



ACS
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The San Diego Chemist

San Diego Section

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**CONGRATULATIONS
TO ALL
CHEMISTRY GRADUATES**



Dear members,

May is Asian / Pacific American Heritage Month, a time to celebrate the profound impact Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPIs) have made on our shared history.

In San Diego, Asian Americans have driven incredible advancements in STEM. This includes pioneering scientists like **Dr. Shu Chien, Dr. Chi-Huey Wong, and UC San Diego's Nobel Prize winner, Dr. Roger Y. Tsien**, who revolutionized imaging chemistry with fluorescent proteins. Today, a new generation of Asian American chemists continues to lead the way in education and research. From medicinal chemistry breakthroughs to nanomaterial innovations, they are shaping the future of science and expanding representation in STEM fields.

Over the past few months, **Joan Schellinger** has helped organize the local section exam for the 2026 US National Chemistry Olympiad (USNCO)—a multi-tiered chemistry competition for high school students. After the originally planned exam was canceled due to a national exam leak, Joan, alongside local and national volunteers and proctors, stepped up to organize and arrange an alternative exam on March 28th. A huge thank you to all the volunteers who made this happen!

Looking ahead to our upcoming local events, the University of San Diego (USD) will host a public symposium, **Jean Dreyfus Lectureship public seminar and symposium at USD** this June featuring **Tim Swager** as the keynote speaker. Additionally, on **June 25th, Dr. Zhongwei Li** from USC will host a webinar highlighting his cutting-edge organoid research.

Finally, we are in the final stages of planning for the **MedChem Symposium on July 17th**, co-organized by UCSD, SABPA, and the ACS San Diego Section on the UCSD campus. It is one of the largest events hosted by ACS Local section. We are actively seeking sponsors for this event. If interested, please reach out to me at jchen@sandiegoacs.org or **Mark Tichenor** at mtichenor@sandiegoacs.org for details.

As we head into a busy summer of symposiums, webinars, and collaboration, we want to thank you for being an active part of our ACS community. Be sure to RSVP for the upcoming June events, and don't hesitate to reach out if you would like to get involved. See you there!

**Best regards,
Jiyue Chen, Ph.D.
San Diego ACS Local Section Chair**



Kenneth Poggenburg A Tribute

The San Diego Section of the American Chemical Society mourns the loss of Kenneth “Ken” Poggenburg, a longtime leader, mentor, organizer, and friend whose steady presence shaped our section for decades. Ken was one of those rare volunteers whose contributions extended far beyond any single office or event. He built community. He connected people. He made the Section feel welcoming and alive. Ken’s involvement with ACS leadership extends back many decades. Outside the San Diego Section, he served as Chair of the East Tennessee Section in 1978 and later as Chair of the San Diego Section in 1991, then as part of the leadership of the San Diego Local Section for multiple decades after that, reflecting a lifetime commitment to ACS service and leadership. He was active nationally as an ACS Councilor and participant in governance activities. Within the San Diego Section, Ken became a familiar and trusted figure on the Executive Committee and in the broader chemistry community. He took on the type of practical and often behind-the-scenes work that keeps a scientific society functioning smoothly. For many years he managed and moderated

the Section's email listserver, helping members stay informed about meetings, lectures, outreach programs, and professional opportunities. While this may sound like a modest administrative role, in practice it meant Ken served as one of the principal connectors of the San Diego chemistry community. He made sure people heard about events, found opportunities to participate, and stayed engaged with one another. He was our lead in Government Affairs, ensuring we had opportunities to advocate for our profession and our field in general.

Ken was also deeply involved in organizing activities that strengthened personal and professional ties among chemists. He played an important role in bringing retired chemists together and ensuring that longtime members remained connected to the Section and to each other. Those gatherings reflected Ken's character perfectly: inclusive, thoughtful, warm, and community-minded. He understood that the ACS is not only about science, but also about friendship, mentorship, shared history, and the relationships that sustain a professional community over time. Many members remember Ken as someone who was always willing to help, whether leading the Greater San Diego Science and Engineering Fair judging, coordinating events, supporting speakers and meetings, encouraging participation, staffing the sign-in table at seminars, picnics, award dinners, ChemExpo and countless other events, or simply making sure everyone felt welcome. He contributed not for recognition, but because he genuinely cared about the people and mission of the Section. His leadership style was quiet but immensely effective. He brought continuity, reliability, and kindness to every role he accepted.

