

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE...



Ingrid Benirschke-Perkins
President ARCS Foundation
San Diego Chapter

Welcome to the Fall issue of the *Insider*! Once again, these pages are filled with inspiring stories and photos celebrating the accomplishments and activities of our members, Scholars, and Scholar alumni.

Looking back on our late-summer gatherings, we've enjoyed wonderful opportunities to connect as a community. Our annual "Just for Fun" Party at the beautiful home of longtime member **Doris Ellsworth** was a delightful evening of camaraderie and shared laughter. We are also thrilled to welcome Doris's daughter-in-law, **Laurie Ellsworth**, to our chapter. Be sure to read Laurie's biosketch on page 7!

In September, we enjoyed a fascinating behind-the-scenes tour of the San Diego Wind Tunnel, a world-class aerodynamics testing facility right in our own backyard. We are especially grateful to **Laurie and Michael Roeder**, whose connection to the San Diego Air & Space Museum made this exclusive tour possible.

Now we're in October, one of the most exciting months on our ARCS calendar, as we prepare to welcome our newest cohort of Scholars at our Fall General Meeting. Two are from Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Institute (SBP), our newest academic partner. Be sure to read about SBP and its inaugural ARCS Scholars, **Laurence Haddadin** and **Erik Hultenius**, in this issue.

You can also connect with our Scholars through the Getting to Know You Program, which pairs members with as many Scholars as they choose. If you'd like to participate, please contact **Suzanne Dixon**, who is once again spearheading this wonderful program.

Meeting these exceptional young scientists and learning about their research reminds us why our mission is so vital. And following their careers gives us a front-row seat to the lasting impact of ARCS support. Don't miss the closing pages of this issue, where we feature three stellar ARCS alumni and their remarkable accomplishments.

I look forward to seeing all of you as we embark on another memorable and impactful year together. First up: our Fall General Meeting on October 27!



Field Trip to SD Wind Tunnel Blows Members Away (September 18, 2026)

Thanks to **Mike and Laurie Roeder's** connection to the San Diego Air and Space Museum, **Martin Garrick**, 20 ARCS San Diego members and their spouses had an extraordinary opportunity to tour the San Diego Air & Space Technology Center's Low Speed Wind Tunnel (LSWT) on September 18. Minds were truly "blown!"

General Manager **Martin Dine**, who holds a PhD, led the tour of this little-known facility, where aircraft and other subjects are tested at wind speeds ranging from 5 to 270 miles per hour. The facility is staffed by an industry-leading team of analysts, engineers, and technicians who study aerodynamics, propulsion loads, and aeroelasticity. They work with a wide range of clients, producing high-quality data with remarkable efficiency.



Airplane manufacturers are the obvious clients for LSWT, but it was fascinating to learn about the many other subjects the team has tested. These include Olympic cyclists, luge and skeleton athletes, professional skiers and cyclists, and more. Based on their testing, LSWT staff can even determine where the seam on an athlete's outfit should be placed to minimize drag. As Martin noted, "Every thousandth of a second matters to these athletes."



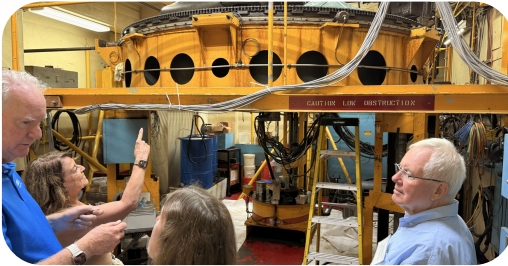
The walls of the wind tunnel are covered with signatures from athletes and members of test crews representing some of its clients, including TaylorMade Golf, SpaceX, and the 2018 USA Luge team, among many others.

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Field Trip to SD Wind Tunnel (September 18, 2026)...

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When asked why we had never heard of LSWT, Dine explained that the facility offers very few tours because its time is so tightly scheduled with testing. **How lucky we are to be ARCS members and to have had this extraordinary opportunity!**



Photos by Michael Roeder, Rob Healey and Ingrid Benirschke-Perkins.

