



# NEWSLETTER

**Mission Statement:** The Association for Women in Science, Inc. (AWIS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the achievement of equity and full participation of women in all areas of science and technology.

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## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Dear Fellow AWIS-SD Members and Friends,

Summer's winding down and schools are ramping up – hope you all have some fun new memories as we head into Fall! Mark your calendars for the Focus Session coming up on September 10<sup>th</sup> titled, “Get Perspective: Explore Life Science Careers in Biotech and Beyond.” This is an AWIS-SD members event for which we are inviting our QWISE friends, the Qualcomm Women in Science and Engineering. This will be a fun evening with an interesting group of panelists, new people to meet, and new career paths to consider! Also on September 26<sup>th</sup>, we will have a Happy Hour at Karl Strauss. Our Happy Hours are always open to non-members for \$10, so bring a friend or colleague with you, have some tasty snacks, relax and mingle! In October, we will have another Strategy Session called “Get the Scoop: Appropriate Business Conduct” (October 1st) and our annual Open House as well (date and venue TBD).

Kudos to the Events Committee for organizing a fantastic day of education, art and adventure at the Living Coast Discovery Center! Please enjoy the article and photos from our expedition there. My favorite part was the ray feeding! I enthusiastically recommend that you visit the Living Coast Discovery Center in the near future, if you have not been there already. It's easy to get to and fun to explore with friendly, knowledgeable guides. If you're looking to move up the career ladder and missed our August Strategy Session titled “Get Promoted: Move ahead in your career,” be sure to read the article recap for some helpful tips and strategies for your career advancement. Also in this Newsletter issue are articles about the Scripps Institute of Oceanography deep sea drilling expedition and a terrific member profile of Alexis Pasulka. Check out the newest section of the Newsletter, the Science News Ticker, for quick summaries of recent local science-related developments. Don't miss reading Lynne Friedmann's lovely remembrance of Sally Ride, who was a ground-breaking woman in science and an outstanding role model for women of all ages who are interested in STEM.

Please contact me at [president@awissd.org](mailto:president@awissd.org) if you have any questions, comments or suggestions about/for our chapter. We are always appreciative of feedback and new ideas! Thank you for your participation and support!

Most sincerely,  
*Dody*  
Dorothy (Dody) Sears

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### Sally Ride: A Remembrance

By Lynne Friedmann

I first met Sally Ride in 1996, when I was hired as a media consultant to the Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement. Sally was the only woman on the 11-member executive committee. For the next five years, I watched her in action as the committee deliberated nominations and administered the award. Among those around the table were a Nobel laureate, two past Tyler Prize recipients, and other eminent scientists, many of whom had forceful personalities. Sally always came prepared, and when she spoke it was with a calm authority that often cut through posturing and deadlocked votes to arrive at consensus.

Tyler Prize award banquets are glittering black-tie affairs, held in Beverly Hills. But Sally was not the ball-gown type. She always attended the event wearing slacks and a dark, tailored jacket with a design of small crescent moons and stars. Yes, it was a playful nod to her historic position as first American woman in space, but it was so subtle that she never drew attention away from the evening's award honorees.

In 2000, Sally called me at home to say she was leaving her position as president of the space and astronomy news website SPACE.com, to pursue opportunities in science education. She wanted to hire me to write the news release and be the point person for the ensuing media calls.

Sally was a fiercely private person and her reluctance to give media interviews was legendary among reporters. After the news was announced, a writer from a major, national publication called with three insightful questions that I felt would nail the story and, in turn,

lead to wider coverage as it was picked up by other media outlets. I reached Sally on her cell phone. She was walking through an airport at the time, but she took my counsel and granted the interview before boarding her flight. Afterwards, the reporter phoned me with thanks, and words to the effect, "How'd you get her to call me!?!"

Due to an accounting error, my check for the assignment was \$25 short. "I'll make it up to you one cup of coffee at a time," Sally said, and she was true to her word. Over the years, we would get together occasionally on the UCSD campus and enjoy a relaxing, quiet chat which often centered on the progress of Sally Ride Science [an innovative science education company dedicated to supporting girls' and boys' interests in science, math and technology], to which she was utterly focused and devoted.