Professionally, Ken had a distinguished scientific career in nuclear chemistry, radiopharmaceuticals, and biotechnology. He earned his Ph.D. in Nuclear Chemistry from the University of California, Berkeley, and held leadership positions at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Union Carbide, Hybritech, and Neoprobe Corporation. His scientific accomplishments were substantial, yet colleagues consistently remember him just as much for his generosity, collegiality, and dedication to service.

Ken's impact on the San Diego Local Section cannot be measured simply by titles held or years served, although those were impressive in their own right. His real legacy lies in the culture of collegiality and engagement he helped create. Generations of members benefited from his efforts, often without realizing how much work he quietly performed behind the scenes. The San Diego Section was stronger because Ken Poggenburg was part of it. He will be remembered with gratitude, admiration, and great affection by all who had the privilege to know and work with him.















San Diego Section, American Chemical Society

Executive Committee – Zoom Meeting

Thursday, April 3, 2026, 6:30pm

In attendance (7): Jiyue Chen (Chair), Nik Chekshin (Chair-elect 2027), Desiree Grubisha (Treasurer/Councilor), Hui Cai (Councilor), Jackie Trischman (Immediate past Co-Chair), James Shih (Alt Councilor), Sharai Mendez (MAL)

Absent: Marta Vuckovic (Secretary), Carolina Ibarra (Newsletter Editor), Jesus Cordova (WRM Chair)

Meeting convened at 6:30pm

1. Treasurer's report and counselor travel reimbursement discussion (Desiree)

- The \$2,000 from National goes into the section's bank account and is not segregated; unused travel funds can effectively roll into future section spending.
- Picnic budget was increased to \$5,000, and last year the picnic was budgeted at \$4,000 with actual spending just under budget.

2. 50/60-year ACS member luncheon planning (Jiyue / Jackie)

- Luncheon will be held in July at Tom Ham's Lighthouse, Jackie has tentatively reserved a time
- Jiyue will receive certificates and a list of eligible members by mail; Jackie will send invitations once the list is received.
- Jackie will also document the luncheon planning process with written instructions for continuity.

4. Greater San Diego Science & Engineering Fair recap (Jim)

- Jim reported this year had the largest ACS judge turnout, with 23 volunteers and 20 judges attending in person.
- The number of chemistry/biochemistry projects was lower than previous years, so judges also evaluated projects in biomedical, microbiology, and computational biology categories. There are many advanced student project topics including amyloid toxicity, salt nucleation, machine learning repurposing of FDA drugs, and influenza M1 protein inhibitor discovery.
- The section will continue inviting judges to participate in future ACS events and will use the judge roster for outreach.

5. Upcoming April webinar promotion (Jiyue/Marta)

“Current applications and future of food colorants – natural vs. synthetic”

Speaker: Dr. Jing Zhao (SDSU)

Date: Thursday, April 23, 2026

Time: 6:30pm – 7:30pm (Zoom)

- Event is published on Eventbrite and promoted through email blasts; ~22 registrations were reported at the time, with plans for another promotional push one week before the event.
- Thanks, Carolina, for preparing the event poster and Marta for organizing and proposing this event.

6. Brainstorming future seminar topics (Group discussion)

- Jiyue shared early discussions with a USC lab regarding a kidney organoid webinar potentially in July, possibly including another UCSD organoid lab.
- Jim suggested metal-organic frameworks (MOFs) as a potential webinar topic due to industrial relevance (filtration, carbon sequestration, PFAS cleanup).
- Jackie noted Jesus Cordova works in MOFs and could suggest local experts in the field.
- Jiyue suggested reaching out to UCSD faculty such as Prof. Seth Cohen as a possible MOF-related speaker.
- Jim mentioned he may explore the possibility of a speaker related to a recently FDA-approved small molecule GLP-1 project.

7. National Science Teaching Association (NSTA) National conference in opportunity update

- Sharai will attend an upcoming multi-day conference (April 15–18 in Anaheim), she will report back at the next meeting with photos and highlights.
- There are potential partnership opportunities with NSTA for promoting ACS events.

8. Email list expansion update (Jiyue)

- Jiyue reported that she, David, and Carolina are actively working to expand the local section email list to increase webinar attendance.
- Target attendance goal for future webinars: 30–35 participants, with April’s webinar used as a trial for broader outreach to other ACS local sections and universities.

