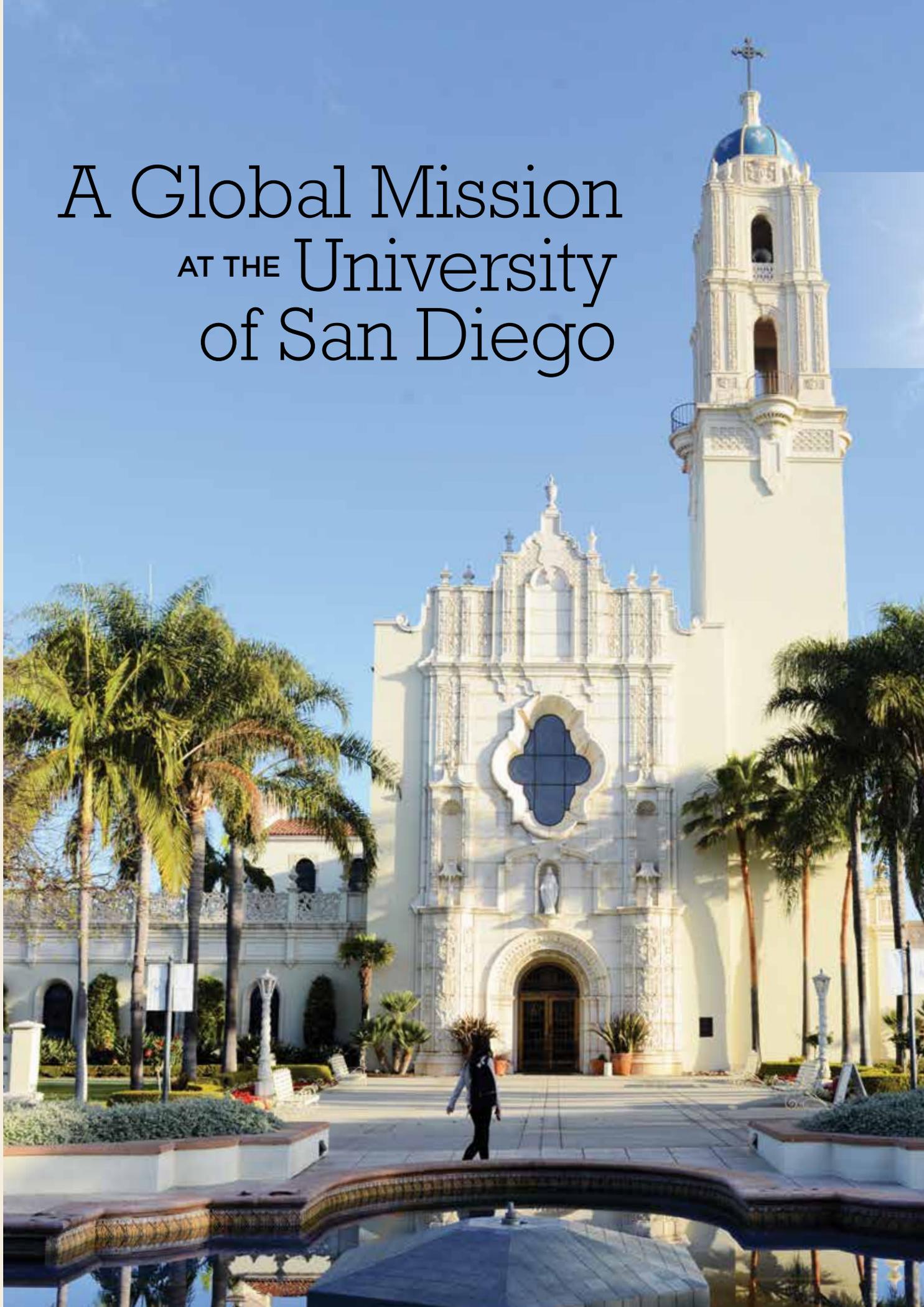


# A Global Mission AT THE University of San Diego



SET ON A HILLTOP JUST 22 MILES FROM MEXICO, THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO STAYS TRUE TO THE MISSION OF ITS FOUNDERS AND AIMS TO EDUCATE STUDENTS “WHO ARE GLOBALLY COMPETENT, ETHICAL LEADERS COMMITTED TO THE COMMON GOOD AND EMPOWERED TO ENGAGE A DIVERSE AND CHANGING WORLD.”

