

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE...



Leslie Bruce

Welcome to the final edition of the *Insider* in 2025. Prepare to be amazed at how vibrant our chapter is!

As you know, to effect our mission of advancing science and technology in the U.S., we raise funds to support academically outstanding PhD students in science, engineering and medical research. These pages are filled with colorful descriptions of those efforts. Efforts that matter now more than ever.

How DO we raise \$500,000 annually for our young scientists? Each one of you has a role to play in that and have done so with grace and enthusiasm. Thank you!

Through innovative fundraising, interesting and fun opportunities for member engagement, and creative storytelling, we have attracted new members, and heightened awareness of who we are and the difference we make in the lives of young scientists.

During this time of federal funding cuts to scientific research we are stepping up to find even more ways to fulfill our mission. These include our leadership in the ARCS National pilot project to connect with Scholar Alums and raise awareness at national scientific meetings. (Great story inside!) We are soliciting donations from Scholar Alums for PhD students following in their footsteps. We are taking a new look at our various managed fund accounts to see if we can prudently use more of our funds to help new or existing Scholars. We are actively working to broaden our support among area corporations and to build our expertise in legacy giving.

In short, no moss is growing under our feet! And I'm glad to have each and every one of you along on the ride. Everything you do adds to the success of the whole. Please enjoy this edition of the *Insider* and revel in news of our new members, our Scholars, Scholar Alums and our many opportunities for camaraderie.

Keep up the good work!

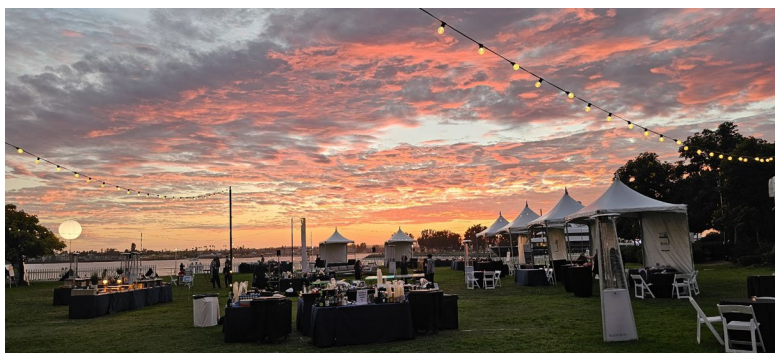
Leslie K. Bruce, President
ARCS Foundation, San Diego Chapter



ARCS National Hosts First-Ever Scholar Alumni Networking Event (October 10, 2025)

In early 2025, a sub-group of the National Scholar Relations Committee came together to plan the first networking event for ARCS Scholar Alumni at the Biomedical Engineering Society (BMES) Conference, held October 8–12, 2025, in San Diego. San Diego Chapter members **Kathe Albrecht** and **Ingrid Benirschke-Perkins** led the organizing team, joined by **Jill Bray**, **Chris Brent**, **Leslie Bruce**, **Sue Dintelman**, **Elizabeth Crist**, and **Barb Goergen**. After months of Zoom meetings, phone calls, and careful planning—it was finally showtime!

On a beautiful mid-October evening, ARCS hosted a lively reception tent during one of BMES's most popular events, Member Appreciation Night. Invitations had gone out to



375 ARCS Scholar Alumni with degrees or careers in biomedical engineering and bioengineering fields. Thanks to the dedicated work of many ARCS members across chapters who helped validate and update contact information, email deliverability was at an all-time high.

Ultimately, ten enthusiastic

Scholar Alumni from multiple chapters — including Atlanta, Los Angeles, Metro Washington, Phoenix, San Diego, and Seattle — RSVP'd and attended the event.

From 7–10 pm, Kathe, Ingrid, Leslie, and Barb welcomed BMES participants to the ARCS tent, shared the rich history of the ARCS Foundation, and offered ARCS-branded keepsakes and drink tickets. **Alexa Hudnut**, San Diego Chapter member and former ARCS Scholar in biomedical engineering (Los Angeles Chapter), also joined the team, providing valuable insight from the Scholar Alum perspective to interested students who stopped by.

Each time a Scholar Alum appeared, the team greeted them with excitement—snapping photos, exchanging stories, and learning about their professional journeys. Conversations often touched on the impact of recent federal science funding cuts, the benefits of alumni networking, and ways ARCS could continue to support their careers. Information about the newly launched Scholar Enrichment Program was also shared.