A Sunset Supper to Remember (August 30, 2026)



Elegant, comfortable and absolutely delightful—that's how you might describe the chapter's recent Just for Fun Party at the beautiful Point Loma home of **Doris and Pete Ellsworth**. With sweeping views of the bay, downtown and beyond, the Ellsworths' home provided a spectacular setting for a "sunset supper" on August 30.

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A Sunset Supper to Remember (August 30, 2026)...

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More than 50 guests gathered to enjoy the evening, and Mother Nature contributed her own special touch: cool ocean breezes that kept everyone perfectly comfortable.



The evening began with wine and other beverages on the patio, giving guests plenty of time to mingle and admire the view. Soon, everyone was ushered onto the south-facing patios on two levels, where intimate tables awaited.

And then came dinner! Guests savored lasagna, salad and delicious olive breadsticks made by none other than ARCS husband extraordinaire, **Michael Roeder**. Clearly, VP of

Meetings, Field Trips and Social Events **Laurie Roeder** knows how to build a winning team!



Eric, Jill, Tom, Cindy, Linda



Laurie & Tom Ellsworth, Lisa & Trevor Perich



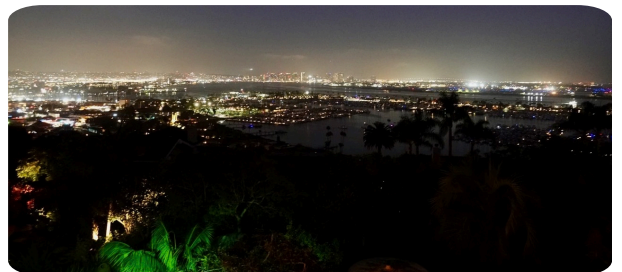
Holly, Meera, Hamp, Peggy, Joy,
Sharon, Susan, Leila, Sue



Douglas, Carolyn, Suzanne, Michael, Stan,
Cathie



Beth Anne, Ann, Peter, Ingrid, Clint, Leslie



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A Sunset Supper to Remember (August 30, 2026)...

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With fabulous food, wonderful company, spectacular views and a gorgeous sunset as the backdrop, it was an evening to remember. Many thanks to **Doris and Pete Ellsworth** for opening their beautiful home, to **Laurie and Michael Roeder** for their culinary contributions, to **Laurie** again for all the wonderful photos and to all the volunteers whose hard work and enthusiasm made this Just for Fun gathering such a success.

ARCS Members Go “Inside the Science” at Sanford Burnham Prebys (August 13, 2026)

Seven ARCS members recently had a fascinating opportunity to go “Inside the Science” at our newest educational partner, Sanford Burnham Prebys (SBP). The panel presentation offered a fascinating look at how studying rare diseases can unlock breakthroughs that benefit patients with far more common conditions.

SBP President and CEO **David Brenner, MD**, moderated an impressive panel featuring **Kristen Wigby, MD**, Associate Medical Director at the Rady Children’s Institute for Genomic Medicine; **Su-Chun Zhang, MD, PhD**, Director of the SBP Center for Neurological Diseases; and **Hudson Freeze, PhD**, Director of the Sanford Children’s Health Research Center.



Kristen Wigby, MD



Su-Chun Zhang, MD, PhD



Hudson Freeze, PhD

Each panelist brought compelling stories from the front lines of research, sharing how their work to identify, diagnose and treat rare disorders can have a ripple effect far beyond the individual patients who first inspire the research. Their stories offered a fascinating glimpse into the way scientific discoveries can lead researchers down unexpected—and potentially life-changing—paths.

Representing ARCS San Diego were **Ingrid Benirschke-Perkins, Leslie Bruce, Margaret Dudas, Laurie Ellsworth, Cindy Goodman, Paulette Roberts** and **Tanya Schierling**, who was joined by her mom, a member of the Metro Washington ARCS chapter.

It was an inspiring reminder that when we support scientific discovery, the possibilities can reach far beyond what we initially imagine.



Legacy Society Basks in Sunshine – and Commitment to the Future of ARCS Scientists

(June 29, 2026)

Sunshine, spectacular views and a shared commitment to the future of ARCS scientists made for a memorable afternoon on June 29, when ten Legacy Society members from the chapter along with several spouses, gathered in the stunning backyard of **Greta Treadgold**.

