



Sciences Update

SDSU COLLEGE OF SCIENCES NEWSLETTER

FALL 2003

Dear College of Sciences Alumni,

The beginning of an academic year is filled with energy and motion. The population on Montezuma's mesa increases by an order of magnitude overnight and the average age drops from 45 to 25. There is pleasantly bumbling confusion as thousands of students unfamiliar with the topography and routines of the University try to get from here to there without looking uncool.

This year it is understandable that much of that energy is being spent dealing with financial uncertainty. SDSU's allocation from the Chancellor's Office declined some \$14 million from last year's already attenuated level. It would have been more had the CSU Trustees not imposed a 30% fee increase on our students, painful though that necessary action was.

The result is that, far from increasing our faculty to match student growth as we had anticipated doing as recently as two years ago, we are not even replacing faculty at the rate they are retiring. Lecturers are also being released and faculty are teaching more—and larger—classes. Yes, that is what we are supposed to do, but the College of Sciences has also invested in a research-quality faculty and an infrastructure to support their activities, and that progress toward national recognition is being placed at risk.

Wise leadership from SDSU's central administration has minimized the impact of the reduction, spread it as painlessly as possible, and staved off some of it through non-academic cost cutting measures. As a consequence of what faculty and staff deem to be sensible decisions made after open discussions, morale has remained remarkably high. But two consecutive years of reductions have limited our flexibility to respond to what might await us in 2004-05. That could be the year that tests our ability to sustain our core values of teaching and scholarship.

I can only spend so much time depressing myself over the State budget. More generous financial behavior emanates from Washington, where our federal government is taking such extravagant advantage of its prerogative to run a deficit. The relative health of the NIH, NSF, DOE, DOD and NASA combined with the high quality and dogged persistence of our faculty resulted in the College's winning \$30 million in research awards in the past year. The average faculty member in the Sciences now brings in twice as much from external sources as he/she costs SDSU in salary and benefits. That is what maintains our research enterprise and allows us to have two buildings—the Coastal Waters Lab and the BioScience Center—in the design stages. Moreover, the quality of our students is higher than ever and we even won three football games and scared Ohio State, though Sciences cannot claim full credit for the latter.

We will have occasional events in San Diego and beyond in the coming year in a continuing effort to reach out to alumni. That offers me the pleasant prospect of meeting many of you in person.

Sincerely,

Tom Scott

Please send in your comments, news and/or questions to cosalum@sciences.sdsu.edu You can read all of our publications at the College of Sciences website, including the most recent Sciences Review, at <http://www.sci.sdsu.edu>

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **October 25, 2003** Wyoming v. SDSU: pre-game reception with President Stephen Weber and football game (by invitation only)
- **November 6, 2003** This year's Covin Lecture will be featuring Dr. Stephen Schneider at SDSU's Don Powell Theatre at 4:00 PM
- **November 15, 2003** College of Sciences Inner Space/Outer Space Exhibition and Open House
- **February 2004** College of Sciences Alumni social, details to be announced
- **March 6, 2004** The Alumni Association Monty's Awards Gala will kick off the second SDSU Month spotlighting the University's role in enriching San Diego
- **August 2004** Dean's Appreciation Dinner for Sciences Benefactors and Heritage Society members (by invitation only)

NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT 265
SAN DIEGO CA

 College of Sciences
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Sciences Office of Development
San Diego State University
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182 • 1010