers across five institutions nationwide plant monkey flower seeds that survived the intense 2015 drought up and down the West Coast. The reserve houses the southern portion of the study with a garden of more than 5,400 plants that, around May or June, bloom into a red and green meadow over 3 feet tall.

“The reserve is at the forefront of every issue we could talk about, whether it is climate change, housing, food security or water security.”

JAMIE BOURDON, RESEARCHER AND GROVE MANAGER AT THE SANTA MARGARITA ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

Since 2022, Lluvia Flores-Renteria, Ph.D., associate professor of biology, and her team have monitored the garden year-round. They measure growing results and compare them with the other localities. The study, which grant managers call “the perfect experiment,” takes a formidable team of researchers across all levels, including evolutionary biologist Jordan Waits (’24), who used this project for his master’s thesis.

“The reserve has offered the opportunity for a lot of students to get trained in field work and experimental design,” Flores-Renteria says.

Researchers also study how drought and heat stress affect wine grape varieties in the reserve’s 1-acre vineyard. From there, Bourdon and his team turn the grapes into wine, which is used at select university events.

Reserve managers don’t let other produce grown on former farmland go to waste either. BrightSide Produce—a program led by SDSU’s Iana Castro, Ph.D., a Zahn professor of creativity and innovation—harvests Haas avocados and Valencia oranges and delivers them to food desert communities across San Diego.

THE LAND AT THE RESERVE has a long history. San Diego’s first external-reaching railroad line, which connected National City to Colton, once ran along the Santa Margarita River. Sections of

track are still embedded in the riverbed. Various families farmed the lands, and 2,500 acres were even part of a utopian commune.

In 1962, SDSU was bestowed the responsibility of maintaining the expansive landscape, and now the College of Sciences serves as its designated caretaker. The collective owners include the California State University, SDSU Research Foundation, Bureau of Land Management, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and The Nature Conservancy.

But the land’s first guardians were seven local Luiseño tribes: the Pechanga, Pala, Pauma, La Jolla, Rincon, Soboba and San Luis Rey. Since Bryant and Bourdon started working at the reserve, they have established and maintained close relationships with tribal members.

“We believe that care by Indigenous communities is what’s going to save and keep this land in perpetuity,” Bryant says. “We’re kind of this blip that got to care for it for a little bit, and ultimately, it should go back to these Indigenous communities because they’ll care for it best.”

The reserve, according to the Luiseño Tribes’ Creation Account, is the birthplace of their people and encapsulates ‘Éxva Teméeku, which means “sand and sun place—where the earth and the sun joined together.”

“Earth Mother, at that point, bore the world and everything

SDSU RESEARCH BY THE NUMBERS

8,800

In its first year, the Collaborative of Native Nations for Climate Transformation and Stewardship, aka CNNCTS, which is co-led by SDSU research scientist Megan Jennings, Ph.D. (’13), served 8,800 people through cultural burn trainings, entrepreneurship bootcamps and grants to create career pathways and leadership opportunities for Indigenous groups.

in it: the rocks, rivers, trees, the sky, the sun. The first water of the world is Táatamay, the Santa Margarita River,” says Paul Macarro, Pechanga tribal member and cultural resources coordinator. “It’s all there, where the reserve happens to be. There may be a 15 freeway between there, but in modern day, the religion, beliefs, language live on because of that place.”

The Pechanga, whose archaeological record dates back more than 10,000 years, shared this sacred Creation Account publicly for the first time in 2012. They were testifying against the construction of a mine—dubbed the Liberty Quarry—on the reserve. A mining company was targeting the granite mountain Káamalam Pomkí, “the First People’s House,” which Macarro says is central to their understanding of the world.

“We wouldn’t have our unbroken cultural tie without it: It’s that important,” he says.

Ultimately, the mining project did not go through.

In recent years, the Pechanga have regained access to the reserve through their relationship with Bryant. It had been about 100 years since they could use the land for gatherings, youth summer programs and ceremonies.

“I’m hopeful that ceremonies will continue, and they’ll be held in our place of Creation because that is the one place that has this deep-rooted attachment for all of our relatives here on these lands,” says Myra Masiel (’13), Pechanga tribal member, curator and certified tribal archaeologist. “That’s the place where all of our first relatives were born. It is the reason for our existence today.

Marissa Strebler (’23), bottom left, a field research assistant with the SDSU Research Foundation, is a part of the team that conducts climate change research around the scarlet monkey flower. The field sits in the shadow of the granite mountain Káamalam Pomkí, which is integral to the Luiseño tribes’ Creation Account.



There’s that inherent spiritual attachment to those places, and that will never go away. It will never leave us because that’s our root.”

Masiel, who also sits on SDSU’s Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act board, earned a master’s in anthropology in 2013 from SDSU.

The reserve team also aims to work with local tribes to reintroduce Indigenous land management practices and cultivate native plants traditionally used for food, medicine and dyes. Masiel supports these plans.

“We are the first scientists,” she says. “We are the first researchers.”

MAINTAINING THE RESERVE is not an easy undertaking for Lipson, Bryant and Bourdon. It’s labor-intensive, with dirt roads and trails requiring boots-on-the-ground maintenance, including fixing wells (Bryant and Bourdon watched multiple YouTube videos to figure that out), putting up fences, monitoring native plants, and removing invasive species with chainsaws and tractors.

Trespassing is also a persistent issue. Every week is a new instance of individuals starting fires, vandalizing, destroying property or driving vehicles across the delicate natural ecosystem.

“On a broader picture, this land is connectivity, on the biodiversity and cultural elements, but also just logistics. Every day is a different challenge in so many areas,” Bourdon says. “If we weren’t here, then who is? That’s when things get out of hand very quickly.”

The Santa Margarita River is one of the last free-flowing rivers in Southern California, meaning it runs naturally to the ocean without dams. It provides water to the Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton downstream and supports an array of flora and fauna in Riverside, Orange and San Diego counties. This includes the endangered steelhead trout, gray foxes, ringtail cats, American badgers, Western pond turtles, red diamond rattlesnakes, California gnatcatchers and monarch butterflies.

“The reserve starts at the confluence of the Murrieta Creek and the Temecula Creek [right by the 15 freeway], and that’s a very vulnerable area,” Lipson says. “It’s a very protected, high-quality watershed, important for wildlife crossing and reintroducing the steelhead trout.”

The reserve is open to visitors through a series of curated programs. Managers work with local teachers and youth organizations to facilitate field trips and engage K–12 students in simple experiments. Volunteers also plan guided hikes on designated trails and other public events, with the hope to one day raise enough money for a visitor center.

“This is the really hard balance, because we want people to appreciate it, know what a special thing they have, and how important it is to protect,” Lipson says. “But it’s really delicate. It has to be controlled to keep it as special as it is.” ●



AZTECS IN RESEARCH

Emily
SCHMIED
’06, ’08, ’15



After earning her third degree at San Diego State University, Emily Schmied never envisioned returning to her alma mater as a professor and researcher. In 2020, though, Schmied did just that. Her research in the School of Public Health focuses on promoting mental health and preventing suicide among military service members.

