

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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# Mayor Todd Gloria Announces New Appointments to City of San Diego's Boards and Commissions

## TWENTY-FOUR APPOINTEES CONFIRMED ACROSS NINE BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

SAN DIEGO – Following City Council approval, Mayor Todd Gloria recently announced these new appointments and reappointments to serve in key roles on the City's Boards and Commissions. Check the [Boards and Commissions webpage](#) to learn about vacancies and apply for a position.

**Dr. Branden Wolner** was appointed to the Community Forest Advisory Board. Dr. Wolner is a scientific and business leader with over 15 years of experience in biotechnology, biopharma, medical devices and alternative foods. Dr. Wolner serves as an independent biotechnology consultant in San Diego, providing strategic and technical guidance in bioprocessing, biomanufacturing and in vitro diagnostic development. Previously, he held the position of senior director of microbiology at Aqua Cultured Foods, where he led significant improvements in product quality and regulatory processes. For nearly five years, he has served on the Board of Directors for Tree San Diego and is a founding member of the Sustainability and Entrepreneurship Committee at the San Diego Entrepreneurs Exchange. Dr. Wolner has a doctorate in biochemistry and molecular biology from the University of California (UC) Los Angeles and a bachelor's degree in microbiology from UC San Diego. He is being appointed to a three-year term, and completing the seat's current term ending Dec. 31, 2025, in the Representative Seat.

**Dr. Cindy Lin** was reappointed to the Climate Advisory Board. Dr. Lin is the CEO and co-founder of Hey Social Good, a social impact tech company. She is an ecologist, environmental engineer, data scientist and expert on the environmental impacts of land use and human activities on ecological habitats. She previously worked at the Environmental Protection Agency, where she designed national environmental standards, worked on cutting-edge research, implemented policy to address environmental pollution and sustainability and managed multiple government and private entities to meet environmental standards. She is being reappointed to a two-year term ending Aug. 1, 2027, in the Council District 1 Seat.

**Dr. Josh Dean** was reappointed to the Climate Advisory Board. Dr. Dean is the executive director of the California Energy Alliance. He has over 12 years of experience in the sustainability, construction and real estate industries, with projects ranging from energy retrofits and LEED certifications to supervising commercial new construction and residential development. Dr. Dean has extensive experience working

with multiple government agencies, businesses and nonprofits to deliver projects and education around sustainability. He holds a Bachelor of Science in construction management from Southern Polytechnic State University and a Master of Science in energy policy and climate from Johns Hopkins University. He is being reappointed to a two-year term ending Aug. 1, 2027, in the Council District 2 Seat.

**Mahayla Slackerelli** was reappointed to the Climate Advisory Board. Slackerelli is an account manager at Calpine Energy Solutions, where she advocates for Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) client programmatic success and leads implementation for the California Energy Commission's market-informed demand automation server requirements. She monitors regulatory proceedings, including demand flexibility and energy efficiency operational interconnect requirements, and development strategies with Recurve Analytics to support CCA, energy efficiency and demand response programs. Slackerelli holds a Bachelor of Arts in economics from Sarah Lawrence College and a Master of Science in energy, technology and policy from Humboldt State University. She is being reappointed to a two-year term ending Aug. 1, 2027, in the Council District 3 Seat.

**Dr. Madison Swayne** was reappointed to the Climate Advisory Board. Dr. Swayne is an assistant professor of city planning in the School of Public Affairs at San Diego State University (SDSU). She is a social science researcher who uses mixed methods, including big data, automated computing methods and primary data sources, to answer research questions about environmental justice and land use. Dr. Swayne teaches courses in environmental planning, environmental law and sustainable urbanism. She holds a doctorate in urban planning and development from the University of Southern California (USC) and both a Master and Bachelor of Science in environmental studies from USC. She is being reappointed to a two-year term ending Aug. 1, 2027, in the Council District 4 Seat.

**Kelly Lyndon** was reappointed to the Climate Advisory Board. Lyndon is an engineering executive, community advocate and consultant. For almost 30 years, she served as a senior director of engineering at Qualcomm, leading high-performance, multi-disciplinary teams to deliver innovative technologies. Lyndon volunteers with the San Diego Building Electrification Coalition, the University City Community Association, the University Planning Group, the League of Women Voters of San Diego, San Diego Girl Scouts and the San Diego LGBT Center and Family Matters Board. She holds a Bachelor of Science in electrical and computer engineering from UC Santa Barbara and a Master of Science in software engineering from Boston University. She is being reappointed to a two-year term ending Aug. 1, 2027, in the Council District 6 Seat.

**Whitney Pearce** was reappointed to the Climate Advisory Board. Pearce is a senior associate at The Miller Hull Partnership, LLP, an architectural firm based in Seattle and San Diego. The firm applies a regionalist design philosophy rooted in sustainability to all its projects. Pearce is a registered architect who serves on the San Diego Green Building Council and the San Diego Downtown Partnership. She holds a Bachelor of Architecture and a Bachelor of Interior Architecture from Auburn University, College of Architecture, Design and Construction. She is being reappointed to a two-year term ending Aug. 1, 2027, in the Council District 7 Seat.

