

By Erika Johnson May 16, 2013

## UC San Diego Alumni to Re-connect with Campus During 5th Annual Alumni Weekend June 6-9



Photos by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications

The University of California, San Diego will host the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Alumni Weekend, June 6-9, where thousands of graduates will enjoy signature events designed to engage and inspire, from *TED*-style presentations from five thought-leaders to a career strategies workshop by top professionals and a family night at Birch Aquarium where mysteries of the ocean will be revealed.

Alumni and friends will join the campus community Saturday, June 8 for the Alumni Celebration to honor this year's distinguished alumni, including an expert in defense policy and international affairs who has served Presidents Reagan, Clinton and Obama; a finalist for National Teacher of the Year

dedicated to closing the education gap; a research scientist passionate about reaching underrepresented students; and an entrepreneur who works tirelessly to ensure continued funding for college programs.

“We are proud of the national and international impact of our stellar alumni,” said UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. “Their accomplishments exemplify the academic excellence and distinction of UC San Diego graduates.”

### ***Kurt Campbell '80, Outstanding Alumnus***

Described as “foreign policy think-tank royalty” by the *Washington Post*, Kurt Campbell’s initial interest in Asia was first sparked by UC San Diego professor Susan Shirk, who regaled her students with stories of her travels in China. Campbell went on to serve as diplomatic counselor for Presidents Reagan and Clinton and is credited as one of the key architects for the “Pivot to Asia” program as Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs for the Obama administration.

“I can’t tell you how much it means to be remembered by this university; UC San Diego has meant so much to me and it really started me on a wonderful career track,” said Campbell, currently chairman and CEO of The Asia Group, LLC. “Each of my professors inspired me in their own way and gave me a sense of the bigger world. I still remember them to this day, and the great educational experience I had.”

*Campbell will conduct a free public lecture titled “U.S. Pivot to Asia: What Does it Mean for the U.S.-China Relations?” from 4:30-6 p.m. June 7 at the Institute of the Americas Auditorium, moderated by Susan Shirk, chair of the 21st Century China Program.*

### ***Kelly Kovacic '00, Emerging Leader***

A passionate proponent of equal access to education, teacher Kelly Kovacic has spent her career dedicated to building confidence and serving as role model and confidant to her students at The Preuss School UCSD, a charter middle and high school for low-income highly motivated students who strive to be the first in their family to graduate from college. Kovacic was recently named one of four finalists for National Teacher of the Year and continually works to uplift her students and encourage them to recognize their potential.

“Kelly has left an indelible mark on all her students,” said Malinda Danziger, associate director for alumni communications, who worked as a student mentor in Kovacic’s class. “She cares about the entire well-being of her students and ensures that they are filled with confidence in their abilities and provided with the resources they need to succeed every step of the way.”



From left, Kurt Campbell, Kelly Kovacic, James Rohr and Leo Spiegel

### ***James Rohr '80 & '85, Distinguished Service***

A similar champion of student potential, James Rohr has initiated numerous outreach programs, including the Enspire Program, the largest of its kind through the Jacobs School of Engineering, which focuses on introducing and encouraging middle school students to pursue a career in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and math). Rohr is a research scientist at SPAWAR Systems Center and lecturer at UC San Diego who believes that all students, regardless of their background, can be successful given the opportunity.

“Jim is genuine, compassionate, and most of all, committed to equity in STEM. That is why our students love him,” said Michelle Ferrez, director of the IDEA student center and Sana Meghani, assistant coordinator of student life at the IDEA Student Center at the Jacobs School of Engineering. “He has been a powerful force in promoting the success and retention of diverse students in engineering at the K-12, collegiate and professional level. He truly walks the talk and makes great things happen.”

### ***Leo Spiegel '83, Distinguished Leadership***

A precocious young entrepreneur, Leo Spiegel began his own business while he was an undergraduate at UC San Diego, and literally got his start when the university became his first client. He attributes much of his success to what he learned during his time at the university and has remained deeply connected ever since. Spiegel currently serves as a UC San Diego Foundation Trustee and works diligently in support of student fellowship and other fund-raising initiatives to benefit campus programs.

“Leo is dedicated to supporting UC San Diego programs, and is passionate about engaging alumni and our communities in supporting our greatest opportunities, especially in the areas of graduate fellows and research support,” said Kathy Drucquer Duff, vice chancellor of University Development at

UC San Diego. “He has had a huge impact as a trustee, and has garnered extensive funding in support of graduate and fellowship programs on campus.”

Numerous signature events—including several that are open to the general public—are planned for this year’s Alumni Weekend, where alumni and their friends and family will reconnect with campus to network, celebrate achievements and enjoy presentations by leading professionals.

“We are excited to welcome our alumni and friends back to campus, and to hear of their amazing stories and accomplishments,” said Armin Afsahi, executive director of UCSD Alumni. “This weekend is the perfect opportunity for our entire university to celebrate our Triton Family, now 150,000 strong, and ensure that our values of service, leadership and philanthropy are celebrated together. Our alumni represent the very best of UC San Diego, and we look forward to broadening our impact across the world.”

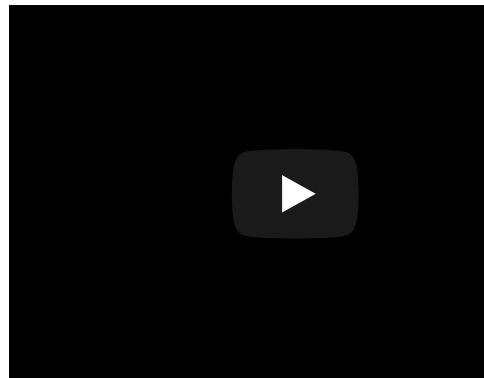
### ***Weekend to Feature Signature Events***

On Saturday, June 8, best-selling author and leading career counselor Robin Ryan, who has garnered the attention of Oprah, CNN and the *Wall Street Journal*, will present cutting-edge strategies and techniques to transform your career at the Career Boost Camp, moderated by Reo Carr, editor-in-chief of the *San Diego Business Journal*. Hosted by UCSD Alumni and UC San Diego Extension, the workshop is open to the public and will offer participants a unique networking opportunity with an entrepreneurial panel of local start-up founders who will share their techniques and success tips.

The workshop is \$25 and will take place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, June 8 at the Rady School of Management on the UC San Diego campus.

The public and campus community is also invited to join Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla on June 8 for the Triton 5K, where participants will run/walk past campus icons and renowned art pieces in a 3.1 mile race. This year’s event includes a healthy living fair, live music festival and more. Registration is now open; all proceeds will go directly to support student scholarships at UC San Diego.

For a complete schedule for Alumni Weekend, please visit [alumni.ucsd.edu/alumniweekend](http://alumni.ucsd.edu/alumniweekend).



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