9. Adjournment

- Jiyue proposed to adjourn the meeting.
- Jackie and Nik seconded.
- Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:21pm.

Next meeting: Thursday, May 7, 2026 (Zoom).

Mini-Chemical MBA: The Fine Print in Research & IP Agreements
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ACS Webinars
May 14, 2026
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**Executive Committee Meeting
Dates 2026**

**First thursdays of
each month**

Zoom Meeting

***Subject to change if
in person meeting**

Achieving Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs): Reaching Compliance with Confidence for the Pharmaceutical Lab
Article Post Icon
ACS Webinars
May 28, 2026
[Click here](#)



The San Diego Section of the American Chemical Society would like to thank our Corporate Sponsors.

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS!

Does your non-profit organization have an upcoming event that might be of interest to members of the ACS – San Diego Section? If so, please send your announcement to our current Chair, Jiyue Chen jchen@sandiegoacs.org Once approved, Jiyue will see that your announcement is published on our website (www.sandiegoacs.org) and, if received by the 20th of the month before the event, in The San Diego Chemist newsletter. This is a free service of the ACS – San Diego Section. Take advantage of it!

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For more information, please contact:

Carolina Ibarra at cibarra@sandiegoacs.org

THE SAN DIEGO CHEMIST, the official newsletter of the San Diego Section of the American Chemical Society, published on a monthly basis, can be viewed at

<http://www.sandiegoacs.org/newsletter/>.

All content is published at the discretion of the Section's Executive Committee. Events of interest to chemistry professionals in the community may be included in the events calendar as space permits and are subject to editing for brevity. Advertisements and announcements from the chemistry community are accepted at published rates. The deadline for submitted items is the 5th of the month for publication by the end of that month.

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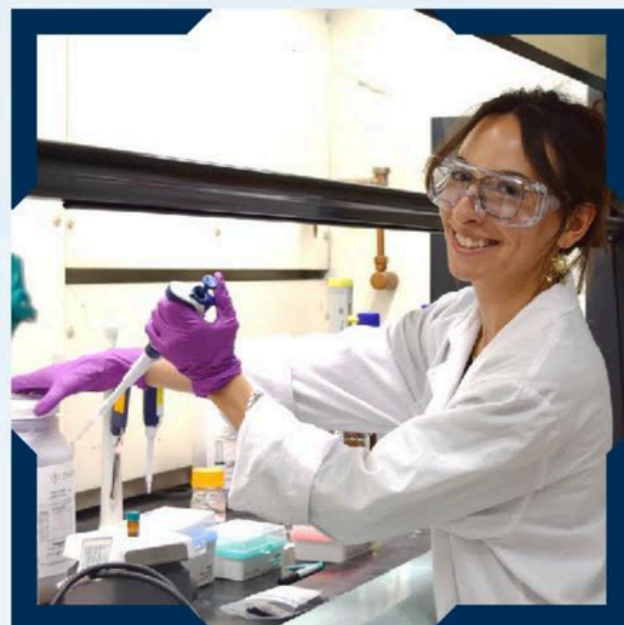
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 www.csusm.edu/chemistry

 apanahi@csusm.edu





JEAN DREYFUS LECTURESHIP PUBLIC SEMINAR AT USD

JUNE 10, 2026 • 4:00 – 5:00 PM

University of San Diego
Degheri Alumni Center, Room 120

Jean Dreyfus Lectureship Keynote Speaker



Professor Timothy Swager

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Molecular Electronics for High-Performance Sensors

Dr. Swager will give a lecture, geared to a broad audience, which will focus on the development of chemical sensors; he will discuss the chemical development, engineering factors, and demonstrate applications of the technology.