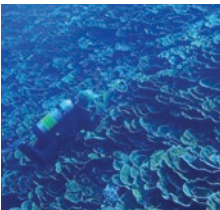
Alongside her partners, Schmied is collecting data to develop and refine a sleep-focused intervention with a recent \$2 million grant from the Department of Defense. Sleep issues are often reported as the most common complaint among adults, particularly among military service members, and the team’s findings indicate that sleep is undeniably correlated with mental health and suicide rates.

“At the end of the project, in three to five years, the goal is to have a sleep education intervention package that we could take to anybody who wants it within the military and then independently use,” Schmied says. “We want to give it to whoever needs it to improve their sleep and psychological health.” —*Melanie Patton*

Restoring the Coral Reefs

Forest Rohwer, professor of biology

The Rohwer Lab studies the viruses and bacteria that live on the coral reefs of the Pacific Ocean, including the Line Islands south of Hawaii. This work compares pristine reefs with those impacted by global and local stressors such as overfishing. To combat this, the Rohwer Lab has built Coral Reef Arks, floating structures. "The corals are suffocating on the bottom," Rohwer says. "So, we float the corals up in the water on these structures, and we test to see if we get healthier corals. The answer is yes."



SDSU student Brandie White retrieves samples from a reef.



Researchers examine an outcrop in eastern Ecuador.

Earthquakes in Ecuador

Rafael Almeida, assistant professor of earth and environmental sciences

Ecuador sits in the Pacific Ring of Fire, a hot spot for tectonic activity. In the dense jungles in the east, faults are hard to find, and earthquakes also haven't been well documented. Almeida and collaborators fly laser-sensor drones to map the jungle floor, looking for signs of faulting. They hope the research will inform local communities and mining industry on earthquake preparedness.

Education and Belief Systems

Linda Abarbanell, associate professor of psychology

Abarbanell examines belief systems in a Tzeltal Mayan community in Chiapas, Mexico. Her latest project, the Culture of Schooling, a collaboration with researchers at the University of Texas Austin, probes how formal education impacts values, beliefs and customs in traditional communities, namely around science and religion. The study spans 16 sites worldwide.



In conjunction with the Culture of Schooling project, Abarbanell is researching how changing religious beliefs impact health care choices in Chiapas, Mexico.

Sustainable Fisheries

Matt Lauer, anthropologist and department chair

Pre-colonial Polynesians practiced *rahui*, short-term fishery closures that helped replenish fish populations on coral reefs. After a few years the closed areas were opened back up. Today, support for similar closures is growing, especially in the global south. However, their effectiveness remains uncertain. In Tahiti, Lauer and colleagues are investigating whether these strategies can achieve marine sustainability while maintaining local support.



Matt Lauer researches fisheries management in French Polynesia.

Climate and Kids

Kathleen Schenkel, assistant professor of teacher education

A principal investigator in the Coastal Climate Kids Collective, Schenkel co-designed a binational research project exploring ways to engage elementary-age children with their local environments via remote learning. The study spanned Toronto, San Diego and Boston. Findings showed increased engagement within nature, paving the way for heightened environmental stewardship.



"People sometimes think we shouldn't be talking about climate change with kids, but what we've seen is they are already grappling with it," Schenkel says.

Heat Islands

Erika Robb Larkins, professor and director of the Behner Stiefel Center for Brazilian Studies

Larkins documents how climate change negatively affects residents of Rio de Janeiro's favelas, which are unplanned, dense neighborhoods that often suffer the worst of Brazil's extreme heat waves. Her latest research evaluates how poor electrical infrastructure results in fewer options for favela residents to escape sweltering temperatures.



"The impact of this is a public health crisis," Larkins says of the unbearable heat in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro. "If you can't cool down at all, you are more vulnerable."

Public Health Outreach

Susan Kiene, professor of epidemiology and biostatistics

Recently, Kiene started four new trials with collaborators in Uganda. They include addressing social and structural conditions affecting alcohol use and HIV among men; engaging men in overall family health; empowering female sex workers to promote HIV-prevention medications to clients; and reducing intimate partner violence, alcohol use and HIV among young couples.



Kiene emphasized the importance of community, public health policy and academic partnerships in her research. "The impact of that and the knowledge exchange both ways is really important," she says, "and I think at SDSU, we are known for that."

Early Humans

Janet Franklin, endowed professor of geography

As part of a team studying a site considered an archeological epicenter of human evolution in South Africa, Franklin reconstructs vegetation and resource landscapes from 50,000 to 170,000 years ago. Her modeling provides context to the archeological record during an important phase of cognitive and cultural human development, creating understanding of how early humans adapted to swings in habitat.



"We want to improve our understanding of life during this very culturally dynamic period of human history," Franklin says of life in South Africa tens of thousands of years ago.

A GLOBAL ENTERPRISE

In locations from Tahiti to Vietnam, **SDSU researchers are hard at work**, and their research is making an impact around the world. Here's a sampling of projects underway today with many more in places such as Alaska, Antarctica, Tijuana and Tajikistan. BY MIKE FREEMAN

Language Development

Giang Pham, speech-language pathologist, professor and associate dean for research

Speech-language pathology is emerging in Vietnam, with no standardized tests for language development and limited research on language disorders. Pham and local research collaborators are building the scientific evidence base for the field, probing how kindergartners develop language skills, what developmental language disorder looks like in Vietnamese, and how DLD can be identified accurately and early enough to prevent children from falling behind in school.



Graduate student Ngoc Do is part of the SDSU research team that works with kindergartners in Vietnam.

Endangered Moor Macaques

Erin Riley, professor of anthropology

Riley has studied endangered Moor macaques in an Indonesian national park for 15 years. Her research took a turn, however, when monkeys began gathering along the road to wait for food handouts. She and a team of SDSU students and local collaborators have documented changes in the macaques' social and ranging behavior, increased danger from vehicles and potential loss of social learning opportunities for juveniles. "It used to be one group of monkeys, but now there are more than eight groups," she says.



The Moor macaques in Indonesia are increasingly relying on humans for food. Riley is exploring ways to change human behavior.

right: Colten Mouzin, a doctor of audiology student in the SDSU–UCSD Joint Doctoral Audiology Program, is a fourth-generation farmer. “Since I was age 10, I spent every summer working in the fields alongside migrant workers from Mexico,” says Mouzin, who grew up in Indiana. “They inspired me, and I learned so much from them. That drew me to this opportunity with Dr. Coco.”



N

THE FRIGID MIDNIGHT HOUR ON Dec. 6, an unusually early day begins for approximately 4,000 farmworkers in Yuma, Arizona. They’re lining up for the 2 a.m. opening of *Día del Campesino*. Translated to the Day of the Farmworker, the annual celebration and health fair offers workers access to essential screenings, including hearing exams.