Kathe Albrecht, Leslie Bruce,
Ingrid Benirschke-Perkins

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ARCS National Hosts First-Ever Scholar Alumni Networking Event (October 10, 2025)...

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The event was a resounding success—strengthening ties with our Scholar Alumni, expanding awareness of the ARCS Foundation, and inspiring new connections with future PhD students and ARCS Scholars. Building on this momentum, the committee is now exploring opportunities to host similar gatherings at future scientific conferences nationwide.



Kathe Albrecht,
Ingrid Benirschke-Perkins,
Kayleigh Fox (Phoenix Scholar Alum)



Barb Goergen
(Minnesota Member),
Alexa Hudnut



Ludovic Vincent, Wade Johnson
(both San Diego Scholar Alums)



Karin Jensen (Metro
Washington Scholar Alum),
Leslie Bruce

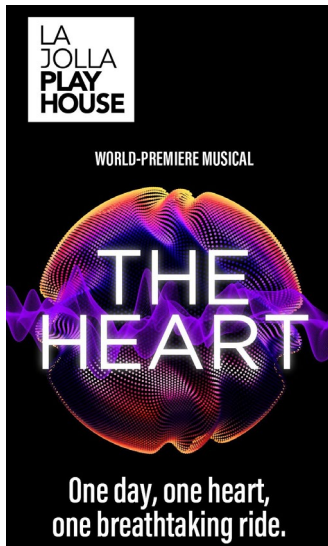
“The Heart” – La Jolla Playhouse (September 28, 2025)

The La Jolla Playhouse, renowned for developing new plays and musicals that often transfer to Broadway, delivered another winner with its latest musical “The Heart.” In fact, it was so popular, the show was extended another week, until October 5th. Thanks to the quick work of ARCS Members **Greta Treadgold** and **Cindy Wollaeger**, a group of about 20 ARCS members and friends were able to secure seats at one of the final

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“The Heart” – La Jolla Playhouse ***(September 28, 2025)...*** Continued from Page 3



performances. A small reception was organized by UCSD's Advancement team before the start of the show, and then it was showtime!

Inspired by an acclaimed French novel, *Réparer les Vivants*, by Maylis de Kerangel, which translates to “Mend the Living,” the musical centers on a 24-hour period in the life of a young man’s heart after a car accident, blending a fast-paced, immersive storytelling style with a unique electronic score. At times tender and emotional and at other times cold and clinical, the story is about life, death, sacrifice, generosity and, ultimately, hope. Most importantly, it offers a window into a critical process developed from decades of biomedical research, and one that most people never get to see – organ donation.

Kudos to The La Jolla Playhouse for partnering with *Lifesharing*, a local organ procurement organization, and educating the public about the importance of organ donation through this breathtaking new musical!



Just For Fun Party ***(September 7, 2025)***

Ooh la la, this year’s Just for Fun Party was one for the record books! **Sharon Arebelaez’** home is simply spectacular and made for a perfect end-of-summer venue. The on-the-spot crêpe making was inspired, the charcuterie display was gorgeous, the string quartet was a sweet and harmonious accompaniment, and last, but by no means least, the drink offerings were perfect on this sunny, balmy afternoon. Our thanks to **Rachel Collins, Danielle James** and **Susan Johnson** for organizing this fun and festive event!

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Just For Fun Party (September 7, 2025)...

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Leslie Bruce, Janet Roemer, Stephen
Charlton, Cathie Atkins



Cindy Goodman



Joy Kirsch, Sue Kalish,
Barbara Doren



Margaret Dudas, Karen Bowden,
Sue Dramm



Alice Brown, Sharon Arbelaez



Yolanda Walther-Meade,
Robin Luby



Priscilla Moxley,
J. Hampton Atkinson



Peggy Hanley,
Cindy Wollaeger



Robert Heaton, Robert Starkey, Barbara Starkey

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Just For Fun Party (September 7, 2025)...

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Rachel Collins, Josh James, Danielle James



Mark Albrecht, Kathe Albrecht, Sue Hylton, Clint Bruce



J. Hampton Atkinson, Robert Heaton, Peggy Hanley, Holly Heaton

Field Trip to Gemological Institute of America (GIA) (July 14 & 24, 2025)

Two groups of ARCS members were treated to a spectacular tour of the Gemological Institute of America (GIA) in Carlsbad; the first on July 14 and the second on July 24. Who knew that we had such a “gem” in our own backyard?!! Not only is the GIA the creator of the 4C’s of diamond quality, it is also the leading research and education center for gems and gemology. The exhibits, spread throughout the campus, display the science and beauty of gems, minerals, and jewelry. They feature rotating items from the GIA collection and extraordinary pieces on loan from friends in the industry and private collectors. **Julia Tripp**, GIA docent, led us on a whirlwind tour of the fascinating gem and mineral jewelry displays, and enthralled us with stories about gem history, mining and lore. We also got a peek at the GIA’s library, which is the largest gemological library in the world.

