

FALL 2024 • NEWSLETTER • ISSUE NO. 14

THRIVE!

School of Exercise and Nutritional Sciences

SDSU



Dr. Matthew Mahar

Director, School of Exercise and Nutritional

Sciences

Director's Message

As Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams." We're excited to share the beauty of our dreams coming to life in the School of Exercise and Nutritional Sciences. Inside this issue, you'll find a warm welcome to our new faculty and staff, a nostalgic look back with an emeritus faculty member, and a glimpse into the bright futures of our talented students. From groundbreaking research and innovative teaching to community outreach and student success, there's something for everyone. So, dive in and discover the latest from the School of Exercise and Nutritional Sciences community.

SDSU Acknowledges the Legacy of the Kumeyaay Nation

For millennia, the Kumeyaay people have been a part of this land. This land has nourished, healed, protected, and embraced them for many generations in a relationship of balance and harmony. As members of the San Diego State community, we acknowledge this legacy. We promote this balance and harmony. We find inspiration from this land; the land of the Kumeyaay.

Kumeyaay Land Acknowledgement created by Michael Connolly Miskwish

ENS News

Welcome New Faculty & Staff

Ms. Jewel Cawaling, IT Support Analyst



Ms. Jewel Cawaling recently joined the CHHS IT Team for the School of Exercise and Nutritional Sciences and the School of Physical Therapy. She is a recent graduate from California State University San Marcos, where she majored in Business Administration with a focus on Management Information Systems. Jewel also brings experience from her previous role as an IT Consultant and a Chief Human Resources Officer in the MIS Society at Cal State San Marcos.

Ms. Rebecca DeHamer, Lecturer



Ms. Rebecca DeHamer received her Master of Science in Nutritional Sciences from SDSU and dietetic training from UCSD Health. She joins us as a lecturer teaching ENS 410 – Concepts in Metabolism and Weight Management and ENS 434 – Promotion of Physical Activity and Healthy Eating.

Mr. Nate Jason, Lecturer



Mr. Nate Jason graduated with a Master of Science in Nutritional Sciences from SDSU. He joins us as a lecturer teaching NUTR 302L – Nutritional Assessment and Research Laboratory.

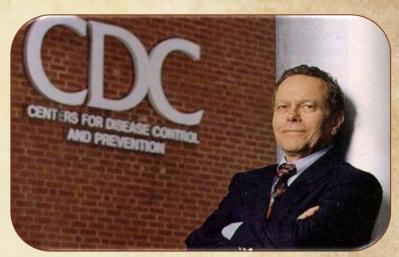
Mr. Anthony Pinzone, Lecturer



Mr. Anthony Pinzone graduated with a Master of Science degree in Sports Science from Hofstra University and is currently in the final semester of his Ph.D. in Exercise Physiology from Kent State University. He joins us as a lecturer to teach ENS 303 - Applied Kinesiology.

Catching Up with Emeritus Faculty Member - Dr. David Sleet Enjoying retirement while remaining active in the field

Emeritus Professor Dr. David Sleet received a B.A. in Health Science and a B.A. Psychology in 1966 and an M.A. in Physical Education from SDSU in 1968. He received his Ph.D. in 1973 from the University of Toledo, Ohio, and returned to teach at SDSU in 1972 while working on his dissertation. Dr. Sleet was selected to conduct research on athletes at the 1976 Olympic games in Montreal as a member of an international team coled by his thesis supervisor, Dr. Lindsay Carter. He went on to teach in public health, health education, and exercise science and was one of the founders of the Graduate School of Public Health at SDSU where he currently serves as an Adjunct Professor. He also carries appointments at Curtin University in Perth, Australia, and Emory University in Atlanta. Since retiring from SDSU in 1997 after 26 years of teaching and research, Dr. Sleet moved to Atlanta to join the CDC as the Acting Director of the Division of Injury Prevention and the Associate Director for Science, until his second retirement in



Dr. David Sleet

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, 2016

2016. Today, when he is not consulting for CDC or publishing research on homelessness, injury prevention, public health, or lifestyle medicine, you might find him playing drums in a pick-up band - a profession he once had before starting graduate school.

While he still lives in Atlanta, David often visits San Diego. When here, he tries to catch up with his former ENS teachers and colleagues including Lindsay Carter, Dick Wells, Tony Sucec, Harry King, Pete Aufsesser, Ron Josephson, Tom McKenzie, and Roger Simmons. He and his wife Louise Gobron, an ESL and Applied Linguistics teacher, will celebrate their 29th wedding anniversary this December.



