IN THIS ISSUE: CATCHING UP WITH DR. JEANNE NICHOLS | A CONVERSATION WITH COACH BOB LARSEN | IN MEMORIAM- EMERITUS FACULTY MEMBER GREGG VOIGT
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
Director’s Message

Faculty and staff in the School of Exercise and Nutritional Sciences (ENS) continue to make the best of the difficult situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The limitations imposed by the pandemic forced most classes to be taught online in the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters. Our faculty have worked hard to continue delivering quality educational experiences. I expect that the creative solutions developed for online teaching will enhance our classes when we are back to in-person instruction. Our students have demonstrated the resiliency necessary to overcome various challenges. In this issue of Thrive! you will read about the accomplishments of some of our students and graduates and about Kinesiology major Christian Holt, who was elected President of Associated Students. Enjoy the story about legendary track coach Bob Larsen. Sadly, the ENS family said goodbye to beloved Athletic Training faculty member, Gregg Voigt, who passed away in June.

Louise Chatagnier Joins ENS as New Advisor

The School of Exercise and Nutritional Sciences is pleased to welcome our new full-time Advisor, Louise Chatagnier. Her latest role consists of helping students with academic course scheduling, pre-professional planning, and graduate school preparation. Louise previously worked as a graduate student advisor. She is currently a student in our Master of Science in Nutritional Sciences program. We are very excited to have her as an advisor!
SNO also had twenty-eight students attend The Weight Inclusive Nutrition and Dietetics (WIND) online workshop. WIND is an education program for aspiring and established nutrition professionals. This course teaches students how to be more weight-sensitive to patients and avoid weight-based discrimination. This knowledge is crucial in a field that has the potential for fat-phobia.

"Since there can be a lot of debate around the "Health at Every Size" movement, this will be an excellent opportunity for students to apply what they’ve learned from their classes at SDSU. This course will employ their critical thinking skills, deciding how much of this course will carry with them throughout their professional careers."
- Isabel Frazier, Foods and Nutrition student and SNO President

SNO also had thirty students register to complete an online workshop, Get Matched! This workshop benefits students in the Didactic Program in Dietetics, as it teaches them skills about being more inclusive as allied health professionals. Get Matched! is led by registered dietitians and instructs students on weight-inclusive practices and weight-centric health care history. The program also provides students with required continuing education credits once they are professionals.

Instructionally Related Activities (IRA) Student Projects Awarded

Dr. Mark Kern and the Student Nutrition Organization (SNO) in the School of ENS received funding from the Instructionally Related Activities (IRA) program for the 2020-2021 academic year.

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Christian Holt Elected President of Associated Students

Associated Students (AS) President, Christian Holt, is a senior pursuing a B.S. degree in Kinesiology, with an emphasis in Pre-Physical Therapy. He was an honoree of the Quest for the Best award and is the current Associated Students President for the 2020-2021 academic year. During the pandemic, Christian stays positive and hopeful for the year ahead by focusing on representing students and communities from different backgrounds, listening to student opinions, providing students with an excellent college experience, and adopting "The Concept of One."

For the 2020-2021 academic year, Christian focuses on connecting students of different backgrounds. He believes that students' voices are powerful and can shape the campus experience. He prides himself on being a collaborative leader. Listening to different perspectives allows him to understand the situation better.

Christian's plans consist of proactively reaching out to campus communities and student organizations to hear about their concerns for themselves and the university. He plans on holding town meetings where students can share their opinions with him and other AS officers. As co-chair of the Co-Curricular and Student Life Tiger Team, he is working on opportunities for students to interact with each other virtually and in-person (as allowed by County Regulations), giving students a chance to enjoy their college experience.

At the All-University Convocation, Christian spoke about how members of Associated Students embrace the academic year and work together. AS acknowledges that students and members of the SDSU community are affected differently by the current crises, and can be reminded of their strength, resilience, and compassion.