Among the dozens of popup tents, SDSU’s mobile hearing clinic is a popular stop. Audiologist Laura Coco, Ph.D., Au.D., an assistant professor of audiology in the School of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences, and her team of current and past SLHS students offer free hearing tests, ear protection, assessments and referrals to local care providers. On a later date, the team provides follow-up care: free hearing aid fittings, ear cleanings and more.

Working both outside in the cold and inside a small trailer turned audiology clinic, Coco and Tucson audiologist Judy Huch examine more than 50 people. They also gather data on the often-overlooked hearing hazards of prolonged exposure to loud tractors, machinery and pesticide-related toxins.

As the sun nears the horizon, the once-bustling fair comes to a close. Farmworkers—many with orange foam earplugs in hand—are bused to their jobs, and Coco and her team pack up the trailer. They will be back next year.



left: This is the third consecutive *Día del Campesino* for Coco. She says that the most common problems she sees with patients are impacted ear wax and ear infections.

below: Alyssa Ramirez is one of seven SLHS students who volunteer at the event with Coco. The interaction with the farmworkers gives them real-world experience and prepares them for a career.

right: A task for Alejandra Garza, an SDSU student, and Gabriela Sanchez (‘22) includes conducting surveys on noise exposure, hearing concerns and demographics, providing essential data for medical referrals and research data.



LISTENING IN THE DARK

BY PEGGY PICO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTURO RIVAS



above: The fair isn't all business. Volunteers at booths give out complimentary bagged breakfasts, tamales and much-needed coffee.



above right: Coco, who came to SDSU in 2022 after completing her postdoctoral research fellowship at Oregon Health & Science University, is also the director of SDSU's Community-Engaged Research for Communications Access Lab (CERCA), which is dedicated to research that improves access to and equity of hearing care for adults.



top: A volunteer with the event organizer, *Campesinos Sin Fronteras*, advertises "Examen de Oido," which translates to ear exams. After the exams, Coco and her team are committed to follow-up care. Brochures in English and Spanish help ensure that the farmworkers get the services they need.

left: At 5 a.m., the workday is just beginning for the farmworkers in attendance. After a whirlwind of health screenings, this worker boards the last bus to start his 12-hour shift harvesting produce in a nearby field.



SDSU RESEARCH BY THE NUMBERS

\$48.6M

SDSU achieved a historic high of \$48.6 million in funding from the National Institutes of Health in fiscal year 2023-2024. These funded research projects tackle health disparities and advance treatments for cancer, dementia, substance use and infectious diseases.



AZTECS IN RESEARCH

Carlo
QUINTANILLA
'15



National Institutes of Health-funded student support programs helped Carlo Quintanilla get his start as an undergraduate scientist at SDSU. A stipend enabled him to study how stem cells can help regenerate the nervous system in biology professor Ricardo Zayas' lab.

Since earning his doctorate, Quintanilla is now advocating for science policies working within the NIH.

"Doing science is really challenging, but it's extremely rewarding when you're contributing to discoveries, especially when those discoveries can impact peoples' lives in a positive way," he says.

Quintanilla has brought together stakeholders to prioritize investing in cures and treatments for diseases such as ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. He's also analyzing whether institute grants are benefiting taxpayers' health and researchers' careers.

"It's been pretty eye-opening coming from basic science to see how many areas of human health are touched by the NIH and how people are impacted by disease," Quintanilla says. "It's not just patients but also caregivers, clinicians, researchers and nurses." —Sarah White

PHOTOGRAPH BY SOPHIA PRICE



In SDSU's Own Backyard

For university researchers, contributing scientific solutions to issues of importance to San Diego County is always an action item.

BY JEFF RISTINE

Last year Bruce Appleyard, a city planning and urban design professor at SDSU, hosted a workshop for researchers on both sides of the California/Baja California border to delve into watershed management and other crossborder topics along with government officials and nonprofit groups. Appleyard and co-investigators also received a grant from the San Diego Foundation to develop a climate, watershed and coastal resiliency education and action plan for the binational region.

This is just one of a variety of projects in which SDSU has put its research to work for the surrounding community, even as close as walking distance from campus, on matters addressing issues affecting quality of life and the natural environment.

Here are four SDSU researchers whose work focuses directly on issues of interest to the San Diego region.

AREA OF RESEARCH
Wildfire Prevention
RESEARCHER
Alicia Kinoshita,
Associate Professor
of Engineering



Everyone's relieved when the last embers of an urban wildfire are

extinguished. Environmentally, however, the damage continues.

As Alicia Kinoshita and her students found after a 2018 fire burned 38 acres on a hill just across the freeway from SDSU, the loss of native vegetation typically degrades water quality. The soil, suddenly unprotected, no longer holds back metals, plastics and other harmful

materials in sediment and topsoil, in this case, dumping into Alvarado Creek. The regrowth has a less suitable root system, and a year or two later an entire bank collapsed.

Even worse: if it's non-native vegetation that burns, the damage "is going to feed back into the fire cycle," Kinoshita says, regrowing faster than native plants to provide fuel for more fires. Kinoshita and SDSU's Soil Ecology and Restoration Group were in the process of removing "a very invasive and aggressive grass species," *Arundo donax*, when the 2018 fire occurred. "Our restored site didn't burn," she says. "A lot of times native vegetation is more resilient."

Kinoshita's project was funded by the San Diego River Conservancy and a National Science Foundation CAREER Award; multiple agencies are supporting ongoing work on better watershed management.

AREA OF RESEARCH
Bridge Structures
and Seismic
Retrofitting
RESEARCHER
Robert Dowell,
Structural Engineering Professor



From the earliest days of the U.S. highway system, engineers have looked to Caltrans for leadership in bridge structural design. "And whatever California does," says Robert Dowell, a former Caltrans bridge design engineer, "the rest of the U.S., and then the world, picks up."

That means research Dowell will do under two Caltrans-sponsored contracts could have far-reaching impacts. He'll be testing reinforced concrete bridge columns, built at half their actual size, and precast bridge girders, also at half-scale. Conducted in the SDSU Structural Engineering Laboratory, his

work is likely to guide the design of new California bridge structures, and seismic retrofit of existing bridges.

Dowell's work follows two trips to Turkey to study damage to bridges from the February 2023 magnitude 7.8 earthquake, occurring under conditions similar to a future Big One in California. He's especially interested in looking at vertical rebar cutoffs in bridge columns to prevent bridge failures and loss of life, as happened when the double-deck Cypress Street Viaduct collapsed in the magnitude 7.1 Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989.

"We're going to test 60 or 70 different columns," Dowell says, "a whole series of tests and analyses to determine what should and shouldn't work."