Heartfelt kudos and thanks to ARCS member **Rachel Collins** and her team (**Gwynn Thomas** and **Cindy Wollaeger**) for organizing this phenomenal field trip, as well as the delightful lunch thereafter!

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Field Trip to Gemological Institute of America (GIA) (July 14 & 24, 2025)...

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Laurie Roeder, Grace Miller, Suzanne Dixon, Rob Healey, Barbara Arledge, Janet Roemer, Linda Johnson, Greta Treadgold



Kimberly Miller, Leslie Bruce, Kathe Albrecht, Margaret Dudas, Cindy Goodman, Joy Kirsch, Alexa Hudnut, Cathie Atkins, Rachel Collins, Ingrid Benirschke-Perkins, Teri Harrah





Exclusive Dining Experience (June 28, 2025)

In an innovative approach to scholarship fundraising, President **Leslie Bruce** offered an intimate dinner experience at her home for three fortunate donors. All contributions to the scholarship fund made before February 14 would qualify for this unique opportunity to deepen connections within the ARCS community. On June 28th, the lucky winners gathered at Leslie's home, along with two ARCS Scholars – **Stephan Freeman** (Scripps Research) and **Catherine Izhikevich** (UCSD) – to enjoy a delicious meal and fascinating, wide-sweeping conversation. It was a truly memorable evening, and all agreed that such gatherings of ARCS members and Scholars should become a regular occurrence!



Kathe Albrecht, Stephan Freeman, Clint Bruce, Leslie Bruce,
Ingrid Benirschke-Perkins, Gordon Perkins, Katherine Izhikevich

New Member Profiles



Leila Armstrong moved permanently to La Jolla in 2019 but spent the summers of her youth in La Jolla at her family's vacation cottage. The Armstrong family have a long history of involvement with Arizona State University in her home state of Arizona. Her great grandfather, John S. Armstrong, was its legislative founder, and the College of Business was named in honor of her cousin, W.P. Carey. Leila served first as a member of its Dean's Fine Arts Council, and later joined the ASU President's Club. She was also on the board of the Phoenix Boys Choir, and was President of the French Heritage Society in Phoenix with her ex-husband, Reginald Winssinger, the Honorary Consul of Belgium. The Bishop's Residence at Trinity Cathedral in Phoenix was among the accomplishments that the award-winning interior designer finished

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New Member Profiles... Continued from Page 8

while working with Wiseman and Gale Interiors in Scottsdale. An artist also, she illustrated a line of greeting cards, designed logos for real estate firms, and now concentrates on painting the portraits of notable women while attending art classes at La Jolla's Athenaeum. Since moving permanently to La Jolla, she has joined the Service League of La Jolla, Republican Women's Club, the La Jolla Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and San Diego Colonial Dames.



After a professional life in financial services, **Barbara Baxter** is enjoying a rewarding post-career. She studied wine academically at Sorbonne University in Paris and has continued her inquiry into the heritage of wine for more than a decade. She has created visitor education programs for Francis Ford Coppola's Rubicon Estate and has worked for some of Napa Valley's most prestigious wineries, such as Sterling Vineyards and Opus One. She is the editor of Planet Wine and has also made wine together with her husband. Barbara has been featured in the *Wall Street Journal* and has lectured at UC Berkeley and UC San Diego, as well as at major museums, including The Getty Villa in Malibu, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Athenaeum Arts & Music Library in La Jolla, Muzeo Museum and Cultural Center in Anaheim, Huntington Library in Pasadena, and San Diego Museum of Art.



Teri Harrah was an educator for 40 years. She received her undergraduate degree in Developmental Psychology from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and her graduate credential from San Diego State University. Her teaching career allowed her to work with diverse populations from La Jolla to Oceanside to Medford, Oregon. Teri and her family then settled in Solana Beach where she taught for 25 years before retiring in 2022.