Reception to follow, 5:00 - 6:30 PM





JEAN DREYFUS LECTURESHIP SYMPOSIUM

JUNE 11, 2026, 1:00 – 6:00 PM

University of San Diego
Mother Rosalie Hill Hall, Warren Auditorium



Jean Dreyfus Lectureship Keynote Speaker
Professor Timothy Swager, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Magneto-Optics of Molecular and Polymeric Materials

Symposium Speakers



Rodolphe Jazzar, PhD
San Diego State University

*Discrete Copper Hydrides:
Small Changes Large
Consequences*



Lauren Benz, PhD
University of San Diego

*Mechanochemistry as a
Tool to Modify MOFs*



Sam Stoneburner, PhD
Point Loma Nazarene
University

*Ethereal AI: Infrared Spectra
of Polycyclic Aromatic
Hydrocarbons with
Machine Learning DFT
Scaling Factors*



April Lukowski, PhD
Scripps Institution of
Oceanography/Skaggs
School of Pharmacy,
UCSD

*Enzymes - Nature's Tools
for Building Molecules*



Kang Du, PhD
Cal State San Marcos

*Development of Mixed-
Valence Fe₂ Systems with
Rigid Ligand Scaffolds*

For details of the event, including location and information on free parking, please visit: [Symposium Details](#) or scan the QR code



ATTENTION COMPANIES!

Do you hire student workers?
If you have open positions in chemistry and biochemistry that would be of interest to college students, such as summer internship opportunities, here is a list of contacts you'll want to keep handy. The people listed below are the faculty advisors of the ACS Student Affiliate groups for all chemistry programs in San Diego County. These professors can get the word out to all chemistry and biochemistry majors at their schools about jobs, career fairs, open houses, etc.

CSUSM

Kang Du kdu@csusm.edu

SDSU

Peter van der Geer - undergrad. advisor
pvanderg@sdsu.edu

UCSD

Jeremy Klosterman jjk@ucsd.edu

San Diego Mesa College

Synthia Chang
schang001@sdccd.edu

Southwestern College, Chula Vista

Juan Gonzalez
jgonzalez3@swccd.edu

Miramar College

Rebecca Bowers-Gentry
rbowersg@sdccd.edu

University of San Diego

Christopher Daley
cjdaley@sandiego.edu

Point Loma Nazarene University

Laurance G. Beauvais
laurancebeauvais@pointloma.edu

Palomar College

Heriberto Rivera hrivera@palomar.edu

Mira Costa College

Kent McCorkle
kmccorkle@miracosta.edu

Grossmont College

Hima Joshi Hima_Joshi@gcccd.edu

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Chair-elect: Nik Chekshin	(2026)	
Secretary: Marta Vuckovic	(2026)	
Treasurer: Desiree Grubisha, Heron Therapeutics, desgrubisha@gmail.com	(2028)	858-254-5497
Councilor: Hui Cai 2026-2028		
Past Chair Jackie Trischman, CSUSM	(2026)	858-414-3323
Past Chair Max Mahler	(2026)	619-405-5509

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Hui Cai, WuXi AppTec	(2025)	858-361-8838
Surya K. De, Conju-Probe	(2028)	858-337-4961
Desiree Grubisha, Heron Therapeutics	(2028)	858-254-5497
Valerie Kuck	(2027)	973-744-5510
David Wallace, Wallace Scientific Consulting	(2028)	858-638-1866

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Ben Pratt, Pratt Pharma Consulting LLC	(2025)	858-945-7893
Jim Shih, Eli Lilly & Co	(2028)	626-826-3561
Juan Gonzalez-Gonzalez	(2027)	619-813-8520
Ryan Smith	(2027)	619-744-2220
Christina Vialva	(2028)	951-287-4503

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Randall Smith	(2025)	
Sharai Mendez	(2028)	

STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES
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Valerie Kuck (Co-Chair)		973-744-5510
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ChemExpo

Jackie Trischman, CSUSM		858-414-3323
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Communications Committee

Surya K. De, Conju-Probe.		858-337-4961
Desiree Grubisha, Heron Therapeutics		858-254-5497
Carolina Ibarra (Newsletter Editor & Social Media Manager)		619-618-9240
David Wallace, Wallace Scientific Consulting		858-638-1866

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David Wallace (Chair), Biosplice Therapeutics		858-204-5412
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Jim Shih, Eli Lilly & Co		626-826-3561
Peter Iovine, USD		619-260-4028
Jackie Trischman, CSUSM		858-414-3323

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Joan Schellinger, USD		619-260-7960

EarthFair

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Ryan Smith		619-744-2220

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Mark Tichenor (Co-Chair), Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
David Wallace (Co-Chair), Biosplice Therapeutics
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Committee Chair

Jiyue Chen email contact for the WCC is ACS-WCC@sandiegoacs.org.

Younger Chemists Committee

Christina Vialva, cvalva@sandiegoacs.org