*Lynne Friedmann is a freelance science writer living in Solana Beach. This article first appeared in the La Jolla Light.*

### Summer Family Event at the Living Coast Discovery Center

By Lydiane Funkelstein and Barbara Davids

On Saturday July 21st of this year, the Living Coast Discovery Center hosted a fun and educational AWIS family-inspired event. From toddlers to adults, there was something for all. Home to an eclectic variety of San Diego's local wildlife as well as some exotic creatures, the Discovery Center maintains and protects sharks, turtles, colorful fish, and birds, including an American bald eagle. The center also offers the public scheduled tours, access to walking trails, activities for children, a gift shop, and daily scheduled public events that are quite interesting.



Once our AWIS group arrived using the Discovery Center's free shuttle service, the staff invited us to a rare and special treat: a private stingray and shark feeding. The head biologist, Gabe, and his volunteer assistants educated us about ray and shark habitats and food preferences. We were encouraged to huddle around the tank, then reach into the water and touch the rays. We were even allowed to feed them directly from our hand, which is not the usual procedure for the public events. Everyone enjoyed this experience. Members also had the privilege of viewing shark behavior during feeding following the ray interaction. Although there weren't any Great Whites smiling at us through the glass, the center houses a variety of other shark species, and it was a fascinating experience to witness them feeding. For obvious reasons, there wasn't any hand feeding allowed, but then, who would want to?

After the private feeding, our groups had an opportunity to explore the center. Children were encouraged to participate in a crafts workshop focused on creating sea life and coastal art. The kids created beautiful works of art to hang up, or in some cases, wear home. Lunch was spent outside socializing and enjoying the surrounding art pieces. One of the volunteers brought out a hawk for us to view up close.



After lunch, Gabe and his volunteer staff educated us on endangered Eastern Pacific green sea turtles. We learned that sea turtles can have a long life expectancy if they are not hunted. The largest recorded sea turtle, named Wrinklebutt due to a deformity in its shell, visits the San Diego Bay each year.

Docent Chris then showed us the large sculptures composed of trash that traveled the oceans. She emphasized how much trash circulates through oceans and washes ashore on our beaches. Next, Docent Frank gave us an amazing lesson on the Sweetwater Marsh National Wildlife Refuge that butts up against the center. Frank discussed the history of the area, native birds and nesting habits, and a breeding program for the endangered light-footed clapper rail, a local marsh bird. He walked us through the raptor and aviary exhibits and shared the interesting background of the reserve location, which originated from an effort during World War I to synthesize gunpowder from brown sea kelp. The eventful day wrapped up with an opportunity to observe the keepers feeding the resident eagles and hawks.



Photos by Diane Retallack

The AWIS-SD event provided an enjoyable outing for the whole family and a chance to become more aware of local animals and visiting migratory birds. Attendees had an opportunity to see animals not typical of their everyday experience, and to gain a deeper knowledge of the delicate balance between conservation and modern urban development.



Many thanks to the AWIS-SD Events Committee organizers, Barbara Davids, Tineke Lauwaet, and Monica Brown, as well as Ben Vellejos and Wendy Spaulding from the Living Coast Discovery Center, who made this amazing experience possible!

### August Strategy Session: Get Promoted: Move Ahead in Your Career

By Margo Streets and Nurith Amitai

Career development and advancement does not end when you land a job! This message was brought home in August's Strategy Session. After sessions focused on networking, résumés and job interviews, and increasing on-the-job visibility, this installment focused on securing promotions. The event, sponsored by Biolegend and hosted by Jones Day, featured Dody Sears and Hanne Hoffmann as speakers. Both brought great insight into the processes of promotion both in industry and academia.

Hoffmann provided an introduction into the session. In a flashback to the previous strategy session, she briefly summarized what attendees had learned about getting noticed in the workplace. Sears then moved into a discussion of the common challenges women face when addressing promotion. The emphasis throughout the evening was that women don't tend to focus on being as visible and vocal as men in the workplace and expect their work to speak for itself. Often this silence causes women to be overlooked when a higher position opens up. Sears stressed the importance of overcoming the fear of self-promotion and speaking up about one's career goals. This allows for positive visibility within the workplace and provides the opportunities to be considered for advancement.