Teri enjoyed working with a wide range of students, but she also was happy to expand her portfolio with professional development roles. She served on many committees over the years to support the development of effective pedagogical strategies in math instruction. Teri wrote grants to establish math labs on campus that served the whole school community and traveled to neighboring districts to promote professional development for other educators. She helped to rewrite the district standards and created a bank of activities to enhance learning opportunities for students throughout the Solana Beach School District.

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New Member Profiles... Continued from Page 9

Community service was always an important part of the curriculum in Teri's classroom. In 2007, she started a partnership with Casas de Luz which builds homes for needy families in Tijuana. Teri spearheaded the fundraising efforts and then led a group of parents and students to build two homes over one weekend. It proved to be a transformative experience for everyone involved and many students and parents continued to be involved in Casas de Luz for years beyond that first exposure. She's pleased that the program is still a vibrant piece of the Skyline sixth grade experience and has been invited each year to return with the group for the annual build. Teri also organized an annual gift drive during the holidays to support families in need in the Solana Beach area.

In retirement, Teri volunteers in a local tutoring program that supports at-risk students in North County. She and her husband Jim also enjoy spending time with their family, traveling to old and new places, and being active with friends. They especially love exploring the many wonderful sites of San Diego.



Sally Oxley is a Board Member of SR Watt Company, a woman-led, family-owned real estate investment firm. Sally's career at Watt began at the age of thirteen when she started doing filing and acting as the office assistant. Over the years, she has maintained her service to the company in numerous capacities. Sally is extremely committed to carrying on her father's legacy by creating a sense of family among every single employee at Watt Companies. In her summers from Stephens College (Columbia, MO) and the University of Southern California, Sally was involved in managing the day-to-day operations of Watt Companies.

In addition to her work with Watt, Sally is currently a member of many associations including Trojan Club of San Diego, Trojan League Associates of San Diego, Town and Gown Associates, USC Alumni Association, USC Associates, San Diego Crew Classic Stewards, Fairbanks Republican Women's Federation, San Diego Kid's Aid, and Salvation Army.

Sally has also been active with the American Nutrition Society, the National Charity League and on the Westlake School Board.

In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her eight grandchildren, traveling and reading. Her interests include real estate, nutrition, cultural anthropology and health.



Updates from ARCS Members



Dr. Martha G. Dennis served as Honorary Chair at this year's Innovation Night, hosted by the La Jolla Playhouse on October 20, 2025. Innovation Night is San Diego's premier networking event for the arts and sciences industries. La Jolla Playhouse took great pride in acknowledging and commemorating Dr. Dennis' exceptional contributions to our region. During her 50-year career, Dr. Dennis has been a telecommunications technologist, entrepreneur and venture capitalist, becoming a leader in the technology and software industries in San Diego since starting her career in the 1970s.

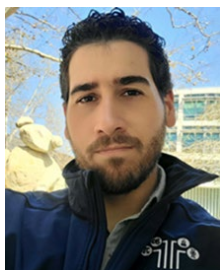


What a joy and an inspiration to read ARCS Member **Barbara Bry**'s article in the *SD Union-Tribune* entitled "San Diego County retirees making a difference." Featured among them was none other than our President, **Leslie Bruce**! We couldn't be more proud and appreciative of her leadership, and we're immensely grateful to Barbara for shining a light on ARCS in this way.

Here's a link to the complete story for your enjoyment:

<https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/2025/07/27/san-diego-county-retirees-making-a-difference-4-volunteers-share-their-stories/>

Updates from ARCS Scholars & Scholar Alumni



Major kudos to **Wilfredo Gonzalez-Rivera (2025-2026 ARCS Scholar at UC San Diego)** on being named a 2025 Human Genetics Scholar by the ASHG (American Society of Human Genetics)! This award recognizes students for their research accomplishments and commitment to achieving ASHG's vision that people everywhere realize the benefits of human genetics and genomics research.

Wilfredo's research combines genetics, genomics, and social science to understand the underlying source of health disparities, especially among admixed individuals in genetic studies. As a Puerto Rican, he's committed to improving

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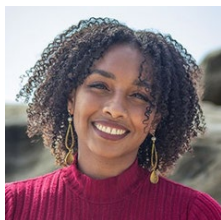
Updates from ARCS Scholars & Scholar Alumni ... Continued from Page 11

how we study complex traits in admixed populations, often mischaracterized by oversimplified population descriptors, which have complicated their analysis in genetic studies. His goal is to improve the clinical utility of genetics in admixed populations, leading to more inclusive, accurate, and impactful healthcare for all.

