

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE...



Holly Heaton

Happy New Year, everyone! I wish you all a safe and happy 2021. With 2020 in the rear-view mirror and vaccinations being administered, our future is looking bright! I know we all look forward to meeting in person again and resuming our lives.

While 2020 was difficult in so many ways, it has also given us an opportunity to show our resilience, creativity and strength. And our chapter is all the stronger for it! (Who knew that we would all become zoom-experts, when 9 months ago we didn't even know what zoom was!)

We have maintained our membership and extended our reach by embracing our new virtual world. We have continued to meet, and thanks to so many of you, we have found new ways to connect with and engage our members: in virtual field trips, Special Events and hand-delivered flowers and ARCS printed materials.

Deborah Mandebach and her team have done a terrific job!

Early on we realized that an in-person event was not in the cards for our 2020 Scientist of the Year event so we pivoted and put together a virtual program that reached almost twice as many people, gave ARCS much broader recognition and raised more than twice our usual amount of money for our Scholars. Our SOY Committee, headed by **Kayda Johnson, Rachel Collins** and **Margaret Dudas**, did an outstanding job!

On the academic partner front we made huge gains with increased visibility and involvement at our four campuses, and by networking with our Scholars, faculty advisors and leaders. **Ellen Moxham**, her liaisons and team really re-vitalized this part of our organization. **Dr. Julia Falk**, as our first Scholar Editor, revised our processes and products and raised the bar in creating beautiful on-line signature pieces.

Thanks to **Ingrid Benirschke-Perkins** we entered the 21st century and for the first time developed a social media presence and found and began connecting with our Scholar Alumni. What a thrill it has been to see these alumni join in the SOY, field trips, and, we hope, membership and stewardship in the future. **June Chocheles** has led our modernization and website-related efforts and has us poised to become increasingly dialed in for the future!

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In this most challenging year, we have managed to raise money, save money and increase our Scholar awards. Many thanks to Marla who has managed our finances and kept us all informed and in line!! And, did I mention that our Member Giving campaign set a new record for fund-raising at \$100,000! Again, thanks Kayda and Fund Development team!

Some think we have “gone Hollywood” in producing not only an incredible SOY but two other productions: the Just For Fun event in August and the Home For The Holidays event in December. Again, we had great team-work involved with **Margaret Dudas** at the helm and many fantastic members, including **Ellen Moxham** and **Ann Hill**, and **Priscilla Moxley** and **Barbara Starkey**, and **Laurie Roeder**, to name a few of the major players. The Holiday event really showcased our “village” with over 20 members participating and sharing traditions, decorations, recipes and good cheer!

And of course, none of this would have been possible without the fantastic skills, creativity and work-ethic of **Rob Healey**, program support. When he joined us one year ago, none of us knew what we would face in 2020, and just how essential and valuable Rob would be to our chapter.

I have enjoyed the privilege of getting to know and work with all of you over the past several years, but none so much as this past year when we faced challenges and really pulled together to create a banner year. And now, let's all join together, keep our momentum going and make 2021 the best year ever!

Holly Heaton, President
ARCS Foundation, San Diego Chapter

Virtual Home for the Holidays Event (December 18, 2020)



Despite the ever-increasing coronavirus infection rate in San Diego County, and across the country for that matter, the holiday spirit was alive and well among the members of ARCS San Diego. This year, with **Rachel Collins** as our guide, we gathered online to share our holiday traditions, our favorite holiday recipes, our favorite Bûche De

Noël /Yule Log (with demonstrations), our most outrageous ugly Christmas sweaters, and some holiday greetings from our newest members.

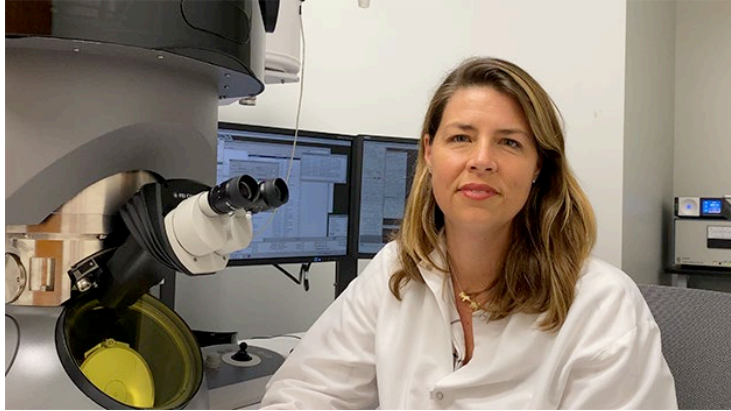
If you missed it, you can still enjoy the fun by clicking [HERE](https://san-diego.arcsfoundation.org/arcs-san-diego-home-holidays-2020).

