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The San Diego Chemist

San Diego Section

Volume 38, Number 7 August 2026

YOU ARE INVITED TO

ACS ANNUAL PICNIC

Food, fun and family

Tacos ! | Dessert Contest

Games & Entertainment

Community, fun & family

Saturday, September 26 2026

11 AM- 3PM

San Dieguito
County Park



*Register
here*



Dear ACS San Diego Members,

August is always a special time for our local section. As summer begins to wind down, it gives us an opportunity to reflect on what we have accomplished so far this year while looking ahead to a busy fall filled with science, outreach, and opportunities to reconnect with our chemistry community.

July was an especially active month for ACS San Diego. We were delighted to support the **2026 San Diego Medicinal Chemistry Symposium**, held in collaboration with **SABPA and UC San Diego**. The symposium brought together scientists and leaders from academia and industry to discuss exciting advances in medicinal chemistry and drug discovery. Thank you to our speakers, organizers, volunteers, sponsors, and everyone who joined us and helped make the event a success. **David Wallace**, one of our Councilors, **and Mark Tichenor** were the main organizers of the event. David has also prepared a write-up highlighting the symposium, which you can read in this issue of the newsletter.

We also continued expanding our scientific programming through virtual events. In July, our **organoid webinar** brought together members interested in emerging technologies and their applications in biomedical research and drug discovery. We welcomed around 33 attendees from related fields, who contributed to a lively discussion and raised many thoughtful and interesting questions.

August also gives us an opportunity to celebrate the people who have helped build and strengthen our chemistry community over many decades. Earlier this month, on August 8, we held our **annual luncheon honoring our 50-, 60-, and 70-year ACS members**. We celebrated the remarkable milestones of **Dr. Charles L. Perrin** and **Dr. Neal Langerman** and had the opportunity to connect with many of our longtime ACS members. It is always inspiring to recognize colleagues whose careers and service span generations. Their contributions remind us that ACS is not only about scientific advancement, but also about the community, mentorship, and lasting relationships that sustain our profession.

As we head into the fall, there is much more ahead. One event I am particularly excited about is one of our biggest gatherings of the year is right around the corner! The **ACS San**

Diego Local Section Picnic will be held on **Saturday, September 26th, from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM at San Dieguito County Park**. This family-friendly event features catered tacos, lawn games, kids' activities, a dessert contest, and a raffle with fun ACS prizes. It's a wonderful opportunity to unwind and connect with fellow members in a casual, festive setting. Early registration is crucial to help us plan for food and activities, so be sure to RSVP soon! [Register here](#).

As always, thank you to our volunteers, committee members, event organizers, and everyone who participates in ACS San Diego. Whether you attend a scientific program, volunteer at an outreach event, mentor a young chemist, or simply come to reconnect with colleagues, your involvement is what makes our local section a community.

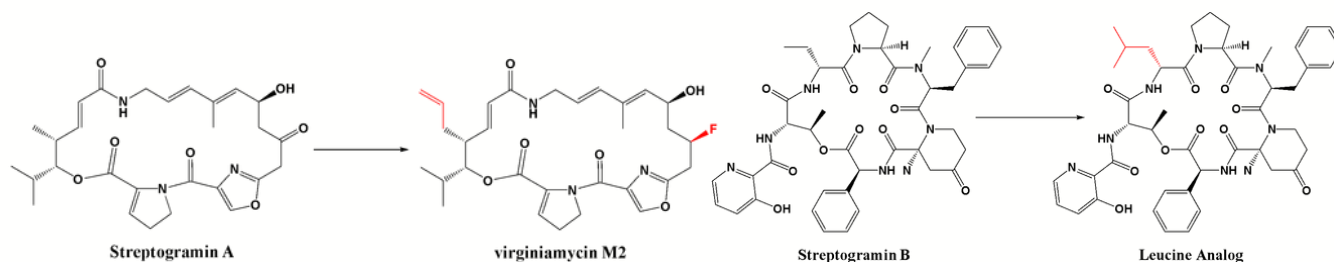
I hope everyone enjoys the rest of the summer, and I look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming events!