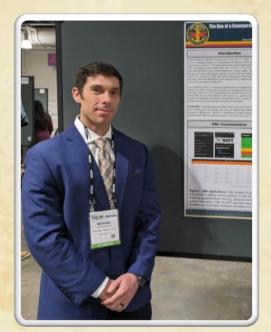
Dr. David Sleet

Drumming with Noodles (rock) Band, 2017



Drs. Lindsay Carter, Dr. David Sleet Via Rancho San Diego, October 2024

The Cradle of Professors: Research Scientist - Dr. Michael Stone



Dr. Stone received his B.S. in Kinesiology and M.S. in Nutrition Science and Exercise Physiology from the School of ENS. After a long tenure as an SDSU graduate student under the mentorship of Dr. Mark Kern, he went on to pursue his Ph.D. in Nutrition Science at Purdue University. At Purdue University his research primarily focused on human mineral metabolism in relation to cardiovascular and bone health, under the advisership of Dr. Connie Weaver. After graduating in 2019, and a short post-doc in the Department of Health and Kinesiology, he made his way from Purdue back to San Diego as a research scientist for the Naval Health Research Center. Dr. Stone is currently the lead contract senior-scientist in the Food Utilization and Energy Laboratory in the Department of Warfighter Performance. Working with the laboratory's government Principal Investigator, he helps oversee a research team that conducts studies assessing the health and performance of military personnel. The laboratory's research focuses include energy balance in warfighters with high physical demands, energy and bioactive supplementation to improve performance in extreme environments, and technological solutions to improve training. His time in the School of ENS graduate program was transformative both professionally and personally, and he credits many of the faculty, past and present, for where he is today.

JEDI Mentor Program



The Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Mentor Program, a student-led initiative spearheaded by the School of ENS JEDI Student Advisory Council, connects undergraduate mentees with graduate student mentors. This program, inspired by the transformative power of mentorship, aims to foster personal, professional, and academic growth.

Founded in 2023 by graduate students Robert Castro and Edgar Doolan, the JEDI Mentor Program has experienced significant growth. With the guidance of Faculty Facilitator Julia Zuniga, the program has empowered mentees to feel a stronger sense of belonging within the School of ENS and SDSU. By boosting confidence and clarifying academic career goals, the program aims to create a self-sustaining cycle of mentorship, with former mentees becoming future mentors.

Student Spotlight

Aalok Gokarn



Aalok Gokarn is a second-year undergraduate student, set to graduate in May 2027 with a B.S. in Kinesiology - Pre-Physical Therapy, on the premedicine track. Originally from San Ramon, California, Aalok has been heavily involved in research and extracurricular activities. He is currently part of a biomechanics research laboratory under the mentorship of Dr. Shawn O'Connor, working on projects focused on investigating the rehabilitative effects of knee braces on individuals with knee osteoarthritis, as well as ACL injury recovery. Aalok also plays a pivotal role in VAW Global, an on-campus organization dedicated to medical mission trips. As the Marketing Co-Chair, he is helping lead recruitment for a mission trip to the Dominican Republic, where students will provide essential healthcare services. Additionally, he is actively involved in the pre-health community on campus as a member of the Aztec Pre-Professional Health Organization and Flying Samaritans.

Kayla Craven



Kayla Craven is pursuing a B.S. in Kinesiology - Pre-Physical Therapy and is a member of the Weber Honors College. She has been assisting with research projects in Foods and Nutrition since Spring of 2023. The project she is currently working on is studying recovery foods for strength training. Kayla values her experience working with the Foods and Nutrition faculty because it helps her look at health and wellness with an interdisciplinary lens. After finishing her undergraduate degree, Kayla aspires to attend a Doctor of Physical Therapy program with the career goal of working as a physical therapist with service members. Kayla engaged in a physical therapy program abroad in Thailand where she worked with pediatric patients with complex needs. Combining her love for traveling and physical therapy, she utilized aquatherapy, hippotherapy, and designed activities with specific physical therapy focuses and goals. Kayla also has a love for running and was elected as an officer for the SDSU Running Club, where she serves as the club's events coordinator.

ENS faculty members are proud to support students as they strive for excellence. We celebrate our students' achievements, including awards, scholarships, professional presentations, and publications of their research.