Sears was promoted herself in the last year, and drew on this personal experience throughout her talk, along with insights from coworkers and fellow AWIS-SD members. She provided an overview of the different types of promotions possible in industry and academia, outlining the timelines and major steps for the two different settings. She addressed aspects specific to these realms; for example, the importance of being aware of the market environment to anticipate a company's needs, or the often-complicated academic career track systems. Throughout her

presentation, however, Sears emphasized key points that hold true for any professional setting. These included a cautionary note that efforts to earn a promotion need to start well before asking for the promotion itself. Expanding one's skill set and taking on additional responsibilities, learning the criteria for promotion, and communicating your achievements and ambitions to others – all of these are important endeavors that one should tackle as early as possible. Sears reminded us that we often need to “do the job before we get the job.” More than anything, however, Sears stressed that getting promoted is largely within our control. She exhorted the audience to be proactive and confident in advancing their promotions.

The evening ended by dividing the audience members into small groups to review one of three case studies. Each addressed different situations that women face in the workplace, including a new hire trying to find her place, a woman trying to determine why she was passed over for a promotion, and an early career professor struggling with gender bias while being the only woman in her department. The groups were asked to identify major issues of concern, suggest ways to solve these problems, and identify both short- and long-term action plans. Each of the groups returned from the breakout session with superb suggestions and discussion. Attendees left with new knowledge and materials to both enhance and advance their careers.

### Member Profile: Alexis Pasulka

By Christine Shulse

As 2011 drew to a close, AWIS members gathered together at the Open House to recognize those volunteers who contribute so much to our organization. One exemplary member honored for her service over the past several years was graduate student Alexis Pasulka, or Ally for short, from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO). I had the opportunity to sit down with Ally and find out more about the Achievements in Outreach or Community Service award winner.

Currently starting her sixth year as a graduate student in biological oceanography, Ally can trace her love of ocean science way back to a Marine Biology camp she attended on Catalina Island every year from ages 12 to 17. There, she snorkeled, learned to SCUBA dive, and attended classes on the marine environment. A self-admitted “science geek,” Ally has always been particularly fascinated by microscopes. “As a child I would look at anything, leafs, sticks, anything!” Ally remembers. Choosing to major in biology as an undergraduate at Arizona State University (ASU) was a natural next step. There, one of her favorite courses was developmental anatomy, which she describes as “such a cool hands-on class” where she got to dissect everything from frogs to cats. Another memorable course was a microbiology laboratory where she grew bacteria and examined them under the microscope. In general, Ally found herself enjoying all her laboratory classes.

After college, Ally took a job at the North Carolina Aquarium on Roanoke Island. There, she taught ocean science to people of all age groups and walks of life, from three-year-olds through adults. “I loved that job,” Ally reminisces, but ultimately she decided she wanted to pursue research. Luckily for AWIS-SD, Ally decided SIO in San Diego would be a great place to spend the next six to eight years.

Ally arrived at SIO intent on studying life in the upper ocean, an environment with which she was familiar from both college courses and practical experience. However, early in her graduate career she

participated in a deep-sea cruise, where she had the incredible opportunity to dive in the deep-sea research vehicle Alvin. She was hooked, and immediately decided to study environments on the ocean bottom, where life is supported by chemicals rather than the sun. Never one to shy away from challenging work, Ally researches marine protists, which are generally the most structurally complex of the marine microbes. Her research sheds light on microbial food web dynamics, with potentially major implications for the global carbon cycle.

As an undergraduate at ASU, Ally was a member of AWIS's Central Arizona chapter. When she moved to California, Ally knew that joining the San Diego chapter would be a great opportunity to network with other female scientists in the area. She immediately joined the Outreach Committee, which quickly became one of her favorite activities outside of the lab. She particularly enjoys the opportunity to work with youth in the San Diego area. In addition to her outreach with AWIS, Ally is the Expanding Your Horizons program co-chair. She is also on the steering committee for BE WiSE (Better Education for Women in Science and Engineering), a San Diego group which organizes extracurricular science activities for young women in the 7th to 12th grades.