(<https://san-diego.arcsfoundation.org/arcs-san-diego-home-holidays-2020>)



2021 ARCS San Diego Scientist of the Year

It took just one meeting of the Scientist of the Year Planning Committee to settle on our 2021 SOY. The vote was unanimous, and we are thrilled to announce our choice:



Dr. Erica Ollmann Saphire, Professor of the La Jolla Institute for Immunology, and one of the world's leading experts in pandemic and emerging viruses, such as Ebola, Marburg, Lassa, and now COVID-19.

Some of you may be familiar with Dr. Saphire from her "Coronavirus Updates: Live from the Laboratory," which are live webinars intended to keep us informed on the latest COVID-19 research in her lab.

Read the press release issued on Dec. 10, 2020 by the La Jolla Institute for Immunology [HERE](https://www.lji.org/news-events/news/post/erica-ollmann-saphire-named-scientist-of-the-year-by-arcs-san-diego/?mc_cid=1e54e8b27b&mc_eid=17f075d583). (https://www.lji.org/news-events/news/post/erica-ollmann-saphire-named-scientist-of-the-year-by-arcs-san-diego/?mc_cid=1e54e8b27b&mc_eid=17f075d583)

A Virtual Visit to San Diego Zoo Global (November 16, 2020)

ARCS ADVANCING SCIENCE IN AMERICA

SAN DIEGO ZOO GLOBAL

**ARCS in Action
at San Diego
Zoo Global:**

*Removing Disease as a Roadblock
to Conservation*

Patty Gaffney, DVM, PhD, MPVM, DACVP
Steven Kubiski, DVM, PhD, DACVP
Caroline Moore, DVM, PhD

On November 16 at 10 am, with just one click of a button, ARCS San Diego embarked on its first virtual "field trip" via Zoom. **Ann Siemens**, Co-Director of Field Trips, had invited three scientists working in the Disease Investigations Group at the San Diego Zoo's Institute for Conservation Research to guide us through their efforts to remove disease as a roadblock to wildlife conservation. All three individuals had earned their PhDs at UC Davis, as well as ARCS Scholar Awards from the Northern California Chapter.

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A Virtual Visit to San Diego Zoo Global

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Patty Gaffney



Steven Kubiski



Caroline Moore

Drs. Gaffney, Kubiski, and Moore provided a wonderful, visually-rich overview of the comprehensive disease surveillance programs, disease outbreak investigations, and targeted disease research for all of the animals in their care.



Kyle Malter

Kyle Malter, 2020-2021 ARCS Scholar at SDSU, dovetailed their presentation with a quick update on his current research on understanding how bacteria affect animal development. To study this, Kyle uses a marine tubeworm that requires bacteria for growth and development.

After a 1/2-hr Q&A, moderated by Ann Siemens, our time was up and we all went away feeling greatly enlightened and impressed by what we had just experienced.

One of the benefits of “going virtual” was the ability to share this activity beyond the borders of San Diego, and, in so doing, reconnect with many of our Scholars and members from other ARCS chapters. Altogether 55 individuals attended this event, including the ARCS National President, **Sherry Lundeen**, several ARCS chapter presidents, 4 current Scholars and 2 Scholar alums from our chapter.

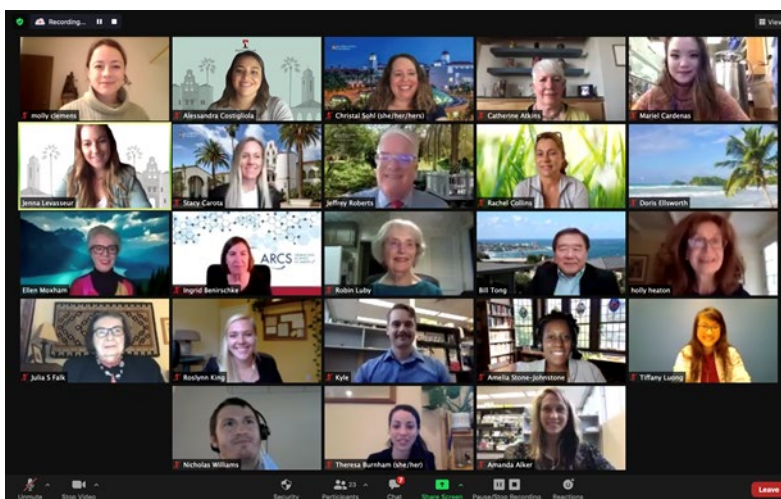
Fortunately, the entire presentation, including the Q&A, was recorded and posted on our website under “Past Events.” Click [HERE](#) to view the Zoom recording.