**Chris Ryall** was appointed to the Board of Library Commissioners. Ryall serves as the co-founder and publisher at Syzygy Publishing, an imprint of Image Comics, and he has been actively involved in publishing in San Diego for over 20 years. He is the former chief creative officer at IDW Publishing and has contributed as the writer and co-creator of several graphic novels. His experience includes serving as an executive producer on Netflix's show "Locke & Key." Ryall has contributed as a guest instructor at UC San Diego's Clarion Writers' Workshop and has served as an exhibits and programming consultant at the Comic-Con Museum in Balboa Park. He holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from California State University, Fullerton, and is being appointed to a two-year term, and completing the seat's current term ending March 1, 2027, in the District 5 Representative Seat.

**Heidi Knuff** was appointed to the International Affairs Board. Knuff is the managing director of the Wendy Gillespie Center for Advancing Global Business at SDSU's Fowler College of Business, where she oversees the center's strategy, partnerships and programming. She also leads SDSU's Charles W. Hostler Institute on World Affairs, which fosters high-level, intellectual engagement on international issues for both the university and the wider public. Prior to joining SDSU, Knuff served as executive director of the San Diego Diplomacy Council, where she led professional international exchange programs and tracked three citizen diplomacy initiatives as well as youth leadership development. Her work supported Department of State initiatives and built enduring relationships between emerging global leaders and local stakeholders. Her career spans more than two decades in international affairs and nonprofit leadership, with previous positions at organizations such as American Councils for International Education, the MIT Center for International Studies, Pacific Intercultural Exchange and the UC Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, where she managed two diplomacy programs focused on Northeast Asia, the Middle East and China. Knuff holds a Bachelor of Arts in communication studies and a Master of Arts in international relations from the University of San Diego (USD). She is being appointed to a two-year term, and completing the seat's current term ending March 1, 2026, in the Civic Organization Seat.

**Pida Kongphouthone** was appointed to the Consolidated Plan Advisory Board. Kongphouthone is the public and community relations director for the Lao Community Cultural Center and has experience in program oversight, financial governance and community-driven initiatives. He is the board treasurer and a director for La Maestra Community Health Centers and chair and co-founder of the Lao Americans Organization of San Diego. Kongphouthone holds a Bachelor of Arts in political science and public administration from California State University, Fullerton, and is being appointed to a two-year term ending July 1, 2027, in the District 6 Representative Seat.

**Dave Kenneth Adams** was appointed to the Board of Building Appeals and Advisors. Adams currently works at BWE, Inc. as a principal associate, performing structural engineering tasks and supervising other engineers and draftspersons. He also serves as a subject matter expert for the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists, reviewing cases alleging negligence and incompetence that are filed against engineers. He has presented numerous papers at engineering conferences over the years, continues to develop and teach webinars for engineering societies and has authored four books

on structural engineering. Adams graduated from UC San Diego with a Bachelor of Science in structural engineering. He is being appointed to a two-year term, and completing the seat's current term ending March 1, 2026, in the Structural Engineer Seat.

**Kaitlin Endres** was appointed to the Board of Building Appeals and Advisors. She is a licensed general contractor and the owner of EG Creative Design Build, Inc. Endres has extensive experience in zoning and building codes, directly overseeing permit applications and ensuring compliance with architectural standards. She holds a Bachelor of Science in premedical biology from the Oregon Institute of Technology and is completing a Juris Doctorate from the Western Sierra Law School. Endres is being appointed to a two-year term, and completing the seat's current term ending March 1, 2027, in the Disabled Community Representative Seat.

**Frank Fritsch** was appointed to the Board of Building Appeals and Advisors. Fritsch is an electrical engineer with over 14 years of extensive experience in electrical engineering design. He is currently serving as the electrical department director at McParlane and Associates. He holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from UC San Diego and is being appointed to a two-year term, and completing the seat's current term ending March 1, 2027, in the Electrical Engineering Seat.

**Reagan Lawson** was appointed to the Board of Building Appeals and Advisors. Lawson is a fire protection engineer with a background in engineering consulting and is currently employed at Coffman Engineers. She is a graduate of California Polytechnic State University, where she earned her Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering and holds a master's degree in fire protection engineering from California Polytechnic, San Luis Obispo. She is being appointed to a two-year term, and completing the seat's current term ending March 1, 2026, in the Fire Protection Engineer Seat.

**John O'Malley** was appointed to the Board of Building Appeals and Advisors. O'Malley is a registered architect based in San Diego with a strong background in design and technical project delivery. He has experience overseeing projects across various sectors, including high-rise developments, laboratories, wellness facilities, and tenant improvements. He holds LEED A+P BD+C certifications, which make him an expert in green building. O'Malley is being appointed to a two-year term, and completing the seat's current term ending March 1, 2026, in the Architect Seat.