While AWIS honors Ally for her outreach achievements, other organizations have taken notice of her equally impressive research achievements. The National Science Foundation granted her a Graduate Research Fellowship as she began her graduate studies, and Ally recently won a prestigious P.E.O. Scholar Award to fund her as she finishes her dissertation. After graduate school, Ally is planning on continuing in academia as a postdoctoral researcher, gaining more experience in both the field and the laboratory. Ultimately, she plans on becoming a professor, perhaps at a small liberal arts college where she can involve undergraduates in her research.

In her spare time, Ally can be found running, doing yoga, or spending time with friends. She enjoys organized races, such as half-marathons, as well as the yearly AIDS walk in Balboa Park. And of course, Ally can be found at many AWIS events, so make sure to say "Hi!" next time you see her!

## **Scripps Scientist Goes on Ocean Expedition along the Eastern Seaboard**

By Atreyee Bhattacharya

The drill rig on board the JOIDES Resolution – an ocean going vessel – was ready to go down into the seabed for the third time in three days. But drilling an extra hole meant an additional \$100,000 a day for the crew on board the ship – a team of thirty Earth scientists from around the world. The "science party" hoped to recover hundreds of millions of years of Earth's history from the Atlantic seabed over the two-month expedition along the eastern seaboard of Canada. Just barely two weeks into the expedition, the team faced a dilemma; over the past two days the scientists had been trying to recover a continuous record of the time when permanent ice appeared on Antarctica for the first time. They were not sure if indeed they had done so in the first two attempts.

"We had to come to a decision fast: to drill or not to drill," says Richard Norris, professor of paleontology at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in San Diego, who was spearheading Expedition 342 to Newfoundland. "Apart from the cost, it also meant major changes for the entire expedition."

"On land, water and winds wash away evidence of climactic events in the Earth's past, but in the deep sea, the evidence remains preserved in ocean clays, undisturbed for a very long time," explained expedition staff scientist and project manager Peter Blum of the University of Texas A&M. Winds and rivers on the land erode and deposit the clay and grit on the seabed, which then mixes with shells and microscopic organisms in the ocean and chemicals precipitated from the ocean water, making ocean clays excellent archives of climate, patterns of erosion, ocean chemistry, circulation patterns and marine organisms of the Earth's geological past.

In this case, the science team on board ship was using the piles of sediment that ocean currents had deposited close to Newfoundland over the past tens of millions of years as archives of both global climate as well as shifting ocean currents. Norris and his team of geoscientists hoped to recreate the chain of events that took place between 50 and 34 million years ago as the Earth transitioned from an ice-free "hothouse" state into a colder "icehouse world" with the eventual formation of northern glaciers and icebergs. That same ice ultimately sank Titanic in the frigid waters of the North Atlantic 100 years ago.

"We know that about 50 million years ago the Arctic Ocean used to be a lake surrounded by forest and there was no icecap on Greenland. We wanted to find out how the world worked back then; that may give us clues to how our own warming world will function in the next century or two," says Norris. "We also hoped to find a detailed record of how that ancient warm Earth developed the icy poles it has today," he explains.

Over the two weeks, the team had already collected deep-sea cores that were treasure houses of some of the most phenomenal events of the earth's past.

Each of the 30 scientists on board was a specialist in different techniques and tools used to weave together the history of the Earth. It was a tense night for the science party on board the ship as the group was faced with decision to drill or not to drill. The mission would be incomplete if the team could not retrieve the interval when the hot world transitioned into the ice world.

At age 27, Dr. Sandra Kirtland-Turner was one of the youngest scientists on board; she had defended her Ph.D. only days before the expedition. Kirtland-Turner was also one of the two specialists who could sew together the different cores by identifying similarities in physical, chemical and fossil content between different deep-sea cores. Earth scientists refer to Kirtland-Turner's job on board scientific vessels as "stratigraphic correlator" – a specialist who matches up strata of Earth, or in this case the sea-bed.

"I was comparing charts of physical properties, mostly magnetic properties of deep sea clay, of the two previous cores we retrieved," says Kirtland-Turner. It was possible Norris already had what he needed in the two cores that the team had previously collected.

Kirtland-Turner took her charts to other members of the science party; everyone compared different lines of evidence – chemical, fossil and even magnetic properties of the sediments. Finally, they reached a verdict: the sediment record Norris sought was already on board. There was no need to drill the third core.