(<https://san-diego.arcsfoundation.org/past-events>)



SDSU Check Presentation (November 20, 2020)

ARCS San Diego was pleased to present 10 Scholar awards at SDSU in 2020-2021 totaling \$100,000 in funds. Typically, our University Relations team would have visited the SDSU campus to make an official check presentation; however, due to the coronavirus pandemic, the ceremony was held via Zoom on November 20th. **Dean Jeff Roberts** kicked off the proceedings by welcoming everyone on the Zoom call. Then **President de la Torre** offered a few more words of introduction. Next **Christal Sohl**, Assistant Professor of Biochemistry at SDSU, told us about a scholarship that had been established to honor the memory of **Dr. Joi Weeks**, who had passed away on September 14, 2020, due to complications related to breast cancer. Joi was an ARCS Scholar working in the Sohl Lab beloved and admired by all. **Cathi Atkins**, Associate Dean for the College of Sciences, proceeded to introduce the ten 2020-2021 Scholars, who each gave a video presentation about their current research. The meeting concluded with this group photo (screenshot) and repeated 'thank you's' for such an interesting and uplifting event.



The entire meeting was recorded and can be viewed [HERE](https://bit.ly/3g3iaxj). (<https://bit.ly/3g3iaxj>)

Updates from ARCS Scholars



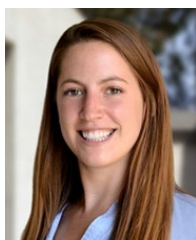
Jiarong Zhou (2019-2021 ARCS Scholar, UC San Diego) is developing nanosponges to neutralize coronaviruses by wrapping a layer of human-derived cell membrane onto nanoparticles to mimic the external appearance of the cell. This action has been shown to successfully divert SARS-CoV-2 from infecting host cells.



Updates from ARCS Scholars Continued from Page 5



Carlos Aguirre (2019-2020 ARCS Scholar, Scripps Research) successfully defended his thesis online via Zoom in August. He then accepted a position as NASA Internships Program Coordinator under the Universities Space Research Association (USRA) for the NASA Ames Research Center in Mountain View, CA. Having participated in numerous NIH and NSF funded research program for underrepresented minorities throughout his scientific training, Carlos intends to bridge research, education, and community engagement by striving for equity and inclusion of students from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds for higher education. He spoke recently about his career – past, present, and future – to Vivian Ko at Job Talk, a program founded by the UC San Diego Neurosciences Graduate Program. You can read the full interview [HERE](https://www.stemjobtalk.com/allprofiles/carlos-Aguirre). (<https://www.stemjobtalk.com/allprofiles/carlos-Aguirre>)



Danielle Grotjahn (2016-2018 ARCS Scholar, Scripps Research) was one of seven scientists to receive a Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation Award. The Damon Runyon-Rachleff Innovation Award funds cancer research by exceptionally creative thinkers with “high-risk/high-reward” ideas who lack sufficient preliminary data to obtain traditional funding. The awardees are selected through a highly competitive and rigorous process by a scientific committee comprised of leading cancer researchers who are innovators themselves. Only those scientists with a clear vision and passion for curing cancer are selected to receive the prestigious award. You can read the press release [HERE](https://bit.ly/35CwiK4). (<https://bit.ly/35CwiK4>)



Chelsea Rochman (2012-2013 ARCS Scholar, SDSU) was asked to write the Roger Revelle Commemorative Lecture for Oceanography in March 2020. This annual lecture series was created by the Ocean Studies Board of the National Academies in honor of Roger Revelle to highlight the important links between ocean sciences and public policy. In "The Story of Plastic Pollution: From the Distant Ocean Gyres to the Global Policy Stage," Chelsea provides a history of the field, the state of the science and our path forward for mitigating plastic pollution. You can read the entire lecture [HERE](https://bit.ly/3hCgY4V). (<https://bit.ly/3hCgY4V>)



Updates from ARCS Scholars Continued from Page 6



Maria Meek (2005-2006 ARCS Scholar, SDSU) co-wrote an OpEd in The Hill on January 8, 2021, urging the US to join the rest of the world and sign onto the Convention on Biological Diversity. You can read the full article [HERE](https://thehill.com/opinion/energy-environment/533139-american-lead-again-in-global-conservation). (<https://thehill.com/opinion/energy-environment/533139-american-lead-again-in-global-conservation>)

Scholar Alumni - Where Are They Now?