**Matt Mangano** was appointed to the Board of Building Appeals and Advisors. Mangano has owned and operated MDEP, Inc. for a decade. There, he functions as principal engineer, president and CEO. He oversees engineering design calculation, detailing, drawings and reports of wood, masonry, concrete and steel structures. Prior to this, he served as a structural project manager for Mellor Engineering. He holds certifications in LEED A+P BD+C. Mangano is being appointed to a two-year term, and completing the seat's current term ending March 1, 2026, in the Structural Engineer Seat.

**Jessie Schmitte** was appointed to the Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention. Schmitte has years of experience in the California State Capitol and has been instrumental in state laws promoting

transparency and trust between law enforcement and the community. He serves on the San Diego Regional Task Force on Sports Equity, coaching Pop Warner football with the South Bay Jaguars, and volunteering annually with the Logan Heights CDC Turkey Drive. Schmitte earned a Bachelor of Arts in criminal justice from Point Loma Nazarene University. He is being appointed to a two-year term ending July 1, 2027, in the District 8 Representative Seat.

**Austin Evans** was reappointed to the Small Business Advisory Board. Evans is a partner of Life Law Partners, a regulatory and corporate law firm based in California that serves companies of all shapes, sizes and industries with a particular focus on life science, technology and startup firms. He provides counsel over a broad range of practice areas, including securities compliance, litigation strategy, corporate governance, transactional ventures and dispute resolution. He is being reappointed to a two-year term ending July 1, 2027, in a Legal seat.

**Jenna Hanson** was reappointed to the Small Business Advisory Board. Hanson is the CEO of JH Imports DBA Revival Vintage Eyewear. She serves on the North Park Main Street Board where she advocates for small businesses in the North Park community and assists in planning community events. Hanson holds a bachelor's degree in Spanish with a minor in business management from SDSU and a Master of Spanish Language, Literature and Culture from Colorado State University. She is being appointed to a two-year term ending July 1, 2027, in the Small Business Owner seat.

**Sunny Lee** was appointed to the Small Business Advisory Board. Lee is the executive director of Discover Pacific Beach and has worked for business improvement districts in San Diego since 2016. Previously, she served as the executive director of the Old Town Chamber of Commerce as well as a program manager for the East Village Association. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in media arts from the University of Arizona and a Master of Business Administration in marketing from the University of Phoenix. Lee is being appointed to a two-year term ending July 1, 2027, in the Representative of BIDC seat.

**Sarah Mattinson** was reappointed to the Small Business Advisory Board. Mattinson has been a small business owner since 2015. She owns and operates Olive Café and Olive Baking Company in Mission Beach. She volunteers with Mission Beach Women's Club, the Mission Beach Town Council and is a part of the California Restaurant Association San Diego Chapter, which advocates for and supports local restaurants. Mattinson holds a degree in business administration from USD and is being reappointed to a two-year term ending July 1, 2027, in the Small Business Owner seat.

**Natasha Salgado** was reappointed to the Small Business Advisory Board. Salgado serves as the vice president of programs and strategic initiatives at City Heights Community Development Corporation. In this role, she spearheads a portfolio of programs and projects that expand equitable access to resources in City Heights, including the City Heights Business Improvement District, a public-private partnership providing services and support to over 400 local businesses and the City Heights Economic Development Collaborative, a coalition that aligns resources, policies and strategies for the benefit of the

neighborhood. She is being reappointed to a two-year term ending July 1, 2027, in the Advocate of Small Business seat.

**Juliet Terramin** was reappointed to the Small Business Advisory Board. Terramin is the business development officer for Accessity, where she works directly with entrepreneurs, guiding them through the process of applying for a loan. Prior to this role, she served as a business development associate at Accion San Diego. Terramin started in lending while living in Oaxaca, Mexico, where she worked for a micro-lending organization providing interest-free loans to women artisans in small towns outside of the city. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Oregon and is being reappointed to a two-year term ending July 1, 2027, in the Financial-Lending Seat.

**Dr. Cathy Hasson** was appointed to the Commission for Arts and Culture. Hasson possesses over 30 years of experience in higher education throughout California, Texas and Washington. She also acted as the lead designer and technical consultant of the groundbreaking Bridging Research, Information, and Culture Initiative, which assessed institutional effectiveness and student services outcomes. Dr. Hasson received her doctorate of education in organizational leadership at Pepperdine University, earned a Master of Science in education from California State University, Fullerton, a Bachelor of Arts in English and linguistics from San Francisco State University and an Associate of Arts in bilingual/bicultural education from Cabrillo College. She served on the Board of Directors for the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges alongside numerous other advisory roles throughout her career. She is being appointed to a two-year term ending Aug. 31, 2027, in the District 7 Representative Seat.



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