

## Staff Members Lauded for Compassion, Dedication at Annual Exemplary Employee of Year Awards



*Photos by Erika Johnson/University Communications.*

Kate McDevitt believes in the power of “taste education.” By teaching kids how to grow, harvest and cook fruits and vegetables, a new appreciation and enjoyment for health and nutrition can be fostered at an early age.

“It is amazing what happens when a child is introduced to a new fruit or vegetable,” said McDevitt. “When you inspire one child to change the way they eat, they in turn influence their peer group and classmates—even the entire school. And that’s just by reaching one child!”

McDevitt is a senior community health program representative in the department of pediatrics at the UC San Diego School of Medicine and this year's Principal Exemplary Staff Employee of the Year. McDevitt was honored along with nine other recipients at the 28th annual UC San Diego Exemplary Staff Employee of the Year Awards on May 8th.

"I am truly amazed at what these staff members have done," said Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. "The work of these 10 award recipients, and the collective efforts of all staff at UC San Diego, is invaluable to our success as a university and community resource. I thank you for your service."

McDevitt is passionate about improving the lives of underserved children in San Diego through educating kids and teachers about the benefits of good nutrition and the importance of physical activity in the prevention of chronic disease. This year, she reached more than 10,000 children through the Children's Power Play! Campaign, which is part of the California Department of Public Health. The campaign provides schools and teachers with a blueprint to implement health and wellness topics in class curriculums.



*Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla, Kathleen McDevitt and Vice Chancellor of Health Sciences Brian Smith*

In the community, McDevitt has worked diligently to ensure underserved children have access to healthy food on a regular basis. She began the San Diego Summer Lunch Task Force, a committee established to address food security among the 125,000 children in San Diego at risk for hunger during the summer months. She has also successfully garnered financial support, including a \$10,000 donation from the San Diego Padres Foundation for physical activity incentives, including hats, backpacks and sweatbands for after school programs.

Her newest "passion project" is Harvest of the Month, a program designed to open communication between chefs, doctors, farmers, parents and community leaders to discover local seasonal fruits and vegetables that can be served in school salad bars, as well as to identify produce donations available through business partnerships with local farms and food banks.

"I want nothing more than to help educators bring nutrition to their students in a fun and meaningful way," said McDevitt. "Knowing that I might have played a small role in changing the lives of students and their families is the greatest gift I could ask for."

More than 100 nominations were submitted this year in recognition of UC San Diego staff members who embody excellence in job performance and significant contributions to the community. James Galvin, director of Global Seminars and the Opportunities Abroad Program, is among those honored

for going above and beyond. He is dedicated to reaching out to underrepresented students and providing enriching opportunities for growth through study abroad.

“I would like to dispel the myth that study abroad is only for a limited few,” said Galvin. “My motivation to serve the campus community comes from the knowledge that education abroad is a life changing experience that influences a student’s career choices, lifelong patterns of civic engagement, personal growth and cultural understanding.”

Galvin works one-on-one with students to tailor study abroad opportunities to their academic, personal and career goals and provides them with the resources and confidence they need for their global journey. In order to improve student learning outcomes, he has developed cultural competency activities to allow for greater cultural understanding and immersion. For example, last summer students who studied abroad in Japan submitted a cultural experience each week and discussed it with the entire group via Skype.

Galvin has also made great strides in connecting with students who have not traditionally studied abroad by engaging in conversations with diverse groups on campus—such as the Black Student Union, LGBT Center and Biological Sciences Student Association—to proactively answer questions, address concerns and facilitate customized study abroad opportunities. As a result of Galvin’s outreach efforts, the number of enrolled Global Seminar students has almost doubled in the past five years, with an increase in participation from African-American, Hispanic and transfer students.

“I take inspiration from each student success because they have overcome so many barriers to achieve the dream of studying abroad,” said Galvin. “My team and I work to communicate the message that any student who wants to study abroad will receive support, advice and encouragement to do so. We want to prepare students for the global challenges of the 21st century and build upon UC San Diego’s accomplishments as a leading international university.”

**The 2012-13 Exemplary Staff Employees of the Year include:**

**Kathleen McDevitt**—Senior Community Health Program Representative  
*Health Sciences: Pediatrics* ([video](#))

**James Galvin**—Student Affairs Officer III - Supervisor  
*Student Affairs: International Center* ([video](#))

**Rafael Acevedo**—Student Affairs Officer III - Supervisor  
*Academic Affairs: Economics* ([video](#))

**Robert Bryan**—Senior Community Health Program Representative  
*Health Sciences: Psychiatry* ([video](#))

**Sarah Hershel**—Physical Therapist II  
*UC San Diego Health System: Rehabilitation Services* ([video](#))

**Anita Ihasz**—Blank Assistant III  
*UC San Diego Health System: Nephrology Programs* ([video](#))

**Sharon Kelley**—Principal Administrative Analyst - Supervisor  
*Academic Affairs: San Diego Supercomputer Center* ([video](#))

**Saura Naderi**—Program Representative II  
*Academic Affairs: Calit2* ([video](#))

**Matthew Proctor**—Child Development Center Teacher II  
*Resource Management and Planning: Early Childhood Education Center* ([video](#))

**Richard Walsh**—Marine Technician III, Nonexempt  
*Marine Sciences: Scripps Institution of Oceanography Director's Office* ([video](#))

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