

40th Annual Pancake Breakfast Unites Staff for Holidays, Inspires Spirit of Giving

Win Tickets to the Sold-Out Holiday Pancake Breakfast

Still need tickets to the 40th Annual Holiday Pancake Breakfast? Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla is giving away 10 tickets to the sold-out event. UC San Diego staff members can enter the drawing starting today. The contest will end Dec. 7. Ten individuals will be randomly selected and notified via email on Monday, Dec. 8. Increase your chances of winning by sharing with your colleagues. For each successful entry that you refer, you will automatically be awarded an additional entry. Use your personal referral link provided on your contest entry confirmation.

[Click here to enter the contest!](#)

A toy drive, craft faire and holiday celebration rolled into one, the annual Holiday Pancake Breakfast hosted by the [UC San Diego Staff Association](#) draws hundreds of staff members from across campus each winter for a hearty breakfast and warm conversation with colleagues. In honor of the breakfast's 40th anniversary, this year's event will be sponsored by the Chancellor's Office, offering complimentary pancakes for the first time as well an expanded number of tickets to staff.

"I am pleased to sponsor this year's breakfast, as it allows me to recognize, thank and support our extraordinary staff members for their work and contributions to the campus throughout the year," said UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. "Day in and day out, our staff ensure that our students are able to receive an exceptional education and that our faculty can teach and conduct research that is transforming lives."

After four decades, the core mission of the breakfast remains the same: to foster community among staff and celebrate the holidays. "When I first began working on campus over 17 years ago, I was looking to get more involved, and a colleague recommended I join the Staff Association," said Ange Mason, education program manager at the San Diego Supercomputer Center and chair of the breakfast. "I volunteered to co-chair the breakfast committee in 1997 and enjoyed the experience so much that I have continued to do so ever since. The committee is made up of such a lovely group, and it makes me really happy to be part of a such a good cause."



Ange Mason, education program manager at the San Diego Supercomputer Center and chair of the breakfast. Photos by Erika Johnson/University Communications.

This year's breakfast will be served to 1,200 staff members during three seatings on Dec. 10 in Price Center West Ballroom. The complimentary breakfast prepared by UC San Diego Catering will feature buckwheat pancakes with mixed berry topping, sausage, bacon, yogurt parfaits, oatmeal, sweet potato hash as well as coffee, tea and juice. The event will also include the 6th Annual Artisan Craft Faire, which will feature more than 20 booths with handmade items created by UC San Diego staff members—including pine needle baskets, jewelry, holiday ornaments, framed artwork and more.

Like Mason, many committee members have been involved in the holiday breakfast for years, including Meredyth Potter, marketing manager for the UC San Diego Bookstore. She has spearheaded the toy and food drive for several years, managed ticketing and

helped deliver toys alongside Santa to babies in local neonatal intensive care nurseries. “My first two years on campus, I attended the breakfast and noticed how much fun the committee members were having, so I decided to get involved,” said Potter. “We definitely have too much fun planning and decorating each year!”

In addition to the breakfast and craft faire, the event also serves as a toy drive. Attendees are encouraged to bring a new, unwrapped toy to support local children in need. In particular, the UC San Diego Staff Association is looking for gifts to suit babies, toddlers, pre-teens and teens, including art supplies, clothing, video games, movies, music, cosmetics, sports equipment and more. The donations are then distributed by staff members to local hospitals and foster care centers during the holidays, including the UC San Diego Mother-Child-Adolescent HIV Program, Polinsky Center, UC San Diego Burn Unit and Voices For Children.

After attending several breakfasts when she first began working on campus, Mindy Schroeder was inspired to begin her own departmental toy drive to support the UC San Diego Staff Association, and it has now expanded to the entire Jacobs School of Engineering.

“My goal is to get 400 toys donated!” said Schroeder, senior administrative analyst in the Jacobs School of Engineering Dean’s Office. “Beyond collecting toys, this project helps to build a sense of community. When we see each other as human beings and not just co-workers, I think we tend to work better together. And when there's a common goal like getting 400 toys that we can all reach together, I think it gives people a sense that they've contributed to something positive as a group. So, in the end, hopefully we make a bunch of kids happy and we foster a better work environment.”

J.V. Agnew agreed that the breakfast inspires camaraderie among staff. “I find that the most important thing we can do is foster good relationships. There are only a few times a year when the staff comes together outside of the office and it's then when relationships are renewed and new ones can be made,” said Agnew, a UC San Diego alumna and business office assistant in the department of mechanical and aerospace engineering who has served on the breakfast committee for three years. “My favorite part of the breakfast is starting out the day with this sense of community; it’s a wonderful feeling to be a part of something greater than yourself!”

The breakfast will feature special guest servers, including Juan González, vice chancellor of student affairs; Margaret Leinen, vice chancellor of Scripps Institution of Oceanography; Pierre Ouillet, vice chancellor of business affairs and chief financial officer; and more. Holiday cheer will be provided by The Preuss School Choir as well as a performance by a staff ensemble. And a photo booth will be set up where colleagues can convene for a holiday group photo. To learn more about the breakfast, visit the UC San Diego Staff Association [Holiday Event website](#).



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