Back on land, Norris and his team had collected almost 5.4 kilometers of deep-sea cores. "It would give an unprecedented record of the earth's climate over the past 120 million years," says

Norris. But it would be months or even years to complete all the relevant analysis and studies on all the cores the scientists had retrieved in Expedition 342. “The events on the ship really made us appreciate how real-time science works,” said Kirtland. “How a science party has to make cutting-edge, split-second decisions and how much everyone has to pitch in for that kind of accuracy. Once you are off the ship, there is no way of getting back there,” says Kirtland-Turner.

Read more here:

<http://explorations.ucsd.edu/research-highlights/2012/research-highlight-turning-the-pages-of-earths-history/>



Sandra Kirtland-Turner with a deep sea core on board the JOIDES Resolution Ship on Expedition 342.

### Science News Ticker

Takeda California is closing its San Francisco site and consolidating operations in San Diego, relocating their essential antibody and biologics research technologies and staff to its La Jolla location. The move is expected to generate a net increase of at least 30 jobs in the San Diego area •• The International Astronomical Union has named an asteroid “210434 Fungyuancheng” in honor of “father of biomechanics” Yuan-Cheng Fung, a Professor Emeritus at UC San Diego’s Jacobs School of Engineering •• Carlsbad-based biotechnology company Life Technologies acquired the personal genomics company Navigenics, expanding its genetic testing and analysis focus •• Palomar Medical Center, the first new acute care hospital in San Diego County in nearly 20 years, opened its doors in Escondido on Citricado Parkway •• A team of scientists at The Scripps Research Institute, in collaboration with a research institute in the Netherlands, described three human antibodies that offer broad protection against Influenza B virus strains, an important step towards the development of a universal antibody-based flu therapy.

### Upcoming Events

#### Focus Session: Get Perspective: Explore Life Science Careers in Biotech and Beyond

September 10, 2012, 06:00pm - 08:00pm, JONES DAY, 12265 El Camino Real, third floor, San Diego, CA 92130

Do you wonder what types of industry career prospects are out there beyond academic research and pharma R&D? At the Sept. 10 Strategy Focus Session, 'Get Perspective: Explore life science

careers in biotech and beyond,' meet and discuss career opportunities with our panelists who represent a variety of organizations that utilize a science background. Our speakers will share their career paths, experiences, and answer any questions that you may have. This session is a must for anyone who wants to explore wide breadth of STEM careers available in San Diego.

This Focus Session is jointly organized by AWIS and QWISE (Qualcomm Women In Science and Engineering).

Networking – 6:00 pm, Workshop – 6:30 - 8:00 pm  
Light refreshments will be served.

Remember to bring your business cards!

Preregistration is essential!

Contact: [StrategySessions@awissd.org](mailto:StrategySessions@awissd.org)

This is an AWIS San Diego and QWISE MEMBERS ONLY event.

If you are not currently an AWIS San Diego member and would like to attend this event, please join or renew your membership online ([www.awis.org](http://www.awis.org)). Remember to select San Diego as your chapter. We would love to have you join us!

#### Mid-Career Coffee Club

September 20, 2012, 07:45 am - 09:00 am, food court at northwest corner of Scranton Rd. and Mira Mesa Blvd.

Informal forum for AWIS-SD members in leadership and/or management positions to openly discuss issues faced on a daily basis. For more information contact [coffeeclub@awissd.org](mailto:coffeeclub@awissd.org)

#### Coffee Club – Working Moms

September 21, 2012, 07:45 am - 08:45 am, Nobel Park - 7414 Toscana Dr, San Diego, CA 92122. We will meet at the parking lot in front of the playground.

If you are a working mom, please join us for our morning walk. We will make our way to a local cafe while sharing our experiences with juggling a career and being a mom. After you register, we will forward additional details regarding our meeting location. Contact Jennifer Cho & Corine Lau.

#### Happy Hour at Karl Strauss

September 26, 2012, 05:30 pm - 08:30 pm, 9675 Scranton Road - Sorrento Mesa, CA 92121.

<http://www.karlstrauss.com/PAGES/Eats/SorrentoMesa.html>

Join us for a relaxed evening of socializing and networking at Karl Strauss in Sorrento Mesa. Delicious appetizers, including hummus, calamari, sweet and stinky fries, chili lime sweet potato fries, and nachos will be served. If you would like, Karl Strauss has a substantial selection of their own beers and wine from which to chose.