You can read the full press release here: <https://www.ashg.org/publications-news/press-releases/ashg-announces-2025-2027-human-genetics-scholars/>



Kian Bagheri (2025-2026 ARCS Scholar at SDSU) is investigating stormwater management in urban areas. He looks at how cities manage rainfall, what challenges come from that management—whether it's flooding or pollution-- and how these systems are likely to change in the future as the climate shifts, sea levels rise, and infrastructure continues to age. You can read more about Kian's research in the November issue of the National newsletter: <https://www.arcsfoundation.org/news/making-every-drop-count>



Rayyan Gorashi (2025-2026 ARCS Scholar at UCSD) has been selected as a 2026 Siebel Scholar! The Siebel Scholars program recognizes the most talented students in the world's leading graduate schools of business, computer science, bioengineering and energy science. The students are selected based on outstanding academic performance and leadership, and each receive a \$35,000 award toward their final year of study. The Siebel Scholars are all part of the Institute of Engineering in Medicine, which brings together researchers from UC San Diego's School of Medicine, Skaggs School of Pharmacy, and the Jacobs School of Engineering to translate creative ideas into clinical medicine and novel products that will transform patient care and well-being. Rayyan seeks to understand the molecular mechanisms driving sex differences in the progression of heart disease using biomaterial-based *in vitro* models.

Read the full story of this prestigious award: <https://today.ucsd.edu/story/2026-siebel-scholars-advancing-human-health-through-engineering>



Congratulations to **Anela Akiona, PhD (2021-2024 ARCS Scholar at UCSD)** and her colleagues at Scripps Institution of Oceanography for their work on a valuable new database that expands our understanding of Pacific coral reef fish! The database was compiled over the past five years and will continue to evolve as more data are collected. "This database is exciting because it brings together quality-controlled, standardized fish length-weight

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Updates from ARCS Scholars & Scholar Alumni ... Continued from Page 12

parameters that are often scattered, inconsistently reported or missing altogether,” said Dr. Akiona, who was co-first author of the study that was published in August 2025 in the journal *Scientific Data*.

Read the complete study here: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41597-025-05788-x>



Morgan Farrell (2024-2025 ARCS Scholar at SDSU) is researching how bacteria influence the health and development of marine invertebrates—especially corals. She discovered that a group of bacteria known as alphaproteobacteria consistently helps initiate coral settlement. This insight led her to develop a restoration tool that uses these bacteria to increase the number of coral larvae that successfully grow into adult corals. With a provisional patent already in place, Morgan’s goal is to refine the tool so it can be used across a range of coral species and restoration sites worldwide.

You can read more about Morgan’s research in the August issue of the National newsletter: <https://www.arcsfoundation.org/news/diving-deep-arcs-scholar-morgan-farrell-uses-bacteria-boost-coral-reef-restoration>



In July 2025, **Colleen Maillie, PhD (2024-2025 ARCS Scholar at Scripps Research)** successfully defended her thesis on “Integrative Protein Engineering to Harness Immune Responses at the Lipid Bilayer.” Dr. Maillie began a new position as Research Project Analyst within an incubator-style initiative in the laboratory of Andrew Ward, her thesis co-advisor at Scripps Research. She was profiled recently in *Scripps Research Magazine*. Here is a link to the complete interview: <https://magazine.scripps.edu/profiles/2024/online-exclusive/community-corner-a-qa-with-protein-engineer-colleen-maillie/>



Travis Young, PhD (2009-2010 ARCS Scholar at Scripps Research) is the Vice President of Biologics at Calibr, the drug discovery and development division of Scripps Research. Dr. Young and the team have created a new type of immunotherapy called “switchable” chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy, which is already delivering precise and powerful therapies to patients with the most difficult to treat cancers. In July 2025, the *SD Union-Tribune* reported on a new trial getting underway at Scripps Research using two novel medications in combination to create a sort of failsafe version of the “CAR” T-cell therapy that has proven effective at driving blood cancers such as lymphoma and leukemia into remission.

You can read the complete story here: <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/2025/07/06/scripps-research-clinical-trial-fights-cancer-with-novel-on-off-switch/?clearUserState=true>



Scholar Alumni – Where Are They Now?