AREA OF RESEARCH
Trash in the
San Diego River
RESEARCHER
Hilary McMillan,
Professor of Water Resources



If you're hoping to stop trash from flowing down rivers into the ocean by blocking it at the storm-drain stage—the purpose of the "full capture devices" in storm drains California is requiring municipalities to install—it helps to know if that's where the trash is coming from. Turns out it's not.

Hilary McMillan, in the geography department, led a just-completed NOAA-funded project to identify the main sources of trash in the San Diego River. Their hypothesis: Storm drains "are one source, but we didn't think it was the main source of trash."

They were right. Through a combination of their own capture nets in the river and surveys by the San Diego River Park Foundation, McMillan and her students concluded anywhere from 79 to 92% of the trash—plastic bags, clothes, mattresses—can be traced to the floodplains along the river and direct

dumping, often adjacent to homeless encampments. Foundation volunteers head to the floodplains twice weekly for cleanup projects, "and what we found is that is really critical in San Diego," McMillan says, "because that's really the only way that trash can get out other than being washed into the ocean."

AREA OF RESEARCH
Dignity for the
Unhoused
RESEARCHER
Megan Welsh Carroll,
Professor in the School
of Public Affairs



The inadequate availability of public restrooms in Downtown San Diego has produced five San Diego County grand jury reports in 25 years. It was identified as a factor in outbreaks of hepatitis A in 2017-2018 that killed 20 people and shigella in 2021, which sickened about 40. In both cases, most victims were experiencing homelessness.

"When people don't have access to proper toilets and handwashing right after," Megan Welsh Carroll says, "that creates the conditions for these kinds of outbreaks," a fact, she points out, known for "thousands of years."

Welsh is founding director of The Project for Sanitation Justice, which in 2020-2022, with the organization Think Dignity, mapped every public restroom in San Diego County. The findings showed a problem Welsh says is "absolutely a U.S.-wide trend," and while the impact falls mainly on people who rely on public sanitation to meet their basic needs, "it affects everyone."

Since then, the situation has only gotten worse under anti-camping ordinances and court-sanctioned efforts to limit the visibility of homelessness. At a minimum, Welsh says, cities should strive for 24/7 availability where public restrooms do exist: "These are solvable problems, y'know." ●

ART ⁺AI

THE INTERSECTION OF

Is generative AI friend or foe? That’s a question professors and students are facing in SDSU’s School of Art and Design—and the answer isn’t always black and white. BY MICHAEL KLITZING

IN DECEMBER, STEPHANIE WISE was out on her board as she’d been countless times before. This time wouldn’t be like the others.

The avid surfer and San Diego State University multimedia major paddled into the Pacific alongside her father at a secluded spot near Marina del Rey Harbor outside of Los Angeles. She soon found they had company—a very large, very territorial sea lion.

Wise didn’t see the animal until it was practically on top of her. “It breached over me and blocked the sun out of view, fully out of the water,” Wise says. “It looked into my soul and it growled at me in a monstrous terrifying way I could never forget. It was awful.”

Wise was unharmed but returned to shore shaken and exhausted.

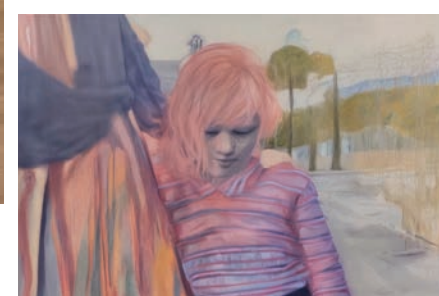
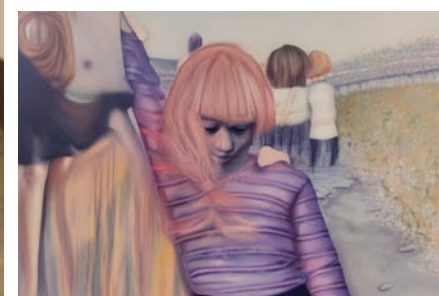
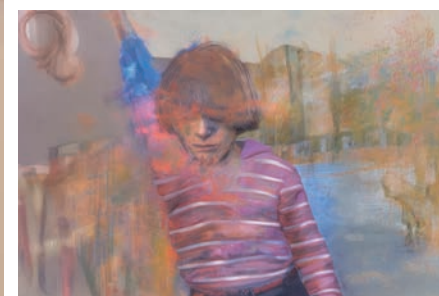
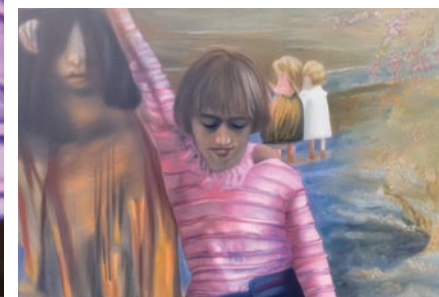
Her father, whose back had been turned during the frightening encounter, insisted she was overreacting. Ever the artist, Wise decided she had to make him see it to believe it when she got home. Typing detailed prompts into a generative pre-trained transformer (GPT) image generator, she produced a series of images of a demonic beast—all fangs and claws—bearing down on a self-portrayal, frozen in terror.

“It would have taken me hours to draw that situation,” Wise says. “In that moment, when I was so exhausted and it was so fresh on my brain, I wanted those visuals to come out immediately. My dad changed his tune when he saw the images.”

As the wave of ever-advancing generative AI sweeps over



PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT FURMAN



Ava Aviva Avnisan, a new media artist and assistant professor of integrated design, used generative AI in her film essay “Specters of Home—Prologue” to create an effect to take viewers back in time.

academia, debate rages about the fantastical opportunities and existential threats presented by this technology. And the uncertainty of the moment is felt deeply in the art world.

Some see a powerful new tool in the artist’s toolbox—one that opens up new possibilities for creative expression. Others see danger lurking beneath the surface, threatening the creative process.

One can find adherents of both viewpoints in the SDSU School of Art and Design, which cultivates promising artists looking to push creative boundaries in media ranging from the tactile—think paint, clay, metal and wood—to the digital.

“We’re all trying to adjust to something that’s happening very quickly and changing very rapidly,” says Ava Aviva Avnisan, assistant professor of integrated design. “There are a lot of questions. What does this mean for teaching? How do you allow, or not allow, students to use these tools? How do we prepare students for that future in their fields?”

“It doesn’t ever feel like there’s enough time to be having these conversations.”

AT THE INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL, SDSU has largely embraced the use of generative AI within ethical guardrails. The university’s Information Technology Division offers resources and training for faculty and staff, including an Academic Applications of AI Micro-Credential launched last summer. In March, the California State University launched a program with OpenAI’s ChatGPT Edu, an AI-powered assistant tailored for academic and research environments that’s free to faculty, staff and students.

James Frazee, SDSU’s vice president for the Information Technology Division and chief information officer, says that generative AI presents an opportunity to push the boundaries of creativity and rethink how the SDSU community engages with technology in the creative process.