Warm regards,
Jiyue Chen, Ph.D.
Chair, ACS San Diego Section

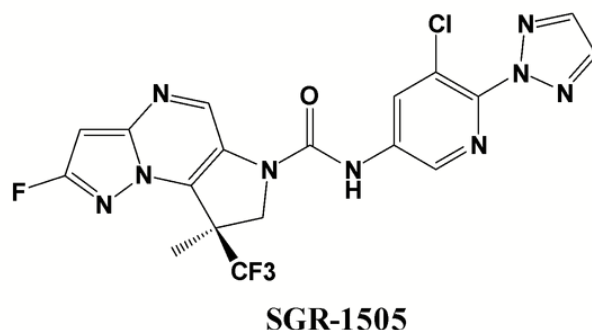
THE 27th ANNUAL SAN DIEGO MEDICINAL CHEMISTRY SYMPOSIUM

The 27th Annual San Diego Medicinal Chemistry Symposium was held on July 17 at UC San Diego's Hojel Hall in the Institute of the Americas, drawing over 300 attendees for local expert presentations. Dr. Brendan Parr of Drug Hunter delivered the opening address, highlighting regional drug discovery achievements from companies including BMS, Neomorph, Kura, Vividion, and Plexium.

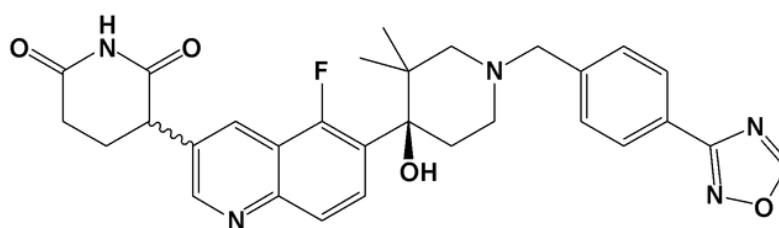
Professor Ian Seiple from Scripps discussed how chemical synthesis can give new life to natural antibiotics, focusing on the semisynthetic development of streptogramin antibiotics. He first shared their work on overcoming VAT resistance in Streptogramin A, followed by tackling Vgb resistance in Streptogramin B. When combined, their new analogs showed strong synergy and success against multidrug-resistant *E. faecium*.



To complete the morning session, Dr. Zhe Nie from Schrödinger elaborated on her group's silico discovery of SGR-1505: a potent MALT1 allosteric inhibitor for the treatment of mature B-cell malignancies. She showed how using Schrödinger's FEP+, a physics-based "computation assay" plus AI can speed up the selection of novel tricyclic MALT1 inhibitors, including SGR-1505.

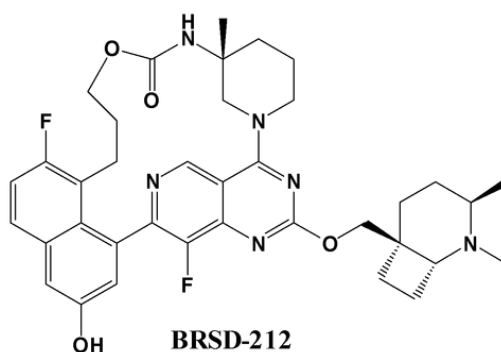


After the coffee break, Dr. Rohan Beckwith from Neomorph presented how Neomorph is expanding the druggable genome with molecular glues. He gave the example of ARNT as an undruggable node in HIF signaling. The discovery of NEO-811, an orally active molecular glue degrader that targets ARNT (HIF-1 β) to treat advanced clear cell renal cell carcinoma (ccRCC).



NEO-811

Dr. Dean Phillips from Novartis delivered the final lecture of the day, presenting on the discovery of macrocycle pan-KRAS inhibitors. The use of cocrystal studies with KRAS GDP revealed that conformational restrictions increased affinity for the Swll pocket leading to BRSD-212.



BRSD-212

The event was free for attendees because of the generous financial support of our sponsors, Apeloa, Drug Hunter, Duane Morris, Eli Lilly, Eurofins Discovery, J&J, Novartis, Pfizer, SAI Life Sciences, Schrödinger, Vertex, Wilson Sonsini, and Wuxi AppTec. The San Diego ACS, SABPA, and UCSD are eager to collaborate on another symposium next year.