Jon Nunes, MS, PhD (1992, SDSU) earned an MS in Analytical Chemistry in 1989, followed by a PhD in Chemistry in 1994, both at SDSU. He is currently Vice President of Development at Roche Molecular Systems in Pleasanton, California, where he has spent over 23 years producing medical tests and digital tools to help healthcare professionals find the right treatments and deliver the best care. Hiring over 182 alumni at the company, he is a proud double graduate from SDSU and often returns to the College of Sciences to share his expertise and experience.



In April 2024, he was one of 10 exceptional alumni to receive a SDSU Alumni Award of Distinction from the College of Sciences. The awards are given biennially to those alumni who have made notable contributions to the university, the San Diego community, or California, nationally or internationally.

To learn more about Dr. Nunes' science journey, view this 3-minute video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s4M_dnn4Dzs

William Redmond, PhD (2001-2004, Scripps Research)

received his undergraduate degree in Biology at the University of California, Davis prior to pursuing a PhD in Immunology at Scripps Research. In 2004, after obtaining his PhD, Dr. Redmond joined Dr. Andrew Weinberg's laboratory at the Earle A. Chiles Research Institute (EACRI) in Portland, Oregon. Dr. Redmond's post-doctoral research investigated the ability of an agonist anti-OX40 antibody to enhance tumor immunotherapy. Currently, Dr. Redmond is a Full Member, Laboratory of Cancer Immunotherapy and Director, Immune Monitoring Laboratory at the EACRI, as well as an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Oregon Health & Science University.



Dr. Redmond has extensive experience with murine tumor models and, as Director of the EACRI Immune Monitoring Laboratory, oversees translational research efforts seeking to develop and implement state-of-the-art immune profiling assays. His goal is to identify biomarkers of response that may provide insight into the mechanisms by which immunotherapy improves outcomes in patients with advanced malignancies.

Dr. Redmond's expertise in tumor immunology has led to numerous peer-reviewed publications and grant support from agencies including the NIH/NCI, Susan G. Komen, Prostate Cancer Foundation, American Cancer Society, and V Foundation.



Scholar Alumni – Where Are They Now?...

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Audrey Ichida, PhD (1995-1996, UCSD) earned a PhD in Plant Molecular Biology at UCSD in 1996 and then spent the next 4 years doing postdoctoral work in plant cell biology at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. From 2000-2002, she worked for the FDA as Deputy Chairman for the Interagency Risk Assessment Consortium (RAC), where she gained expertise in microbiological risk assessments with an emphasis on foodborne hazards.



In 2002, she joined ICF International in Fairfax, Virginia, where she was involved in many projects related to microbial and other risks from water, such as supporting EPA's development of recreational water quality criteria (RWQC), and development of a Microbiological Risk Assessment (MRA) Tools, Methods. She has managed risk assessments on *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia* in water for EPA, and site-specific risk assessments for reference pathogens (Rotavirus, Norovirus, Adenovirus, *Cryptosporidium*, *Giardia*, *Campylobacter*, *E. coli*, and *Salmonella*). Dr. Ichida later moved to Hawaii, where she has worked part-time as Lead Health Scientist for ICF until present.

In March 2025, she founded Big Island Enneagram*, which offers online courses, retreats, and personalized life coaching. Big Island Enneagram's mission is to bring greater presence and compassion into the world by fostering a deeper understanding of the Enneagram.

Outside of work, Dr. Ichida studied ballet for many years and as well as Middle Eastern dance. She joined Silk Road Dance Company in 2001, performing with the ensemble that year in their first appearance at the Kennedy Center. She is also a Level I certified dancer with The Suhaila Salimpour School of Dance in Albany, California.

* Enneagram is a system of classifying personality types that is based on a nine-pointed starlike figure inscribed within a circle in which each of the nine points represents a personality type and its psychological motivations (such as the need to be right or helpful) influencing a person's emotions, attitudes, and behavior. Using the enneagram, participants strive to become more aware of their own psychological fixations, spiritual problems, patterns of behavior and ways of relating to other people.

ARCS Calendar of Events

NOVEMBER

- Thursday, November 13 – Field Trip to San Diego Zoo Safari Park
- Sunday, November 16 – Scholar Picnic (Home of Catie Madani)
- Tuesday, November 18 – Board Meeting (via Zoom)

DECEMBER

- Saturday, December 13 – Holiday Tea Party (Barbara McColl's home)
- Tuesday, December 18 – Board Meeting (via Zoom)

JANUARY

- Tuesday, January 20 – Board Meeting (via Zoom)
- Tuesday, January 27 – Winter General Meeting (La Jolla Country Club)