Christian shared, that AS will lead with courage and heart in their actions. He shared, "AS is here for students, cares about students, and advocates for students. This year, AS is adopting the theme of "The Concept of One." He spoke more about how "The Concept of One" can change someone's life forever. The littlest thing can be saying hello, having a conversation, or doing an act of kindness. This concept can be done with an invitation to join a student organization or attend a virtual event with fellow students.

Christian stated, "'The Concept of One' is essentially everyday leadership in action, and we invite you to join us. It is true, one kind of gesture you give a student or colleague can make a life-changing impact on them. This year 'The Concept of One' is more important than ever."
Katie Thralls Butte  
Assistant Professor in the Department of Health and Human Performance at Seattle Pacific University

Dr. Katie Thralls Butte graduated from SDSU with an M.S. degree in Exercise Physiology and an M.S. degree in Nutritional Sciences. She earned her Ph.D. from the SDSU/UCSD Joint Doctoral Program in Public Health under the mentorship of Dr. Susan Levy. Dr. Thralls Butte managed several research projects in the San Diego community, with a particular focus on older adults and maintenance of independence. She currently serves as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Health and Human Performance at Seattle Pacific University. Dr. Thralls Butte loves outdoor adventures, all types of exercise, and teaching/mentoring students towards a brighter future! She got married earlier this year.

Zane Brandt  
Physical Therapist at Sharp Memorial Hospital on the Acute Care Physical Therapy Team

Dr. Zane Brandt graduated from the SDSU Doctor of Physical Therapy program in 2017. During his studies, he was the Vice President of the Student Association and recognized with the Clinical Excellence Award for exceptional skills throughout the program’s academic and clinical components. After graduating, Dr. Brandt initially practiced in outpatient orthopedics with a specialty in Functional Manual Therapy. He now works at Sharp Memorial Hospital on the Acute Care Physical Therapy team. Recently, his role shifted to be a part of the COVID-19 team. Although working with these patients is challenging, Dr. Brandt feels that the ultimate reward is seeing patients go from barely moving in the ICU to walking out of the hospital as they reunite with their families. In addition, he is an instructor at the University of St. Augustine and enjoys sharing his physical therapy passion with his students.

Kim Detwiler  
Athletic Trainer at CU Sports Medicine in Denver, CO

Kim Detwiler is a California native, born in the Bay Area and raised in Modesto, CA. She began her athletic training career at Modesto Junior College by obtaining an A.S. degree in Sports Medicine. Kim graduated from San Diego State University with a B.S. in Kinesiology, with an emphasis in Athletic Training in 2005. In 2007, she graduated with an M.S. degree in Athletic Training from the University of Oregon. She has been an athletic trainer in the collegiate setting for most of her career, spending time at the University of La Verne, the University of Texas, and the University of Colorado. Kim served as an athletic trainer for softball, track and field, and cross-country teams over the past 15 years. Currently, she works in Denver, Colorado, at C.U. Sports Medicine and is a student in the Doctorate in Athletic Training program at A.T. Still University. She expects to graduate in December 2022. Kim was involved in the National Athletic Trainers’ Association and the Board of Certification as a committee chair, board member, and other roles. She enjoys carrying on the SDSU tradition, teaching other athletic trainers about proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation (PNF), a central component of her athletic training education at SDSU. In her spare time, Kim enjoys riding her road bike through the Colorado plains and mountains, spending time with her family and friends, playing guitar, traveling, hiking, and other outdoor activities.

Carl Barnes  
Registered Dietitian in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area

Carl Barnes is a Registered Dietitian in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. In 2014, he graduated from SDSU with a B.S. in Foods and Nutrition. During his time at SDSU, he served as a Food Inspector in the U.S. Army Reserves and was proactive on campus with the Student Nutrition Organization. Carl left San Diego for Commission Active Duty for the Army within their Graduate Program in Nutrition. His most notable time was spent at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and overseas in Korea. At Walter Reed, he was the Chief of Food Operations overseeing one of Military Medicine’s largest kitchens. In Korea, he served in a different role overseeing the Clinical Nutrition Division for Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital. He helped facilitate the closure of the Hospital in Seoul and relocation without disruption of clinical services, just in time for the onset of the current pandemic. Carl remained involved with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, serving on several committees and on the Board of Directors. He returned to the U.S. and transitioned from Active Duty to Reserves. Carl chose to stay in the D.C. area and work on a few of his businesses. He started two new businesses in both Food Service Consulting and Nutrition. He thanks the faculty and staff in the School of ENS for the professional foundation they helped foster, most notably Dr. Mark Kern.
Hall of Fame Track and Field Coach and SDSU alumnus Bob Larsen is widely recognized as one of the most innovative, influential, and visionary American running coaches of all time. His coaching career is studded with remarkable achievements from the high school level straight through to the Olympics, and he is often credited for his role ushering in the new American era of competitive distance running.