Grants and Awards *ENS Student Names in Bold*

Student: Anna Kwon

-California Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, The Outstanding Dietetics Student Award, 2024



Anna Kwon

California Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Student: Sophia Balmaceda, Madison Cirillo, Annaliese Andersen

Mentor: Drs. Michelle Weber Rawlins and Kim Detwiler Title: Factors impacting collegiate athletic trainer's job satisfaction: A qualitative study

-NATA Research and Education Foundation Master's Grant



Annaliese Andersen, Madison Cirillo, Sophia Balmaceda
FWATA Annual Meeting and Clinical Symposium

Student: Daisy Lopez

-2024 SDSU Irwin Zahn Spirit of Innovation Prize -2024 ENS Outstanding Undergraduate Student



Daisy Lopez

SDSU Zahn Spirit of Innovation Award

Student: Chih-Ling "Janet" Lee

-Phil Bates Scholarship

Student: Corissa Williams

-Phil Bates Scholarship

Student: Stacey Lehrer

-Phil Bates Scholarship

Student: James Wadman

-ENS Student Research Grant

Student: Jesse Baker

- -Oral Competition at the 2024 Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) Annual Meeting, Second Place
- -ENS Student Conference Travel Award
- -Agricultural Research Institute Fellowship



Jesse Baker, Dr. Jing Zhao
Institute of Food Technologists 84th Annual Meeting

Internships

Student: Liana Feng

-Sustainable Food Research Internship with

\$4,500 Stipend

Student: Jessica Borough

-USDA Internship with \$5,000 Travel Allowance

Student: Corissa Williams

-Sustainable Food Research Internship with

\$4,500 Stipend

Student: Maylee Quinteros

-USDA Internship with \$5,000 Travel Allowance



Jessica Borough (4th from right) and Maylee Quinteros (6th from right) with USDA Scientists

Natural Resources Conservation Service Farm

Presentations *ENS Student Names in Bold*

Student: Jesse Baker, Dr. Ali Raza, Dr. Changqi Liu,

Dr. Jing Zhao

Mentor: Dr. Jing Zhao

Title: Unlocking seafood flavors from macroalgae: A

sustainable, vegan approach

Presented at the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT)

84th Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL

Student: Edgar Doolan

Mentor: Dr. Amanda McClain

Title: Differences between quantitative and qualitative responses to the U.S. household food security survey module: Findings for U.S. Latine households with

children

Presented at the Annual Conference of the International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity,

Omaha, NE



Jesse Baker
Institute of Food Technologists 84th Annual Meeting



Edgar Doolan

Annual Conference of the International Society of
Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity

Student: Haya Altammami, Shealyn Daley, Sofia

Teran, Zhenjiao Du, Yonghui Li, John J. Love, Cristal

Zuniga, Dr. Jing Zhao, Dr. Changqi Liu

Mentors: Dr. Jing Zhao, Dr. Changqi Liu

Title: Protein language model-based prediction of

potential allergens in Chlorella vulgaris

-Southern California Institute of Food Technologists Section (SCIFTS) Research Showcase, Chapman

University

Student: Krisztina Kemenes, Daniel Norena-Caro, Dr.

Changqi Liu, Cristal Zuniga, Dr. Jing Zhao

Mentors: Dr. Jing Zhao, Dr. Changqi Liu

Title: Antioxidant activities of different microalgae

species

-Southern California Institute of Food Technologists Section (SCIFTS) Research Showcase, Chapman

University

Student: Chih-Ling Lee, Leo Hong, Lexi Hwang, Dr.

Changqi Liu, Dr. Jing Zhao

Mentors: Dr. Jing Zhao, Dr. Changqi Liu

Title: Molecular dynamics simulation of trans-fatty acid formation in various oils during high-temperature frying

-Southern California Institute of Food Technologists Section (SCIFTS) Research Showcase, Chapman

University

Student: Stacey Lehrer, Dr. Ali Raza, Dr. Changgi Liu,

Dr. Jing Zhao

Mentors: Dr. Jing Zhao, Dr. Changqi Liu

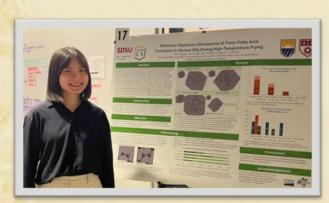
Title: Unlocking seafood flavors from macroalgae: A

sustainable, vegan approach

-Southern California Institute of Food Technologists

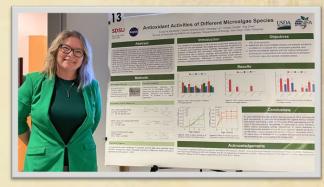
Section (SCIFTS) Research Showcase, Chapman