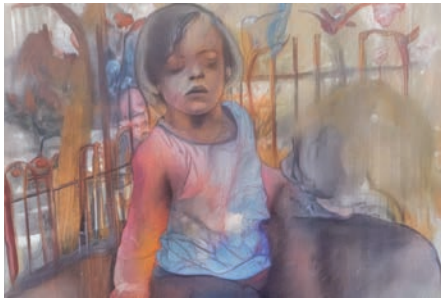
“We’re preparing our students to be at the forefront of a rapidly

SDSU RESEARCH BY THE NUMBERS

31

Last fiscal year, SDSU inventors disclosed 31 new ideas with potential commercial applications, including a financial literacy app for girls and noninvasive wearable devices for elderly and disabled patients to monitor vital signs and coughing rates remotely and comfortably.

AI FILM STILLS BY AVA AVIVA AVNISAN AND DOUG ROSMAN



Avnisan says she turned to AI to create something that would not have been possible to create on her own—not to create something she already knew how to do more efficiently.



When Stephanie Wise, an SDSU multimedia junior, needed to illustrate a terrifying encounter with a sea lion, she turned to generative AI to tell her story. This is the result.

My challenge is to create a class in which I can convince students that there’s a right time and place and a wrong time and place to use these tools.

AVA AVIVA AVNISAN, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF INTEGRATED DESIGN

evolving digital landscape,” Frazee says, “and we’re committed to fostering responsible, ethical and critical engagement with AI, ensuring that our community doesn’t just use these tools but also understands their implications and leads in shaping their future applications.”

Avnisan is something of an early adopter. As a tech-savvy new media artist specializing in performance, photographic and interactive installations and film/video, she’s begun using AI in her own work. Her film essay “Specters of Home—Prologue” explores the connections between her own Arab-Jewish family’s exodus from Iraq and Iran and the 1948 displacement of Palestinians; it also makes extensive use of generative AI animations. She and collaborator Doug Rosman, assistant professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, fed 8mm footage from Avnisan’s childhood in Jerusalem to the AI engine one frame at a time to create a unique style of AI-generated animation.

“When I first saw these images, I was like, ‘There’s something there that is so strange and so haunting,’” Avnisan says.

In the past year, Avnisan has started inviting students to engage with generative AI as a “collaborator” to complete assignments in her creative coding class. But she does so in a structured way. For instance, rather than having students prompt ChatGPT to create a specific visual design, she will ask them to think about the architecture of a script first, do the planning and then ask AI to create

sections within their plan.

One of Avnisan’s most enthusiastic students is Wise. Born and raised in Venice Beach, Wise is interested in pursuing a career in 3D art or marketing. She is deeply immersed in the action sports culture, and her art includes airbrushing designs on surfboards. Lately she’s been tinkering with robotics and virtual reality.

“I am an artist, and I do believe in the craft,” Wise says. “But now that we’re moving forward into this new realm of having generative AI accessible to us, I think it’s really cool to experiment with it. Now I feel like I’m approaching artwork in a scientific way.”

MATTHEW HEBERT is hardly an enemy of technology. The professor of furniture design and woodworking teaches courses in digital fabrication and 3D modeling. This semester, he’s teaching embedded computing for artists and designers. When it comes to generative AI and its implications for artistic expression, however, he’s concerned about its potential to stifle creativity and innovative thinking.

“I feel like it’s taking the most interesting part of the process and handing it over to a computer,” Hebert says. “You try to get students excited about ideation and conceptualization of a design, thinking about it from their own lived experience or idiosyncrasies. Now they can just take the prompt and feed it into a computer that is going to pull off everybody’s experiences.”

Hebert, who works under the studio name “eleet warez,” explains that his own process with 3D media requires coming up with an idea, reflecting on it and improving on it in multiple iterations. But what happens when generative AI makes your first iteration convincingly good enough?

“You’re just going to be happy with the idea, right?” Hebert says. “It’s sort of easy. It’s given to you. And now you’re just going to sort of march forward and try to make it a reality. To me, as an artist, that’s a pretty sad way to go through the process.”

What’s striking in talking to both skeptics and early adopters of generative AI is how much shared apprehension exists about what lurks beneath the surface. Avnisan admits to harboring concerns that generative AI may one day make her replaceable as an educator.

But she also knows that AI is not going away. Her charge, as she sees it, is to get students to use the technology ethically—and in a way that augments artistic expression rather than smothers it.

“The way I see my challenge as an educator is to create a class in which I can convince students that there’s a right time and place and a wrong time and place to use these tools,” Avnisan says. “How do we get them to want to not take the shortcut when the shortcut’s available?”

“That’s a hard challenge as an educator—but it’s also kind of an exciting challenge.”

For Wise’s part, she isn’t afraid of the unknown. She insists the freedom to interface with generative AI has fueled her inspiration and curiosity.

“Now that the technology is learning on its own, and I can collaborate with it and even boost my own educational level with it, I feel like I’m able to do a lot more,” she says.

“It’s making me a superhuman without putting a computer chip in my brain—it’s just on my phone.”



AZTECS IN RESEARCH

Jordan
EVANS
'93



Being the project manager for the Europa Clipper Mission, NASA’s largest planetary mission ever, is a dream come true for Jordan Evans. Launched successfully on Oct. 14, the spacecraft Europa Clipper is en route to Jupiter’s icy moon.

“We spend so much effort during the design, build and test phases of missions like this thinking about what could go wrong—and all of that preparation has paid off,” Evans says. “That is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the team.”

On March 1, the Clipper executed a Mars gravity assist, a critical maneuver that positions it for an Earth flyby in 2026 before arriving at Jupiter in 2030.

Evans also plays a key role in shaping future NASA missions, contributing to project management policies and serving on mission review boards.

“Helping the agency with things like this is a great way to share what I’ve learned from past projects so that they can be applied to the future,” Evans says. —Taylor Harris

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHELI CLAYTON

whywedgeive

"THIS GIFT WILL HELP OUR GRADUATES BE EXCEPTIONALLY PREPARED FOR THE DEMANDS OF THE PROFESSIONAL WORLD."

—ADRIENNE VARGAS

*Vice President for
University Relations
and Development*



Trulette Clayes and
Jeffrey Partrick ('73).

To learn more about how to participate in this \$2.5 million challenge gift, please contact Sheona Som at ssom@sdsu.edu.

THE DONORS

Jeffrey Partrick ('73) and **Trulette Clayes** come from modest beginnings. He was a night janitor at a local elementary school, and she was a manicurist at the Hotel del Coronado. The couple now shares an accounting background and a philanthropic vision. Partrick and Clayes are known for making gifts throughout San Diego, and their latest donation will provide career development support for SDSU students in the Fowler College of Business.

THE GIFT

\$2.5 million challenge gift to enhance career readiness by providing students with access to innovative programs and resources that build skills employers seek.