Larsen’s personal talent as a runner was first discovered by Raleigh Holt, Track and Field coach at Hoover High School in San Diego, shortly after Larsen and his family moved to the city from his childhood home in northern Minnesota. Holt was also the first to recognize in Larsen the characteristics of a good coach and encouraged him to pursue coaching in college. His senior year, Larsen won the City Championships in the mile, and was offered scholarship assistance to attend SDSU (then San Diego State College) the following year. Larsen went on to earn both his bachelor’s ('61) and master’s degrees ('67) in physical education from SDSU, along with a minor in history.

“For me, San Diego State was just perfect, and I had several great instructors there,” shared Larsen. “All the classes I took over the years had an influence on me, and how I would go on to coach and teach.” Among his most notable influencers was Dr. Fred Kasch, who served as a professor in SDSU’s Physical Education Department. “Fred was ahead of his time in many ways, in terms of science and applying it to exercise physiology,” Larsen shared. “I actually had the great honor of working for him grading papers during my senior year, and then I continued to do that as a graduate assistant as well. He was outstanding, and I learned a lot from him.” Other instructors who influenced him significantly included George Ziegenfuss, who coached basketball and taught introductory courses in physical education; Paul Governali, who served as head coach for football as well as Larsen’s graduate thesis advisor; and Don Coryell, who took over the football program after Governali, impressing Larsen through his work ethic and ability to motivate people.

Larsen ran for SDSU throughout his college career. During his time as a graduate assistant, his coach Choc Sportsman offered him a position coaching SDSU’s distance runners. Sportsman later offered Larsen a permanent assistant coaching position that Larsen turned down due to a desire to begin his professional coaching career at the high school level. He soon accepted a position at Monte Vista High School in Spring Valley, California, where he remained for four years. During that time, he led his cross country teams to four California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) titles.

From Monte Vista, Larsen was recruited by Ron Vavra and Jack Mashin to coach at nearby Grossmont College, where his teams won seven state titles in a row and nine consecutive conference titles. During his tenure coaching at Grossmont, his distance runners set 11 national community college records. “I had so much fun with those guys. We were better than many Division I schools, both in cross country and track. It was really the golden era of the community colleges.”

While Larsen was coaching at Monte Vista and Grossmont, he co-founded and served as head coach for the Jamul Toads, a track club that was started largely as a means to keep his runners in shape in the off-season. This underdog cadre of runners shocked the nation in 1976 when they beat the best teams around the country to win the AAU National Cross Country Championship in Philadelphia. The story of the Toads and their stunning victory is heavily featured in Robert Lusitano’s documentary of Larsen’s life, titled City Slickers Can’t Stay with Me: The Coach Bob Larsen Story (available on Amazon), as well as New York Times’ deputy sports editor Matthew Futterman’s riveting best-seller, Running to the Edge: A Band of Misfits and the Guru Who Unlocked the Secrets of Speed.

After twelve years at Grossmont, Larsen was recruited to UCLA in 1979 by Jim Bush, where his cross-country teams won the first Pac-10 Conference titles in school history. He took over as head track and field coach in 1984.
During his tenure, the Bruins achieved eleven Pac-10 titles, two National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Outdoor Championships, nine Top 10 national outdoor finishes, and four National Dual Meet Championships. He was a four-time NCAA National Coach of the Year and eleven-time Pac-10 Coach of the Year.