With a breathtaking view of Mission Bay as their backdrop, guests enjoyed a delicious lunch featuring generous salads and croissants, followed by an irresistible array of desserts—from gooey brownies to bright and beautiful fruit tartlets. It was a feast for both the eyes and the palate!

Cindy Goodman, Legacy Society Director for 2025–26, organized the gathering, which was attended by **Leslie and Clint Bruce**; **Kim and Barbara Doren**; **Toby Eisenberg**; **Doris Ellsworth**; **Cindy and Tom Goodman**; **Paulette Roberts**; **Elizabeth Taft**; **Greta and Tom Treadgold**; and new Legacy Society member **Carolyn Sharp**.

The afternoon was about more than good food and beautiful scenery, however. It was also an opportunity to celebrate the generosity and foresight of members who are helping ensure that ARCS scientists have the support they need for generations to come.

Joining the Legacy Society is simple: a chapter member makes a pledge to leave funds or property to ARCS through a will, IRA, insurance policy or other planned gift. Interested in learning more? Please complete the [one-page form](#), read the [fact sheet](#), or reach out to **Elizabeth Taft**, our new Legacy Society Chair for fiscal year 2026-2027.

Let's make sure the impact of ARCS—and our commitment to scientific discovery—shines brightly well into the future!





New Member Profile



Laurie Ellsworth is a native San Diegan and graduate of UCSD. Her career has been multifaceted and began at the local CBS affiliate, News Eight, where she worked both in the field and in the studio. When opportunity presented, she made a transition into public relations and branding/marketing, where she worked with local organizations such as the San Diego Chamber of Commerce, national organizations including the American Institute of Wine and Food, big retail brands Easton Sports, The Sweet Factory and Urban Decay Cosmetics, and events including the annual Torrey Pines Golf Tournament.

After her daughters were born — seeking a lifestyle change with shorter, more flexible hours — she decided to turn her passion for interior design into a part time career. Adapting the branding strategies she utilized in marketing, she developed a niche for helping her clients discover their own personal brand to be reflected in their living spaces. She continued this until her father's health was such that she was required to assume management of his real estate business, which she continued after his passing and to this day.

Laurie has held numerous volunteer positions including Rotary International, three years as the Chair of Annual Giving at the Bishop's School, and host of the 2024 St. Germaine Silver tea. A life-long equestrian, she rides and competes her dressage horses Joey and Cubi, and is a U.S. Dressage Federation silver medalist. She is excited to bring her efforts and varied career skills to ARCS of San Diego.



ARCS Member Updates



We were all deeply saddened to learn of the passing of our beloved ARCS member **Helga Moore**, who served as co-president with **Mary Lou Quick** from 2017–2019 and was honored as an ARCS Light in 2019–2020. It was especially heartwarming to learn that Helga's family suggested donations to ARCS in her obituary; a beautiful testament to the meaningful role ARCS played in her life and to the lasting impact she had on our chapter.

You can read about Helga's extraordinary life and legacy here:
<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/san-diego-ca/helga-moore-12989319>



New Academic Partner Profile

We are thrilled to welcome two inaugural ARCS Scholars from our newest academic partner, **Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute (SBP)**!

Established in 2005, SBP's accredited Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences offers a top-tier PhD program focused on cutting-edge biomedical research and innovative laboratory technologies.

Please join us in celebrating our very first SBP ARCS Scholars, **Laurence Haddadin** and **Erik Hultenius**! To learn more about SBP's graduate program and these exceptional scholars, read the full announcement from Sanford Burnham Prebys:

<https://sbpdiscovery.org/sanford-burnham-prebys-launches-new-graduate-student-scholarship-as-arcs-foundation-san-diegos-newest-university-partner/>



Laurence Haddadin



Erik Hultenius

Save the Date: Don't miss the field trip to SBP on November 10th to tour the laboratories, explore the campus, and experience their work firsthand!

ARCS Scholars & Scholar Alumni Making Headlines



We are thrilled to announce that **Kian Bagheri, PhD (2025–2026 ARCS Scholar, SDSU)** has joined Tory R. Walker Engineering, Inc. (TRWE) as a Junior Engineer! Headquartered in Vista, CA, TRWE has provided specialized water resources planning and engineering services across Southern California since 2000, serving public agencies, private developers, and engineering partners alike.