AT SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY'S FOWLER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS,

it turns out 1 + 1 can equal \$2.5 million. That is the amount SDSU alumnus Jeff Partrick and his wife, Trulette Clayes, donated to the college to establish a new leadership development program for student organizations, a new career bootcamp for accounting students and a new executive coaching clinic for graduate students.

In recognition of the gift, the center will be renamed the Partrick-Clayes Center for Career Development.

Although Partrick and Clayes became certified public accountants with experience at major international accounting firms, neither grew up with that as a career goal. Partrick started at Grossmont College near SDSU with the intent of playing football and becoming a high school teacher and coach. After transferring to California Western University and taking some business classes, his plans changed when a professor asked him to stay after class.

"Have you ever thought about a career in accounting?" the professor asked at the time.

This path had never crossed Partrick's mind. "He outlined the steps to earning a degree in accounting, passing the CPA exam and working for an accounting firm," Partrick says. "That conversation changed the course of my life."

Supporting himself as a night janitor at an elementary school, Partrick transferred to SDSU and became the first in his family to graduate from college. He became a CPA for Arthur Andersen & Co. "My career just progressed from there," he says.

Partrick transitioned from a CPA to an entrepreneurial fast-food operator and executive, and for the past 25 years, he has served as CEO of HOIST Fitness Systems, a San Diego-based company that produces strength training products that are sold to fitness facilities around the world.

Partrick's additional claim to fame, at least among SDSU alumni of a certain age, was taking over a beer bar in the old Aztec Center and turning it into Monty's, the iconic campus hangout. "Whenever I tell old Aztecs the Monty's story, they all have a memory or two to share," he says.

Clayes, meanwhile, took a different route. She attended beauty college and worked as a manicurist at the hair salon her mother owned at the Hotel del Coronado. She attended community college until a serious car accident sidetracked her education.

One of her clients, M. Larry Lawrence, the hotel's owner and a U.S. ambassador to Switzerland, monitored her progress. "Every time I saw him, he would ask if I had registered to return to college and finally said he would not talk to me until I was," Clayes says. "I registered the following week!"

Clayes returned to community

college and applied to the University of San Diego, where she was accepted and received a scholarship sponsored by the Lawrence family. She took a career placement exam and scored high in engineering and accounting. That set her on course to a position at a major international accounting firm.

Eventually, Clayes became the controller at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego for 23 years. She is a trustee of the Joseph Clayes III Charitable Trust, established by her beloved late Uncle Joe. "Although the trust has no involvement in the SDSU gift, the trust is really what inspired our interest in philanthropy," Clayes says.

Although Partrick and Clayes have donated to SDSU athletics for years, they said the FCB gift arose from personal experiences, citing mentors' helpful advice and the career placement exam Clayes said opened her eyes to new opportunities.

"I did not go back to college until my late 20s with little time to consider what I wanted to focus on, so that test was the key for my early college decisions," Clayes says. "It is why I feel strongly about providing tools to guide students' focus in their early college years to maximize their time at university and their eventual career."

"We hope," Partrick adds, "that the Center for Career Development will impact students and influence what they want to do with their future careers as much as our experiences did for both of us."

Dan Moshavi, the Thomas and Evelyn Page Dean of the Fowler College of Business, says Partrick and Clayes' gift will support "new opportunities that enhance the career readiness of our students with the communications and critical thinking skills they will use throughout their professional lives." In thanking Partrick and Clayes, Moshavi also says the gift launches a fundraising campaign to generate additional support for new programs and tools students need to transition into the workforce.

—Tobin Vaughn



Cody Barbo began his journey at SDSU in 2007 before ultimately finding his place in the business world. He wanted to build something from the ground up.

Now the cofounder and CEO of Trust & Will, Barbo helps families create online estate plans, including wills, trusts and health care directives. Since its founding seven years ago, the company has helped more than 1 million users. It has also raised more than \$75 million in venture capital and is valued in the hundreds of millions.

As Associated Students president ('11-'12), Barbo helped lead a \$100 million project to build the Conrad Prebys Aztec Student Union. He developed the skills to pitch a broad audience of stakeholders and deepened his SDSU connection.

"There are so many parallels between what I do now and what I learned at SDSU," Barbo says. "Being A.S. president and CEO at 21 years old gave me the confidence to take control of my own destiny."

After his time at SDSU, Barbo served on the SDSU Alumni board of advisers for six years and was just named a 2025 Rising Aztec (see back cover).

In addition to naming SDSU in his estate plan, he recently donated \$1 million to support the Zahn Innovation Platform Launchpad. Now living in Dallas with his wife, Mystique McCormick ('12), Barbo still considers SDSU his "home away from home."



The SDSU connection runs deep in Cesar Padilla's family. Padilla ('95, international business) met his wife, Mary, at the university, and all three of their children are alumni. His daughter Calixta Padilla ('22) recently graduated with a bachelor's and master's degree from SDSU. "We're all Aztecs for life," says Cesar Padilla, who serves on SDSU Alumni's board of advisers. "SDSU is more than just a school—it's a part of who we are."

At SDSU, Padilla was a member of several student organizations, including the *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán* (MEChA) and the Mexican American Business Association. He also represented the College of Arts and Letters on the ssociated Students Council. He was elected A.S. vice president of finance and later became the A.S. president ('94-'95).

Edward Jones recruited Padilla out of SDSU, and he has built a successful career in financial advising. Today, he makes financial planning accessible to San Diego and his community in Chula Vista.

Padilla's financial guidance has helped families send their children to college, purchase homes, secure their financial futures and leave lasting legacies. One of his proudest achievements is working with multiple generations of families, some of whom now include the great-grandchildren of his original clients.



Ronald Williams II ('03, political science) is a historian, writer and former professor. While at SDSU, he minored in Africana Studies, which deepened his intellectual interests and led him to pursue an M.A. in political science at Howard University and a Ph.D. in African American Studies at the University of California Berkeley.

Williams, a first-generation college student who served as Associated Students president ('01-'02) at SDSU, believes in the importance of accessible public education as a tool for social mobility and change. This guided his career path and work as a professor of African American Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill from 2013 to 2024. Outside of the academy, he has held leadership roles in finance and operations in municipal government and higher education and has served on several nonprofit boards.

Most recently, Williams received a coveted Whiting Creative Nonfiction Grant for 2024 to support the completion of his book "Black Embassy: TransAfrica and the Struggle for Foreign Policy Justice," which is an institutional history of TransAfrica, an African American foreign policy advocacy organization, he has worked on for almost 20 years. It is scheduled to be published by University of North Carolina Press in 2027.

1960s

'68 Don Walsh (M.A., political science), a trail-blazer in ocean exploration, will have a future Navy surveillance ship named in his honor.