University



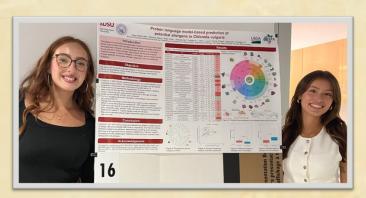
Chih-Ling Lee

Southern California Institute of Food Technologists Section



Krisztina Kemenes

Southern California Institute of Food Technologists Section



Shealyn Daley, Sofia Teran

Southern California Institute of Food Technologists Section

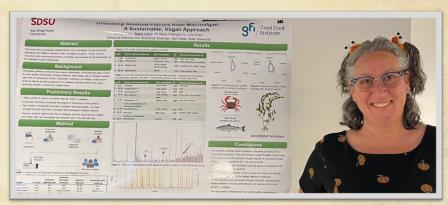
Student: Corissa Williams, Joanna Rockwell, Chih-Li **Liana Feng,** Dr. Changqi Liu, Cristal Zuniga, Dr. Jing Zha Mentors: Dr. Jing Zhao, Dr. Changqi Liu

Title: Nutrient composition and functional properties or microalgae as food ingredients

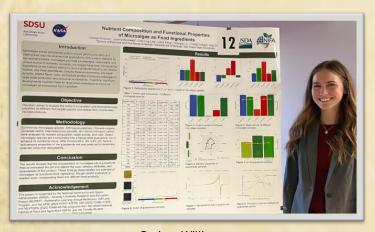
- -Southern California Institute of Food Technologists Se (SCIFTS) Research Showcase, Chapman University -SCIFTS 3MT Pitch Contest, First Place
- Student: James Wadman, Liana Feng, Stacey Lehrer,
- Dr. Ali Raza, Dr. Jing Zhao, Dr. Changqi Liu Mentors: Dr. Jing Zhao, Dr. Changqi Liu

Title: Sensory similarity and consumer preferences of plant-based/vegan seafood analogues

- -Southern California Institute of Food Technologists Section (SCIFTS) Research Showcase, Chapman University
- -SCIFTS 3MT Pitch Contest



Stacey Lehrer
Southern California Institute of Food Technologists Section



Corissa Williams

Southern California Institute of Food Technologists Section



James Wadman

Southern California Institute of Food Technologists Section

STEAM Day - Imagining Tomorrow's World -

Student (Volunteers): Stacey Lehrer, Rebecca Walters, Yohana Rios Verduzco, Nicolas Roccoforte, Taylor Ambre, Corissa Williams, Yifan Zhou

Participating Schools: 15 students from Crawford High School, 35 students from Morse High School



Kristofer Patron-Soberano



Dr. Changqi Liu



Rebecca Walters



Yohana Rios Verduzco



Taylor Ambre, Nicolas Roccoforte



Stacey Lehrer

Empowering Youth: The Upward Bound Summer Academy

Student Lab Mentors: Jacob Baker, William Wong

Internship Supervisor: Dr. Leonardo Nogueira

Mentee: Nery Gomez

Title: Effects of TNF-alpha on diaphragm force function

mice

-Presented at the Upward Bound Summer Academy,

Third place

Student Lab Mentors: Jacob Baker, William Wong

Internship Supervisor: Dr. Leonardo Nogueira

Mentee: Tatiana Rodriguez

Title: Nitric oxide dependent delay in post fatigue contractile recovery in isolated fast-witch muscle: The

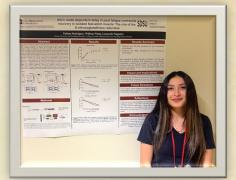
role of the S-nitrosoglutathione reductase

-Presented at the Upward Bound Summer Academy,

Third place



Jacob Baker, William Wong
Upward Bound Summer Academy



Tatiana Rodriguez

Upward Bound Summer Academy



William Wong, Tatiana Rodriguez
Upward Bound Summer Academy

Faculty Highlight

Dr. Surabhi Bhutani, Associate Professor

Dr. Surabhi Bhutani earned her B.S. and M.S. in Foods and Nutrition from the University of Delhi, India. While initially pursuing clinical work, she discovered a deeper passion for research, which led her to a role as a research coordinator at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi. There, she worked on a nutrition intervention study with postmenopausal women, an experience that solidified her commitment to scientific inquiry. To advance her research career, Dr. Bhutani pursued a Ph.D. in Human Nutrition at the University of Illinois, Chicago, graduating in 2013. She went on to complete postdoctoral fellowships at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine before joining the faculty at San Diego State University in 2018. Dr. Bhutani's research has grown significantly over the years. Her early work focused on dietary interventions for weight loss and cardiometabolic health, while her postdoctoral studies examined how environmental and behavioral factors, particularly smell, influence eating behaviors and weight gain. Since joining SDSU, her research has expanded to two key areas:



1) investigating how contextual factors like sleep patterns and the modern food environment impact smell and taste perception to drive obesogenic behaviors, and 2) developing strategies to modify these factors and promote healthier eating habits. In addition to her research, Dr. Bhutani teaches both undergraduate and graduate courses in nutrition counseling, energy metabolism, and nutrition across the lifespan, and is deeply passionate about mentoring students. Outside of academia, Dr. Bhutani loves to travel, enjoying the opportunity to discover new cultures and traditions through their food. She is also trained in Indian classical vocal music.

Featured Student Organization Sports Nutrition Cooperative

Since 2018, the Sports Nutrition Cooperative (SNC) has been among the interdisciplinary teams that support SDSU Adapted Athletics - the first competitive, collegiate adaptive sports program in California. The SNC works alongside physical therapy, strength and conditioning, and mental performance practitioners to help athletes with disabilities achieve their peak performance. The SNC supports athletes who have a disability such as spinal cord injuries, amputations, cerebral palsy, and blindness and who compete in a variety of sports including wheelchair tennis, track and field, para-swimming, and para-surfing. The SNC is excited to welcome four new members this fall: Jenna Mueller, Mikaela Salamat, Jahdai Hernandez, and Sabrina Stringfellow.



Steph Cortez, Jill McNutt, Jordan Beall, Julia Travis, Sabrina Stringfellow, Jordan Chen, Alison Meagher



Nick Portoni, Humoody Smith (Blind Sprinter), Estefania Cortez



Estefania Cortez, Jenna Mueller Learning about wheelchair tennis



Jill, Michele (Ambulatory Track Athlete)
Learning how to be a guide runner



Tim Fitsemons, Manny Gomez (Wheelchair Athlete), Justin

ENS Faculty and Staff Awards 2024

College of Health and Human Services Unity Award

The College of Health and Human Services Unity Award recognizes faculty and staff who cultivate core values in their efforts to advance health and wellbeing. This year the award went to School of ENS faculty members Dr. Margo Greicar and Dr. Kimberly Detweiler, who collaborated with the School of Nursing to foster diversity through interprofessional education.

Awardees: Margo Greicar (ENS), Kim Detwiler (ENS), Karen Anderson (SON), Angela Bencke (SON)

Dr. Margo Greicar, ATC, ACSM-CPT **Program Director, Athletic Training Program**



Dr. Kim Detwiler, ATC, Coordinator of Clinical **Education, Athletic Training Program**



San Diego AD-RCMAR Scientists, 2024-2025

Multi-Level and Capacity-Oriented Factors Shaping Food Insecurity and Cognitive Function Among Hispanic/Latino Adults from a Federally Qualified Health Center

Dr. Amanda McClain, Associate Professor



Dr. Amanda C. McClain was recently selected as one of three new Scientists for the San Diego Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center for Minority Aging Research (AD-RCMAR), which is a partnership between SDSU and UCSD and one of several RCMARs across the U.S. funded by the NIH National Institute on Aging. During the 2024-2025 academic year, Dr. McClain will receive training and mentorship on Alzheimer's Disease research methods, as well as funding for her pilot project, which will use mixed methods to understand the connections between food security status, related management strategies, dietary intake, and cognitive function among low-resource Hispanic/Latino adults. These findings can inform strategies to promote healthy cognitive aging and well-being.

Instructionally Related Activity (IRA) Awards

Dr. Shirin Hooshmand received \$2,000 to support the Foods and Nutrition students to host the Aging Experts Security Internship at SDSU Imperial Valley Campus **Guest Lecture Series**

Dr. Changqi Liu received \$2,000 to support the Food

Distinguished Alumni

Athletic Training Breyonne Williams, MS, ATC

NBA G League Assistant Athletic Trainer



Ms. Breyonne Williams graduated from the SDSU Athletic Training Program in 2022 and continued her education at the University of Southern California, earning a Master's degree in Biokinesiology with a focus in Sports Science in 2024. After her time at SDSU, she spent two years as an athletic training intern with the Los Angeles Sparks, gaining valuable experience in the professional basketball setting. Ms. Williams has also worked as an athletic trainer for Nike-, Jordan-, and Adidas-sponsored events. In 2023, she interned with the Los Angeles Clippers G League team, where her performance led to a full-time position as the assistant athletic trainer for the following season. She looks forward to returning to San Diego for the upcoming G League season.