Larsen was inducted into ten Halls of Fame, including the San Diego County Breitbard Hall of Fame, the U.S. Track Coaches Association Hall of Fame, and the National Track and Field Hall of Fame. In 2019, Larsen was honored as the sixth Legend Coach by U.S.A. Track & Field (USATF).

Throughout Larsen’s career, he maintained a commitment to understanding the science behind running, just as he’d first learned to do in his years at SDSU with Dr. Fred Kasch. Earlier in his coaching career, he co-led a trip to Europe for a group of U.S. coaches to learn about the advancements that European coaches were making with regard to running mechanics and training techniques. Conventional wisdom maintained that distance running was all about physiology, but Larsen understood that when physiology was coupled with stride mechanics and with drills like bounding and depth jumping, it could make a tremendous difference in a runner’s efficiency.

Part of the reason that Larsen retired from UCLA in 2000 was to help U.S. distance runners get back to an internationally competitive level. At the Olympic Marathon Trials in 2000, not a single male runner achieved the Olympic “A” qualifying standard of 2:14; therefore, the United States could only send one American marathon runner to the Sydney Olympics that year. That runner, Rod DeHaven, placed 69th in Sydney, a full 20 minutes behind Gezahenge Abera, an Ethiopian runner who won that year with a finishing time of 2:10:11.

“We knew the best runners in the world, those who were getting on the podium in international competition, were training at altitude—and Americans weren’t seriously training at altitude in those days,” shared Larsen. He became convinced that the American breakthrough would require a commitment to altitude training, so he and retired Adams State coach Joe Vigil established a training camp in Mammoth Lakes, California (7,800 feet), where Mebrahtom “Meb” Keflezighi (whom Larsen recruited to UCLA in 1994), Deena Kastor, and several other runners trained consistently in the thin mountain air of the Sierra Nevadas.

Flash forward to 2004. With Larsen as Olympic distance coach, Meb and Deena both took home medals from the Olympic Marathon in Athens, having placed 2nd and 3rd in their races, respectively. These were the first U.S. Olympic marathon medals in 28 years for men and in 20 years for women. The progress the American team made in just four short years defied all expectations and set the stage for a new era in American distance running, where elite runners now regularly train at altitude to compete at the highest levels against runners from around the world.

With Larsen as his coach, Meb achieved tremendous success in his career as a runner. In 2001, he set a new American record at 10,000 meters (27:13). He won more than 20 national titles in cross country, in road races, and on the track, and made four U.S. Olympic teams. Notably, he is also the only athlete in history to win The New York City Marathon (2009), The Boston Marathon (2014), and an Olympic medal. Meb’s success, and the subsequent success of other American distance runners, has inspired millions and helped to popularize the sport of running in America. Over the past two decades, record numbers of people have registered for races at all distances, from 5,000 meters to the marathon.

Today, Coach Larsen remains active in the running community and continues to run himself most days. The scientific understanding that he brought to the sport continues to be the bedrock of many runners’ training programs. He is widely recognized as one of the greatest running coaches of all time, both due to his quest to understand and master the factors that contribute to efficiency, as well as his ability to get the most out of his runners. “Do a little bit each day,” Larsen responded when asked if he had a mantra for living. “That keeps the momentum going. You have to overcome inertia in so many things you do. We all have terrible days and things don’t always go well, but if you just do a little each day—get things started—you’ll keep heading in the right direction.”
Dr. Jeanne Nichols grew up in Boston, MA, and attended Northeastern University as an undergraduate student from 1965-69. Upon completing her B.S. degree, she taught physical education and coached high school gymnastics and cross-country for ten years. She read about a few exercise physiology graduate programs around where she lived and immediately knew what she wanted to do.

In 1980 she completed her M.S. degree at the University of New Hampshire, where she studied and worked as a research assistant in UNH’s cardiac rehabilitation program. She completed her Ph.D. in Exercise Physiology at the University of Michigan and joined the faculty at SDSU in 1985.