1970s

'73 Fred Lee Norfleet, Jr. (B.A., accountancy) passed away on Jan. 29 due to cancer. He had a distinguished career in media, including roles at Phillips-Ramsey Advertising, KFMB-TV and KGTV 10, where he produced and hosted "Spectrum" for a decade. He later founded Norfleet Video Productions Inc., which he led for 30 years.

'78 Patricia DesMartis (B.A., television-film) published a book called "California Agriculture" for the "Images of America" series last year.

'79, '80 Joanie Lindenmeyer (B.A., exercise and nutritional sciences; teaching credential) is the author of "Nun Better: An Amazing Love Story," which reached No. 24 on Amazon Ebooks.

1980s

'80 Nick Zygaczenko (B.S., public health) is retiring after 44 years as an occupational safety director and thanks SDSU for providing the necessary education for a successful career.

'81 William (Bill) Dorsey (MSW), now retired, volunteers for the Red Cross, travels with his wife, Lynn, and plays in bands around Sonoma County.

'81 Patricia Pefley (B.A., Spanish) is the J21 Chief, Joint Intelligence Operation Center-Korea, USFK, where she leads four cross-functional teams to support intelligence operations.

'83, '87 Steve Goble (B.S., marketing; MBA) was reelected to his third term as El Cajon city councilmember and currently serves as vice chair on the board of directors of the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System.

'86, '90 Stephen Jacobson (B.A., public administration; MPA) is entering his 33rd year working in local government and public service.

'86 Cynthia Rapaido (B.S., biology) has retired after 32 years in education and published her first book, "Step Up Your School Leadership Game."

'87 Bruce Green (B.S., telecommunications and film) has more than 40 years of experience in television and is a four-time Emmy recipient. He works on shows that include "Dancing With the Stars," "American Idol," "The Voice" and "Shark Tank."

'87 Jeffery Light (B.S., finance) has started a new job as director of Treasury & Cash Management Services at Stretto after being a partner at Robbins Geller Rudman & Dowd LLP for more than 10 years.

1990s

'92 Thomas Dewell (B.S., management) serves as president and CEO of Commercial Bath Refinishing in California. Dewell recently published the book "Bathroom Remodeling Secrets."

'92 Cyndi Powell (B.A., liberal studies) is an English Learner Advisory Committee examiner for the Del Mar Union School District, where there are more than 32 languages spoken.

'92 Diana Sproul (B.A., theatre arts) transitioned from a career in graphics and web design to follow her passion for nutrition and healing and launched her own business, Transform Health.

'93 Jeff Poltorak (B.A., political science) is the interim vice president for University Advancement at California State University, Los Angeles, a role he has held since January.

2000s

'05 Kenneth Landes (B.A., graphic design), who was an avid advocate for gay rights and helped uplift those in his community, died in August.

'09 Jereal Dorsey (M.A., public affairs) is an active duty public affairs officer in the U.S. Navy and was selected for a promotion to rear admiral (lower half).

2010s

'11 Bryan Stanton (B.M., music and dance) hosts the podcast "Teaching While Queer." Launched in 2022, the podcast recorded more than 100 guests in 2024 and is now a nonprofit organization that focuses on the needs of queer people working in education.

'12 Perwar Almissouri (B.S., public administration) serves as the director of Career Services for a university in Iraqi Kurdistan and credits SDSU for helping him succeed.

'14 Samantha Siros (B.A., public administration) was recognized as a 2024 Distinguished Teacher by Noble Schools in Chicago, an achievement that celebrates those having an exceptional impact on students.

'18 Natalie Quijada (B.S., marketing) built a dynamic career working with companies like the San Diego Padres and NBC Universal. After 11 years in San Diego, she is now a senior analyst in corporate partnerships at Vizio in Los Angeles.

2020s

'20 Lauren Louie (B.A., hospitality and tourism management) was nominated for the 2025 Entrepreneurship Impact Award, which recognizes individuals making meaningful contributions in their fields.

'21 Megan McElaney (B.A., communication) is a Dallas Cowboys Cheerleader and represented the team in the 2025 Pro Bowl.

Submit Class Notes through SDSU Alumni's online form at sdsu.edu/classnotes or scan the code.



SDSU ALUMNI

2024–2025 Alumni Board of Advisers

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: Denise Zellmann ('89,'04)
President-Elect: Brianna Bennett ('10)

The Campanile Foundation Alumni Representative: Risa Baron ('91)

Liaison to Past Presidents: Sam Brown ('96)

Vice Presidents of Alumni Engagement Metrics: Dylan Aste ('06) and Kevin Decker ('00, '13)

Vice Presidents of Revenue: Channelle McNutt ('13,'17) and Martin Bridges ('87)

Vice Presidents of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging: Brandon Kyle ('11) and Yolanda Apalategui Lugo ('05, '15)

Vice Presidents of Finance: Mark Emch ('84) and Scott Robert ('99)

Vice President of Special Projects: Victor Alfredo Lopez ('20)
Administrator: Caitlyn Smiley ('19)

OTHER ELECTED ADVISERS

Brian Avera ('12, '15), David Baron ('87), Chiloh Baty ('08), Whitney Bond ('05, '13), Greg Chew ('03), Dan Denham ('99, '02), Dirk Epperson ('06), Carey Fernandes ('99), Richard Gonzalez ('97), Keith Harris ('91), Maria V. Kachadoorian ('87), Tom Karlo ('75), Kelli Kedis Ogborn ('07), Martin Lang ('97, '09), Brian Moffitt ('10), Cesar Padilla ('95), Gabriella Penaloza ('04), Humberto Peraza ('97, '16), Corey Polant ('15, '20), Justin Quis Quis ('97), Ashley Rodriguez Thompson ('11), Marlene Ruiz ('75), Scott Summerfield ('80), JR Tolver ('02), Alberto Velasquez ('07), Krystin West ('06), Gerry Widmer ('90)

PAST PRESIDENTS

First President: 1931
Vesta Muehleisen (1907)
Visit sdsualumni.org/pastpresidents for a full list.

NON-ELECTED ADVISERS

President: Adela de la Torre
Vice President, University Relations and Development: Adrienne Vargas
Senate Chair: Nola Butler-Byrd
Associated Students President: Katarina "Kat" Hernandez

SDSU ALUMNI STAFF

Executive Director: Stephanie Dathe ('95)
Director, Alumni and Community Engagement: Malerie McNeill ('03, '07)
Director, Marketing: Gema Deleon ('11)
Associate Director, Parma Payne Goodall Alumni Center: Marian Lim ('15)
Assistant Director, Membership & Alumni Support: Blaire Chapman
Assistant Director, Alumni Engagement: Dustin Adkins ('20)
Alumni Relations Specialist: Jen Ranallo
Alumni Events Specialist: Caitlyn Smiley ('19)
Communications Specialist: Taylor Harris ('23)
Data Control Technician: Robin Breen Rust
Parma Payne Goodall Alumni Center Events Coordinator: Cierra Ross ('23)
Parma Payne Goodall Alumni Center Events Coordinator: Lily Martinez

Remembering the Past and Preserving the Future

Created by a \$2.5 million gift, the Kit and Karen Sickels Endowed Chair in University Heritage and Community Engagement is a welcome campus resource.