Please contact Fleur Ferguson (fmferguson@ucsd.edu), Ben Pratt (bpratt@sandiegoacs.org), Mark Tichenor (mtichenor@sandiegoacs.org), David Wallace (davidmw@san.rr.com), or Tao Wu (tao.wu@sabpa.org), if your organization would like to sponsor the event or has an exciting new disclosure for this symposium in 2027!



**Dr. Brendan Parr,
Drug Hunter**



**Co-organizer,
Dr. Fleur Ferguson**



**Professor Ian Seiple,
Scripps**



**Dr. Zhe Nie,
Schrödinger**



**Dr. Rohan Beckwith,
Neomorph**



**Dr. Dean Phillips,
Novartis**

Text & photo credits: David Wallace



**Co-organizer,
Dr. Ben Pratt**



**Co-organizer,
Dr. Tao Wu**



**Co-organizer,
Dr. Mark Tichenor**



A packed auditorium

50-60-, and 70-Year ACS Member Recognition Luncheon



50-60-, and 70-Year ACS Member Recognition Luncheon



50-60-, and 70-Year ACS Member Recognition Luncheon



50-60-, and 70-Year ACS Member Recognition Luncheon



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Sep 26, 2026 • Hilton San Diego/Del Mar, 15575 Jimmy Durante Blvd, Del Mar, CA



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PLENARY SPEAKERS



Adam Mullick, Ph.D.
VP
Cardiovascular and Renal
Drug Discovery at
Ionis Pharmaceuticals, Inc



Ardem Patapoutian, PhD
Professor,
Presidential Endowed Chair in
Neurobiology
Department of Neuroscience
Scripps Research



Dimitri E. Grigoriadis, PhD
Distinguished Scholar
Neurocrine Biosciences



Fan Zhang, PhD
VP of Business Development
Bristol Myer Squibb



Jeff Settleman, PhD
CSO for
Oncology Research Unit
and La Jolla Site Head
Pfizer



Mark Merchant, PhD
VP
Translation Research at
Revolution Medicines



Paul Negulescu, PhD
SVP
Research and Disease Area
Executive for Pain at
Vertex Pharmaceuticals Inc.

PANEL DISCUSSION



Brendan Eckelman, Ph.D.
CEO
SciThera



Chelsea Hewitt
Senior Director,
External Scientific Innovation,
Johnson & Johnson



Jeremy Caldwell, Ph.D.
Managing Director,
Red Tree Venture Capital



Kim Kamdar, Ph.D.
Biotech Entrepreneur and
Investor, Managing Partner,
Medical Excellence Capital, LLC



Qing Dong, Ph.D.
Co-Founder & CEO,
RayThera



Yipeng Zhao
Co-Founder & Managing Partner,
Embark Ventures

HIGHLIGHTS

Nobel-Winning Discoveries

Transforming Fundamental Science into Therapeutic Breakthroughs

San Diego Biopharma Leaders

Exclusive Insights from Executives at Vertex, Neurocrine, BMS, Pfizer, Ionis, and Other Leading Life Science Companies

Industry Innovation Spotlight

Lessons in Translating Cutting-Edge Science into Breakthrough Medicines from Revolution Medicines

Business & Investment Panel

Navigating Innovation, Strategic Partnerships, Funding, and Growth in Today's Biotech Landscape

Interactive Roundtable Discussions

Engaging Conversations on AI, Emerging Therapeutic Modalities, Entrepreneurship, Career Development, and the Future of Biopharma

Lunch & Learn Sessions

Discover Practical Solutions from Leading CROs and Technology Partners, with Expert Tips, Live Demonstrations, and Gift Card Raffles

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

GOLD



Scan the QR code and click "Register Now" on the [event page](#) to kick-start your event registration. Registration fees will increase after **September 5th, 2026**.

Consider joining SABPA as a member – members enjoy free online registration for all SABPA events. Don't miss out on this incredible opportunity – secure your place now!

Executive Committee – Zoom Meeting

Thursday, July 9th, 2026, 6:30pm

In attendance (7): Jiyue Chen (Chair), Desiree Grubisha (Treasurer/Councilor), James Shih (Alternate Councilor), Surya K. De (Councilor), Christina Vialva (Alternate Councilor), Marta Vuckovic (Secretary), John Palmer (Councilor), Jackie Trishman (Councilor, Immediate pass chair), Ryan Smith (Alternate Councilor), Nik Chekshin (Chair-elect), Jessica Le.