Dr. Bagheri recently completed his PhD in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, specializing in the hydrologic and hydraulic modeling of urban drainage infrastructure.

With extensive experience in stormwater management and water quality improvement, he brings valuable expertise that will make an immediate impact on the TRWE team.

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ARCS Scholars & Scholar Alumni Making Headlines...

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Hearty congratulations to **Hannah Battey (2026-2027 ARCS Scholar, UCSD)** on being named a SPARK finalist! The SPARK Program at the La Jolla Institute for Immunology (LJI) provides early-career seed funding and science communication training for rising immunologists. Hannah's project aims to transform the future of pneumonia diagnosis and treatment by developing a simple blood test to identify the specific bacterial cause of infections. She will pitch her concept live to a panel of LJI leaders, board members, and donors for a chance to secure a \$30,000 philanthropically funded SPARK Award. Learn more about Hannah's SPARK project here: <https://www.lji.org/spark27-hannah/>



Congratulations to **Jessica Wan, PhD (2023-2025, UCSD)** for her joint authorship of a recent paper in the journal *Science Advances*. The paper cites a new study by UC San Diego's Scripps Institution of Oceanography which explores whether a geoengineering technique known as marine cloud brightening could safely alter the weather in order to mitigate the floods, extreme heat and other events that El Niño would bring. With a super El Niño looming, the study takes on even greater importance.

Jessica received ARCS support from 2023-25 while a PhD candidate at UC San Diego. She is now a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Climate

Systems Engineering Initiative (CSEi) at the University of Chicago. To learn more about the study, click here: <https://today.ucsd.edu/story/could-geoengineering-work-to-tamp-down-super-el-ninos>



Adriana Trujillo, PhD (2018-2020, SDSU) shared this sad news regarding fellow ARCS Scholar alum **Brian Maniaci, PhD (2017-2020, SDSU)**:

Dear members of the ARCS community,

It is with great sadness to share the passing of ARCS alumnus Dr. Brian Joseph Maniaci on Friday, June 19, at the age of 39, following a courageous three-year battle with glioblastoma.

Brian earned his PhD in Chemistry in 2019 through the SDSU-UCSD Joint Doctoral Program, where he conducted research in Dr. John Love's lab.

During his time as an ARCS Scholar, Brian's research focused on engineering protein/protein interactions to treat human diseases. Prior to his diagnosis, he worked as a Scientist II at Molecular Assemblies.

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ARCS Scholars & Scholar Alumni Making Headlines...

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He was a talented and dedicated scientist who remained committed to advancing research even while undergoing treatment. He recently co-authored a publication in the labs of Dr. Love and Dr. Tom Huxford at SDSU.

Brian was a warm, genuine, and positive person who had a remarkable ability to connect with others. He loved meeting people, learning their stories, and forming lasting friendships wherever he went. In his free time, he enjoyed playing golf and board games with family and friends. True to his Italian heritage, he lived with passion and treasured time with his loved ones. He was an enthusiastic foodie and always eager to discover a new restaurant, cuisine, or hidden gem. Nothing made him happier than gathering family and friends around a great meal.

Brian fought with extraordinary determination throughout his illness. After initially being told that his tumor was inoperable and that he had only weeks to live, he sought a second opinion and enrolled in a clinical trial at UCI Health. There, surgeons were able to remove nearly all of the original tumor. Over the next three years, Brian faced radiation, chemotherapy, steroid treatments, and the use of the Optune device (tumor treating electric fields) with remarkable grace, resilience, and optimism. His faith provided him the strength to face his treatments and the peace to accept his journey. He will be greatly missed by many.

Memorial arrangements have not yet been finalized; I will share information as it becomes available. My thoughts are with Brian's family, friends, and colleagues during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

Adriana Trujillo (ARCS alumna class of 2020)



We are deeply saddened to share that Scholar alumna **Sandy DeSimone, PhD (1995–1997, SDSU)**, Director of Research, Education, and Land Management at Starr Ranch Sanctuary, passed away in April 2026.

Sandy's 30 years of dedication to the sanctuary and her lifelong passion for conservation have left an extraordinary legacy. After conducting her thesis and dissertation research on coastal sage scrub at Starr Ranch, the 4,000-acre Audubon Sanctuary in southeast Orange County, she became the sanctuary's Director in 1997.