Bring friends and business cards!

Free for members, \$10 for non-members.

#### Strategy Session: Get the Scoop: Appropriate Business Conduct

October 1, 2012, 06:00pm - 08:00pm, JONES DAY, 12265 El Camino Real, third floor, San Diego, CA 92130

Additional Details TBD.

Networking – 6:00 pm, Workshop – 6:30 - 8:00 pm  
Light refreshments will be served.  
Remember to bring your business cards!

Preregistration is essential!

Contact: [StrategySessions@awissd.org](mailto:StrategySessions@awissd.org)

This is an AWIS San Diego MEMBERS ONLY event.

If you are not currently an AWIS San Diego member and would like to attend this event, please join or renew your membership online ([www.awis.org](http://www.awis.org)). Remember to select San Diego as your chapter. We would love to have you join us!

#### Mid-Career Coffee Club

October 18, 2012, 07:45 am - 09:00 am, food court at northwest corner of Scranton Rd. and Mira Mesa Blvd.

Informal forum for AWIS-SD members in leadership and/or management positions to openly discuss issues faced on a daily basis. For more information contact [coffeclub@awissd.org](mailto:coffeclub@awissd.org)

### Local Events of Interest

#### Human Origins: Lessons from Autism Spectrum Disorders

October 5, 2012, 01:00pm - 05:30pm, De Hoffmann Auditorium at the Salk Institute, 10010 North Torrey Pines Rd, La Jolla, CA 92037

A public symposium hosted by the UCSD/Salk Center for Academic Research & Training in Anthropogeny (CARTA) featuring scientists from many diverse fields, including genetics, neuroscience, psychiatry, cognitive science, psychology, and evolutionary biology, who will share their insights into autism spectrum disorders – providing a multi-disciplinary perspective on this multi-faceted spectrum of disorders, and its implications for understanding human origins and the evolution of the human mind.

Admission is free and open to the public; however, registration is required. To register, go to:

<http://carta.anthropogeny.org/events/autism-a-window-human-origins>

#### Member News

**Katherine Ruby** was recently elected to the position of Vice President of the Board of Directors for the Michigan State University (MSU) College of Natural Science Alumni Association. Ruby received her bachelor's degree from MSU in 2005 and has served on the Board of Directors for the past year. She is excited to take on this new leadership role and stay involved with MSU.

**Christine Shulse** defended her dissertation in Biology at UCSD and has taken a postdoctoral position at the University of Hawaii studying coral-associated bacteria.

In August, **Tineke Lauwaet** started her new job as Technical Applications Scientist – Proteomics at Life Technologies in Carlsbad (CA). Tineke is an active member of AWIS-SD and a member of the Events Committee.

#### About the AWIS Newsletter

The AWIS-SD Newsletter is published six times per year and provides AWIS members and supporters with information on Chapter activities, career development, and issues related to women in science.

Newsletter staff for September/October issue:

Nurith Amitai, Areyee Bhattacharya, Tiffany Hernandez, Caitlin Ides, Alka Malhotra, Molly Moloney, Emily Plummer, Pat Rarus, Shweta Sharma, Geetha Srinivasan, and DeeAnn Visk.

#### Contribute to the Newsletter

If you are an AWIS-SD member, we encourage you to contribute to the newsletter. Please send articles, photographs, and member news as MS Word attachments to [newsletter@awissd.org](mailto:newsletter@awissd.org). News articles should not exceed 250 words, event summaries should not exceed 500 words, and feature articles (special-interest stories and profiles) should not exceed 1000 words. The submission deadline for the next issue is **October 10, 2012**.

### AWIS-San Diego Sponsors

AWIS-SD thanks our corporate sponsors for their generous support. Donations from corporate sponsors help us fund scholarship awards, monthly events and Strategy Sessions, community outreach efforts, the Newsletter and the website.

For more information about how your company can support AWIS-SD, send e-mail to [fundAWISSd@gmail.com](mailto:fundAWISSd@gmail.com).

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To contact the Board, visit the following website:

<http://sdawis.org/about-awis-san-diego/board-members-awis>

**Committee**

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