Absent: Carolina Ibarra (Newsletter Editor), Jesus Cordova (WRM Chair), David Wallace (Councilor)

Meeting convened at 6:30 pm

Executive Summary

The July Executive Committee meeting focused on approving corrected June meeting minutes, reviewing current financial balances, and finalizing logistics for several major local section events throughout the summer and fall. Key items discussed included vendor deposits for the upcoming 50-60-70 Year Member Luncheon, promotional strategies for the July organoids webinar, venue and committee planning for the Trailblazer Women Chemists Award, date shifts for ChemExpo 2026, and early coordination for section officer elections and the annual picnic.

1. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The June Executive Committee meeting minutes were reviewed with the following corrections noted:

- **Attendance Corrections:** Jackie Trishman was added to the absent list as Councilor. Christina Vialva, James Shih, and Juan were clarified as Alternate Councilors.
- **Treasurer's Report Correction:** The checkbook for the new account had been ordered but was not yet received at the time of the June meeting (checks arrived approximately two weeks later).

Motion: Approve the June Executive Committee meeting minutes as amended.

Outcome: Moved, seconded, and approved by vote. The approved minutes will be published in the July newsletter.

2. Treasurer's Report

Desiree Grubisha presented the current financial summary:

- **Income & Deposits:**
 - Received Annual ACS National allotment and additional sponsorship for the Medicinal Chemistry Symposium from Schrödinger.
- **Expenses:**
 - **Education / ChemOlympiad:** \$187 for ChemOlympiad supplies and testing materials; \$800 in student awards (\$50 each to 16 student participants); \$500 allocated for the Greater San Diego Science and Engineering Fair.
 - **Event Deposits:** \$500 deposit paid to Tom Ham's Lighthouse for the 50-60-70 Year Member Luncheon.
 - **Administrative & Media:** ~\$1,900 for newsletter preparation (covering combined June and February invoices); \$873 for Constant Contact subscription fees; \$385 for social media management services (February and June invoicing).

3. Upcoming Events & Technical Programs

A. Human Kidney Organoids Webinar (July 23, 2026 – 6:30 PM)

- **Speaker:** Professor Zhongwei Li (USC / Startup Co-Founder).
- **Topic:** Research on human kidney organoids and 3D organ-on-a-chip technology.
- **Promotion & Outreach:** Eventbrite page and LinkedIn flyers are active. Suggested forwarding poster and registration details to all Western Regional Sections to broaden attendance (Target: 30–40 attendees).

B. Medicinal Chemistry Symposium

- Scheduled for Friday, July 17, 2026. Final promotional materials will be reflected in the July newsletter.

4. Special Event Planning

A. 50-60-70 Year Member Luncheon (August 8, 2026)

- **Venue:** Tom Ham's Lighthouse.
- **Student Participation:** Jackie Trischman will coordinate with Carolina Ibarra to generate registration codes for local student club leaders.
- **Prior Non-Attendees:**

- **Motion:** Invite last year's 50-60 year member honorees who were unable to attend the previous ceremony, providing complimentary registration for them and a plus-one guest using registration codes.
- **Outcome:** Moved by Jackie Trischman, seconded by Desiree Grubisha, and approved unanimously.
- **Event Logistics:** Jiyue Chen will deliver opening remarks and present awards. James Shih will attend to capture photographs.

B. Trailblazer Women Chemists Award (October 2026)

- **Target Dates:** Saturday, October 3 or October 10, 2026.
- **Venue:** Event facility in Clairemont Mesa (similar budget target under \$4,000 for ~50 attendees).
- **Process & Timeline:**
 - Nominations open in August and close in September.
 - Award selection committee being formed (Jiyue Chen leading; Nick volunteered to serve as a committee member). Seeking an odd-numbered panel representing both academia and industry.

C. Annual ACS Section Picnic (September 26, 2026)

- Date confirmed for September 26, 2026. Marta Vuckovic will lead the picnic planning committee (including James, Max, Christina, and Nick) to organize catering, entertainment, and flyers.