For nearly three decades, Sandy was the heart of Starr Ranch, developing innovative education programs, fostering partnerships with biologists and universities to advance long-term bird and wildlife research, and pioneering new approaches to ecological restoration and habitat conservation. Her vision and commitment have had a lasting impact on countless people, species, and landscapes. Andrea Jones, Vice President of Audubon California, shared this remembrance of Sandy shortly after her passing:

<https://www.audubon.org/california/news/remembering-dr-sandy-desimone>



Scholar Alumni – Where Are They Now?

Victoria Newman, PhD, CEM, PMI-ACP, CEA (1997-1998, SDSU) earned a PhD in Biology through the SDSU/UCSD Joint Doctoral Program in 1999. She currently works as a Resource Efficiency Manager for Energy Efficiency & Consulting Services in Honolulu, Hawaii, where she identifies energy conservation opportunities and helps to facilitate the implementation of projects, initiatives, and programs that reduce energy consumption and demand, save money, and benefit the environment. She augments existing customer capabilities and serves as an on-site action agent to facilitate energy and cost savings.



Dr. Newman has 20+ years of experience across the scientific, environmental, sustainability, energy, and renewable energy sectors. She also volunteered to serve as Vice President for the Hawaii Chapter of The Association of Energy Engineers for two years (2021-2022).

Stace E. Beaulieu, PhD (1997, SIO/UCSD) is a Senior Research Specialist in the Biology Department at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI). Her specialty is deep-sea benthic invertebrates, including surveying and sampling to assess biodiversity, distribution, and abundance. She previously served as coordinator of the InterRidge (2007-2009) and Ridge 2000 (2010-2012) program offices and currently coordinates WHOI's Ocean Informatics initiative.



When she was about 6 years old, she became interested in the deepsea and kept that interest through undergraduate studies at Stanford University and graduate studies at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, earning a PhD in Biological Oceanography in 1998. After receiving her PhD, she worked as postdoctoral research at WHOI and has been working there ever since.

Dr. Beaulieu has 25 years of seagoing experience, including dives to the abyssal plain and hydrothermal vents in the human-occupied vehicles Alvin and Shinkai 6500. Her research at deep-sea vents includes studies of re-colonization after volcanic eruptions and dispersal of larvae between vents in the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument. She updates the InterRidge Global Database of Active Submarine Hydrothermal Vent Fields and presently serves on the international sFDvent Working Group to build a global functional trait database for hydrothermal vent ecosystems. In addition to research and data management, Dr. Beaulieu teaches and is involved in public outreach. To learn more about Dr. Beaulieu's work, here is a 6-minute video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQxitMBpf3Y>



Scholar Alumni – Where Are They Now?...

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Jonathan Melnick, PhD (2005-2006, Scripps Research) is currently VP of Research at Ray Therapeutics in Berkeley, California. Founded in 2021, Ray Therapeutics is a clinical-stage biotechnology company developing best-in-class vision restoration therapies for people with degenerative retinal diseases independent of genetic mutation.

Dr. Melnick has over 15 years of experience in the biotechnology industry, with a focus on platform development in the fields of high throughput biology and gene therapy. He received his bachelor's degree from Cornell University in Chemistry and Biology, and his PhD in 2006 from Scripps Research.



Dr. Melnick specializes in a multidisciplinary approach to platform refinement and optimization, combining the principles of chemical biology with next generation sequencing (NGS) and bioinformatics/machine learning. His career has focused on early stage biotechs, where he has established teams and brought in new capabilities to expand academic platforms into industrial discovery engines.

ARCS Calendar of Events

2026

NOVEMBER

- Tuesday, November 10 – Field Trip to SBP Medical Discovery Institute
- Sunday, November 15 – Scholar Picnic (Rachel Collins' home)
- Tuesday, November 17 – Board Meeting (via Zoom)

DECEMBER

- Sunday, December 13 – Holiday Party
- Tuesday, December 15 – Board Meeting (via Zoom)

2027

JANUARY

- Tuesday, January 19 – Board Meeting (via Zoom)
- Tuesday, January 26 – Winter General Meeting (La Jolla Country Club)