Foods and Nutrition Michelle Wolford, ND

Naturopathic Doctor



As an athlete, a deep-rooted passion for nutrition and exercise physiology fueled Dr. Wolford with an everlasting thirst for more knowledge. After earning a Master's degree in Nutrition and Exercise Physiology at SDSU, Dr. Wolford completed her doctorate in Naturopathic Medicine. As a licensed and board-certified Naturopathic Doctor, Dr. Wolford has treated patients in the San Diego community and across the globe, reaching across 11 countries and over 22 states since 2010. She's traveled the world working with top doctors, herbalists, Shamans, and Gurus to expand her knowledge of both eastern and western medicine for patients' optimal healing and expansion. Her approach is to blend the world of science and spirituality for brain and body optimization. She's a thought leader with a profound way of intertwining her medical training and advancements in modern science, with her extensive knowledge of plants, energy medicine, nutrition, body movement, nature's rhymes, meditation, breath work, ancient healing traditions, and spirituality.

Kinesiology Dennis Petrucci, MS, ATC

Head Athletic Trainer Southwestern College



Mr. Dennis Petrucci started his athletic training career at San Diego State University, earning a B.S. degree in 1996. He continued his education at The Ohio State University, where he earned a Master's degree while working with various athletic programs including football, hockey, and baseball. Upon returning to San Diego, Mr. Petrucci served as the Head Athletic Trainer for the San Diego Stingrays, a minor league professional basketball team. During his tenure, he had the opportunity to work with legendary athletes and entertainers like Magic Johnson and Master P. He then moved on to Pepperdine University in Malibu, CA, before returning to San Diego to become the Head Athletic Trainer for the San Diego Gulls, a minor league professional hockey team. In addition to the Gulls, Mr. Petrucci contributed to the success of other San Diego-area professional teams, including the San Diego Spirit, Sockers, Flash, and Gauchos. He has also earned a few international "caps" by going on tours as the Head Athletic Trainer for the United States National Rugby and "Rugby 7's" team, competing against top-tier nations like Wales, Fiji, New Zealand, South Africa, and Australia. Throughout his career, Mr. Petrucci has worked with a diverse range of elite athletes across various sports, including NFL, NBA, MLB, and NHL players, Olympic soccer and beach volleyball athletes, and even rock stars like Steven Tyler of Aerosmith. His extensive experience has been invaluable to Southwestern College, where he has held his current position for 18 years.

Discover ENS Research

Dr. Frankie Wade Experimental Biomechanist



Dr. Frankie Wade is an experimental biomechanist who explores how aging, cognition, fear, and environmental factors alter walking function.

Her research is inherently interdisciplinary, incorporating biomechanics, gerontology, psychology, neuroscience, and more to improve the quality of life and independent mobility in the aging population. Dr. Wade likes to say she's a solar-powered human and can often be found underwater when outside of work.

Dr. Mark Kern Exercise and Nutrition Researcher

Dr. Mark Kern is a registered dietitian who came to SDSU in 1995 as the first foods and nutrition faculty to be hired after the Physical Education and foods and nutrition faculty merged to form the first known department to include both exercise and nutrition in the same department with the goal that his teaching and research would span both areas. His research involves two primary areas: 1) how diet and exercise independently and interactively influence lipid, energy, bone, and calcium metabolism as well as appetite and adiposity; and 2) sports dietetics.



One of his key focuses is on the effects of minimally processed foods such as fruits, dried fruits, nuts, honey, agave nectar, and sports on metabolism, risk factors for chronic diseases, and exercise performance. His research has been funded by the USDA, California Almond Board, National Cattleman's Beef Association, American Pistachio Growers, California Prune Board, Wild Blueberry Association of North America, American Heart Association, National Honey Board, California Raisin Marketing Board, and others. He regularly presents his research at the annual meetings of the American Society for Nutrition and the American College of Sports Medicine.

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SDSU School of Exercise and Nutritional Sciences

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