D. ChemExpo 2026 (November 7, 2026)

- **Date Confirmation:** Scheduled for November 7th at Miramar College (shifted due to Halloween conflict on Oct 31).
- **Call to Action:** Executive members are challenged to find at least one volunteer or company representative to host an interactive table or assist with logistics.

5. Governance & Operations Updates

- **Officer Elections:** Vacancies will be posted in the upcoming newsletter. Candidate biographies must be collected by October 1st for November voting.
- **Distinguished Scientist Award:** Dr. Romi Amaro was selected as this year's recipient. Jackie Trischman is following up to confirm acceptance and schedule the presentation dinner.
- **August Meeting Details:** The August 6th Executive Committee meeting is targeted to return to an in-person format at 6:30 PM in the HDBio (WuXi) Conference Room in

Sorrento Valley (pending venue confirmation by Hui). James Shih will coordinate catering options (Jersey Mike's, pizza, or pasta).

Adjournment & Next Meeting

- **Meeting Adjourned:** ~7:35 PM
- **Next Executive Committee Meeting:** Thursday, August 6, 2026, at 6:30 PM (Location: HDBio Conference Room, Sorrento Valley / Zoom Hybrid TBD).

**Chemistry, Regulation, and Change:
Understanding TSCA's Next Chapter**
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Winning Green Chemistry in Pharma**
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How Python can Streamline your Chem Lab
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ACS Webinars
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**Building the Data Foundation for AI-Native
Small Molecule R&D**
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Future-Proof Your Chemistry Career for 2030
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**What 25 Years of Process Chemistry
Can Teach Us**
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**Expanding NMR Possibilities with HFX
Cryogenic Probes**
September 9, 2026
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[Click here](#)

**Catalyze the Vote! Meet the 2027 ACS
President-Elect Candidates**
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ACS Webinars
September 10, 2026
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**Executive Committee Meeting
Dates 2026**

**First thursdays of
each month**

[Zoom Meeting](#)

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



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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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 jkk@ucsd.edu

San Diego Mesa College

Synthia Chang
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Southwestern College, Chula Vista

Juan Gonzalez
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Miramar College

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kmccorkle@miracosta.edu

Grossmont College

Hima Joshi Hima Joshi@gcccd.edu

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Chair: Jiyue Chen	(2026)	858-260-8283
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

Councilors

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

Alternate Councilors

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

Members-at-Large

Jessica Le		
Randall Smith	(2025)	
Sharai Mendez	(2028)	

STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES**Awards Nomination Committee**

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

Distinguished Scientist Awards Nomination Committee

David Wallace (Chair), Biosplice Therapeutics	858-204-5412
Surya K. De, Conju-Probe	858-337-4961
Hui Cai, WuXi AppTec	858-361-8838
Jim Shih, Eli Lilly & Co	626-826-3561
Peter Iovine, USD	619-260-4028
Jackie Trischman, CSUSM	858-414-3323

Education Committee

Valerie Kuck	973-744-5510
Joan Schellinger, USD	619-260-7960

EarthFair

OPEN

Finance Committee

David Wallace (Chair)	858-204-5412
Ryan Smith	619-744-2220

Fundraising Committee

OPEN

Government Affairs Committee

Hui Cai, WuXi AppTec (Chair)	858-361-8838
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Law Committee

Ryan C. Smith, Duane Morris LLP	619-744-2220
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Mad Science Program

OPEN

MedChem Symposium

Ben Pratt (Co-Chair), Pratt Pharma Consulting LLC
Mark Tichenor (Co-Chair), Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
David Wallace (Co-Chair), Biosplice Therapeutics
Tao Wu (Co-Chair), Kumquat Biosciences

858-945-7893
858-334-8914
858-638-1866
858-922-0428

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OPEN

Nominations Committee

OPEN

Picnic Committee

Jim Shih, Eli Lilly & Co.

626-826-3561

Professional Development Committee

Valerie Kuck

973-744-5510

Public Relations Committee

OPEN

Senior Chemists Committee

OPEN

Seniors Breakfasts

OPEN

Women Chemists Committee**Committee Chair**Jiyue Chen email contact for the WCC is ACS-WCC@sandiegoacs.org.**Younger Chemists Committee**Christina Vialva, cvialva@sandiegoacs.org