Susan Adamowicz (1994, SDSU) - Susan is the Land Management Research and Demonstration Biologist at Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge in Wells, Maine. In her words: "I develop and execute innovative ways to restore salt marsh ecosystems, I also help coordinate the Salt Marsh Integrity assessment project." She's studied at numerous prestigious schools, including BU, UVM, IU, SDSU and URI/GSO and lists her conservation heroes as Rachel Carson and Joy Adamson.



Susan grew up in the 1960s and 1970s and saw what people were doing to the planet – mostly in terms of pollution and animal extinction. "I had thought about being a wildlife veterinarian for a while but then decided there were enough of those. But there were hardly any planet doctors."

Susan loves salt marshes because she grew up alongside of them, and coastal systems are where things are happening on the natural and human scales.

Tracy Baynes (1989-1992, UCSD/SIO) - Tracy founded STEP (Student Expedition Program) in 2002 and is the President. The mission of STEP is to educate and empower low-income Arizona high schoolers to enroll in and graduate from college. Tracy brings 25 years of teaching and expedition leadership experience to the organization. Tracy obtained her doctorate in oceanography from Scripps Institution of Oceanography in 1993. Since then she has dedicated her career to teaching and leading expedition-based programs designed to increase students' self-confidence, enhance their ability to meet unfamiliar challenges, and widen their view of what's possible for the future. She has done so as a faculty member with a variety of institutions including Sea Education Association, Columbia University, Long Island University, and the University of Pittsburgh and now dedicates her full attention to STEP.



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Scholar Alumni - Where Are They Now?

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Timothy F. Wright (1991, UCSD) - Dr. Wright is Assistant Professor at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces. He's interested in the evolution of vocal learning and communication signals. Much of his work has focused on parrots because of their well-developed learning abilities and the interesting contrasts they pose in behavior, ecology, and life history patterns to the better-known songbirds. Early work focused on describing vocal repertoires in selected parrot species and investigating patterns of geographic variation known as vocal dialects. Of particular interest was the contrast between patterns of vocal variation among populations, driven by cultural evolution, and patterns of genetic variation.



Dr. Wright's work has included fieldwork on the yellow-naped amazon in Costa Rica and the thick-billed parrot in Mexico. In the last five years he has taken a broader, comparative approach that includes extensive molecular work on the evolutionary relationships among parrots and the use of the resulting phylogenies to investigate questions regarding life history, longevity, and mitochondrial genome evolution. Most recently, he has begun a collaborative project to examine the neural and endocrine mechanisms underlying vocal learning in adult and juvenile captive budgerigars. Finally, the serious conservation issues faced by parrots inform much of the work he does; his conservation actions include coordinating a multi-year education program in Costa Rica, conducting surveys of genetic and vocal diversity of the endangered thick-billed parrot of Mexico, investigating patterns of invasion in the monk parakeet, and engaging in public outreach and education.

Member News



Bon voyage to long-time member **Connie Adelman!** Connie and Jim are moving to a beautiful new retirement community, Robson Resort, outside of Dallas, Texas on January 15, 2021.

Here is her new contact information:

12613 Copper Ore Way

Denton, Texas 76207

email: theconz19@gmail.com

cell: 858-395-6046

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Connie's parting words: "Our street is so new it might not be on the GPS grid. Blessings, good health in the New Year and fond memories."

Connie has been a member since 1995 and is the queen of bulk mail, stuffing parties and is valued in so many ways by so many of us. She will be greatly missed!...however, since Texas does not have any ARCS chapters, we would be delighted to have her as our own Texas member! Then we would have an LA member—**Yolanda Walther-Meade**; a Colorado member—**Betty Sim**; and a Texas member!

ARCS Calendar of Events (all virtual)

January

- Friday & Saturday, January 22-23 – National Board Meeting
- Monday, January 25 – General Meeting
Speakers include: Dr. Jeffrey Drazen (1997 ARCS Scholar Alum at UCSD/SIO) and Channing Prend (2020-2021 ARCS Scholar at UCSD/SIO)

February

- Tuesday, February 16 – Board Meeting
- Thursday, February 25 (10-11:30 am) – Field Trip to Scripps Institution of Oceanography (Tour of Jeff Severinghaus' lab by Jessica Ng, 2020-2021 ARCS Scholar at UCSD/SIO)

April

- Sunday, April 25 (6-7:15 pm) – Scientist of the Year Virtual Event – SOY Honoree: Erica Ollmann Saphire, PhD