During her 27-year tenure at SDSU, Dr. Nichols taught undergraduate and graduate courses in Exercise Physiology and related courses, served as Associate Director (1985-1991), then Director (1992-2003) of the Adult Fitness Program, and Graduate Program Advisor. She served on the university’s Institutional Review Board for 17 years, the last 5 of which she served as chair. While at SDSU, Dr. Nichols maintained a strong commitment to student learning and student research, as evidenced by her mentoring of over 100 graduate students who completed their master’s thesis under her guidance.

Dr. Nichols maintained an active research program in exercise and musculoskeletal health across the age continuum, emphasizing optimizing bone health in children and adolescents, prevention of muscle and bone loss, and preventing falls and fractures in older adults. She collaborated with Dr. Mitch Rauh, Director of the Doctor of Physical Therapy program. They focused on the Female Athlete Triad – a syndrome of three interrelated health concerns: low energy availability, menstrual dysfunction, and low bone mass – and its association with musculoskeletal health and injury in high school athletes. They were the first to publish data on the prevalence, risk factors, and severity of this syndrome among high school athletes.

In 2009, Dr. Nichols received the SDSU Distinguished Faculty Award for her contributions to the College of Professional Studies and Fine Arts. In 2010 she was the recipient of an Excellence in Research Award from the Sports Physical Therapy Section of the American Physical Therapy Association.

Following her retirement from SDSU, Dr. Nichols joined the Department of Family Medicine & Public Health (FMPH) at UCSD. First as the lead exercise physiologist, and currently the Scientific Director of the Exercise and Physical Activity Resource Center (EPARC) within FMPH. At EPARC, she collaborates with colleagues in Preventive Medicine, Sports Medicine, Public Health, Geriatrics, Psychology, and Engineering, and is currently a co-investigator on multiple NIH-funded clinical trials. Dr. Nichols co-developed and teaches a curriculum in Exercise is Medicine® to physicians enrolled in the combined residency/MPH program in Preventive Medicine. She also serves as the Program Director of the UCSD Bone Densitometry School. She trains technicians to become licensed in California to conduct bone density assessments to diagnose osteoporosis. In this time of COVID-19, through a partnership with American Bone Health, their research team is developing and pilot testing exercise programming for virtual delivery to older adults at risk for falls and fractures.

When not in the lab, Dr. Nichols spends her free time cycling and rowing. She has been a competitive master cyclist since 1989 and holds multiple regional, state, and national titles in road cycling and mountain biking. More recently, she has been exploring trails and slot canyons throughout the Southwest, now as a hiker seeking new adventures while discovering the beauty and solitude of these open spaces.
In Memoriam
Emeritus Faculty Member Gregg Voigt

We are saddened to share that beloved ENS Emeritus Professor Gregg Voigt passed away on June 19th following a long battle with cancer. He impacted many lives in his 21 years at SDSU, and is most remembered for his perseverance, positivity, great stories, laughter, love of teaching, and genuine care for others - most especially his students. Gregg received his B.S. degree at Southwest Minnesota State University. He earned his M.S. degree from the University of South Dakota, where he became Head Athletic Trainer and faculty member. He served as Director of Division of Sports Medicine at a clinic in Sioux Falls, SD, until his appointment at SDSU. Gregg taught a wide range of courses, including basic kinesiology courses, physical growth and development, care and prevention of sports injuries, and athletic injury evaluation.

As a cancer patient, Gregg participated in cutting-edge research with Mayo Clinic doctors. Because of his sports medicine background, he shared special insights and presented his survival story and perspective at national conferences attended by Mayo Clinic researchers. Through it all, Gregg showed courage and grace under challenging circumstances and persevered with a long and successful career at SDSU. His family celebrated his life last June in Spencer, ND.

In Professor Voigt’s memory, we are working to establish the Gregg Voigt Memorial Scholarship in Athletic Training, which would provide support for a student in the Athletic Training Program each year in perpetuity. Thank you to those who have already contributed to help us meet our goal ($25,000 is needed to endow the scholarship). If you would like to contribute, you may do so by visiting our secure site: http://campaign.sdsu.edu/GreggVoigt. With any questions, please contact Natasha Bliss at nbliss@sdsu.edu or 619-993-1931.