BY TOBIN VAUGHN
PHOTOGRAPH BY SANDY HUFFAKER

Christopher “Kit” (’60, ’19 LHD) and Karen Sickels have always appreciated the relationship between San Diego State University and the community—and that appreciation inspired them to donate \$2.5 million to create the Kit and Karen Sickels Endowed Chair in University Heritage and Community Engagement at SDSU. Their gift focuses on SDSU’s legacies and significance in creating new ways to propel both the university and the community forward.

“We love so many different aspects of SDSU,” said Kit Sickels, a member of The Campanile Foundation board of directors. “I think we do need to keep up with explaining who we are [as a university], who we’ve been and what we plan to do.”

When SDSU expanded into Mission Valley in 2020 with the groundbreaking of Snapdragon Stadium, it incentivized the Sickelses to establish the endowment because of its visibility as a project for the community.

“It’s a good time to fund a chair to continue sharing the information of what the school does to engage our community,” Karen Sickels said following the endowment’s Dec. 9 announcement.

Seth Mallios, SDSU anthropology professor and university history curator, is the endowment’s inaugural chair and director of the new Center for University Heritage and Community Engagement. Mallios said the endowment will provide support for him and his team to field a larger volume of research and go deeper into subjects.

“We’ve been able to do what we’ve done on a shoestring budget and under really crazy deadlines,” said Mallios, a prolific researcher and author with a particular enthusiasm for both SDSU and San Diego histories. “This gives us breathing room to go even bigger on some of our projects.”

Among the first to tap into the Center for University Heritage and Community Engagement’s resources was Virginia Loh-Hagan, executive director of SDSU’s Office of Asian American



Philanthropists Karen Sickels (left) and her husband, Kit Sickels (right), are excited that university curator Seth Mallios (center) was chosen to head the new Center for University Heritage and Community Engagement. “He just brings everything to the table that we need,” Kit Sickels said.

Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander-Serving Institution Affairs and the Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) Center. She works to create more knowledge and awareness of the local APIDA community. Loh-Hagan achieves this in part by emphasizing the memories, traditions and histories that build the community. “We’re not a passive group,” she said, “we’re just not amplified.”

Loh-Hagan’s work to instill university, cultural and community pride has gained traction through the APIDA Center over the past five years. Now, she is advancing it further through a collaboration between the two centers.

“The Sickelses’ donation elevates the importance of preserving the history of the university, which we very much want to be a part of, and now we have additional assets to highlight the value of preserving our community’s histories in new and exciting ways,” Loh-Hagan said. ●

throwback

THE MAN BEHIND THE HARDY MEMORIAL TOWER BELLS

For most every San Diego State student since 1947, the bells have been a soundtrack to their time on Montezuma Mesa.

By Seth Mallios

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT HARGROVE

TERRY O’DONNELL (’68) goes to great lengths to avoid talking about himself. Instead, he turns the conversation to the iconic bells of the beloved Hardy Memorial Tower carillon he has played for more than half a century, the Master of Fine Arts Musical Theater Program he cofounded or the 1963 San Diego State graduation ceremony. O’Donnell, as a member of the commencement band, happened to be seated with his bassoon a mere 20 yards from John F. Kennedy, the speaker and then U.S. president.

A deep dive into the university archives reveals O’Donnell’s star status on the undefeated 1963 freshman State College champion track team (19-year-old O’Donnell’s specialties were the 100- and 220-yard dash, and 440 relay) and his ubiquitous involvement in nearly all things San Diego State as a double alumnus, faculty member and university philanthropist. He served as the Marching Aztecs drum major (see inset photo), Marching Aztecs director, director of the University Symphony and professor of music and theatre, among other roles.

O’Donnell’s encyclopedic knowledge of SDSU’s Fletcher Symphonic Carillon is unrivaled; he can recall everything about the evolution of the installation from 24 amplified chimes in 1947 into the complete 204-bell carillon system comprised of 21 Whittington hour-strike/peal/change-ring bells, 98 English bells, 49 Flemish bells, 12 upper-minor bells and 24 Bourdon bells.

There are 170 songs in the carillon library, and many are musical dedications to SDSU pillars, including Barbara Hartung, executive assistant to two SDSU presidents; Sally Roush, SDSU president emerita; Stephen Weber, SDSU president emeritus; and the family of alumnus David Wheeler.

O’Donnell’s reverence for past Aztecs is matched by his dedication to the future.

When he and professor emeritus Carey Wall donated \$2.4 million to San Diego State’s Musical Theatre program in 2012, they ensured through their gift that the training of these graduate students for careers as performers, directors, choreographers and educators would continue to grow and attract students in years to come. The Fletcher family and many SDSU affiliated organizations and individuals have supported the tower bells as well.

Though retired, O’Donnell, the self-proclaimed “bell freak,” is still regularly on campus, and his musical compositions serenade Montezuma Mesa throughout the day, as they have for decades. ●



Terry O’Donnell is at home in his SDSU workspace after more than 50 years as the university carillonneur. (Inset) Pictured in the 1965 Del Sudoeste yearbook, O’Donnell was the Marching Aztecs drum major.



INSET PHOTO COURTESY OF SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

Address Corrections:

SDSU Magazine
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-8045
alumdata@sdsu.edu

INTRODUCING THE 2025 RISING AZTECS

Congratulations to these San Diego State University alumni for being named as the 2025 Rising Aztecs. This biennial award recognizes outstanding alumni who make support for SDSU and engagement with the university part of their lives and careers.

SDSU Alumni
sdsualumni.org



Cody Barbo
COMMUNICATION
Founder/CEO of Trust & Will



Chris Barra ('05)
MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS
Lead Program Manager at YouTube



Leo Carrillo III ('16)
COMMUNICATION
Cofounder/CEO of CRVFT



Trisha Clifford ('12)
POLITICAL SCIENCE
Cofounder of My Leche



Teal Cooper ('16)
JOURNALISM & MEDIA STUDIES
President/Cofounder of VendiBean



Jonathan Davidi ('15)
POLITICAL SCIENCE
Lawyer at Panish / Shea / Ravipudi



Paige Doherty ('20)
COMPUTER SCIENCE
Founding Partner at Behind Genius Ventures



Brandon Ishikata ('15, '16)
EDUCATION; MULTIPLE
SUBJECTS TEACHING CREDENTIAL
Academic Career Coach at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago



Amber Tarrac ('06, '11)
CRIMINAL JUSTICE
ADMINISTRATION;
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
Founder/CEO of FounderFuego



Raymond Wu ('11)
KINESIOLOGY
Executive Manager for the YMCA of San Diego County