With the University of San Diego’s (USD) Spanish Renaissance–style architecture, sunny climate, gardens in flower year round, and postcard view of Mission Bay, it might seem hopeless to convince students to tear themselves away to study abroad. But nearly three-quarters of the undergraduates do so and, befitting USD’s religious identity, many jump at opportunities to perform service in South Africa, Jamaica, Haiti, and elsewhere. “One of our distinguishing marks is that we take seriously the need to become global citizens,” said former President Mary Lyons. “As a Catholic university that belongs to a worldwide network that has global outreach, global presence, and pays attention to global concerns, it comes naturally to us.”

Today’s USD is the product of a 1972 union between colleges for women and men built after World War II on a hilltop called Alcalá Park that sits 22 miles from the border with Mexico. The founding Sacred Heart nuns modeled the women’s college after the University of Alcalá in Spain, professing a belief that those attracted by its beauty would also find truth and goodness. The college has been under lay control since the merger and only half the student body is Catholic. Undergraduates must take philosophy and two religious studies classes. Kuwaiti student Khaled Alaskar, a mechanical engineering major, initially regarded the requirement as a burden, “but I learned a lot about different religions. USD does a good job at addressing how religion is important in people’s lives without enforcing it.”



Former President Mary Lyons says international students enrich diversity on campus.



**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Profiles of the five winners of the 2015 Senator Paul Simon Award for Campus Internationalization are being included in IE. The full set of profiles can be seen in *Internationalizing the Campus 2015: Profiles of Success at Colleges and Universities*.



Associate Provost for International Affairs Denise Dimon

### Expanding the Global Footprint

Lyons, a former captain in the U.S. Naval Reserve and president of the College of Saint Benedict (a 2012 Simon Award winner) and the California Maritime Academy, has just retired. She drove two, multiyear strategic planning efforts during the past 12 years that both placed greater emphasis on international study and research. An International Center headed by an associate provost was created in 2007, bringing three separate study abroad offices under one roof. A 2011 strategic plan set a goal of “expanding USD’s global presence” and developing a “footprint” in major cities abroad to promote international partnerships, exchanges, and collaborations.

In August 2014 it opened a 10,000-square-foot USD Madrid Center with classrooms, meeting and study spaces, and facilities equipped with videoconferencing and high-speed connections to the home campus. The university spent \$400,000 to open the center near Retiro Park and the Prado museum. Lyons said it represented the culmination of a decade of efforts “to graduate men and women who are truly global citizens.”

USD had already been sending 90 students to learn Spanish, live with host families, and take other courses each fall in the Spanish capital. The center now has two administrators and a large roster of local faculty teaching classes that run the gamut from art history to business to political science. It is also home to summer programs for the business and education graduate schools.



Kuwaiti student Khaled Alaskar



Vice President and Provost Andrew Allen says a global footprint “needs more than one foot.”



Patricia Márquez, dean of the Kroc School of Peace Studies, seeks to train not philosophers but problem solvers.



Economics professor Stephen Conroy directs the Center for Peace and Commerce.

Denise Dimon, associate provost for international affairs, said the goal is to enroll 200 students each year at the USD Madrid Center—115 went in 2014–2015—and attract students from other U.S. colleges as well. While students studied in Madrid before, “the difference is we are now a recognized educational institution in Spain,” Dimon said.

Paula Cordeiro, former longtime dean of the School of Leadership and Education Sciences (SOLES), is considering designing a graduate course that would bring future school principals to Spain. To do that, she said, “I need to make connections with schools and professional organizations there. It will be much easier to do that if I have a base—our Madrid Campus—to work out of.”

### Seeking to Make Peace and Social Innovation

Thanks to a \$25 million gift and \$50 million bequest from Joan Kroc, widow of the McDonald’s founder, USD is home to the Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice and the Kroc School of Peace Studies. The institute won a Simon Spotlight Award in 2011 for its Women PeaceMakers program, which provides several months’ respite for community activists from war-torn countries.

Mrs. Kroc gave instructions that the institute was to not just “talk about peace, but make peace.” Perhaps no school could adequately fulfill that lofty ambition, but USD’s leaders admit that Kroc has had, in Lyons’s words, “fits and starts.” Built in 2000, it began offering master’s degrees two years later, followed by a minor for undergraduates. The Kroc School, opened in 2007, has six faculty members and 33 graduate students. But a conference it organized in November 2014 on “Defying Extremism” drew 125 international policymakers, religious leaders, and peacebuilders from 30 countries. The institute

followed that up with a February 2015 regional conference on extremism that drew participants from eight Asian countries to Manila and the conflicted island of Mindanao in the Philippines. Provost Andrew Allen said Kroc has the potential to become the hub for peacebuilding studies and actions that span the university.

It has already begun strengthening ties with USD’s other schools. Patricia Marquez, Kroc’s dean since 2014, came from the School of Business Administration, where she taught entrepreneurship for social change. While still at the business school, she spearheaded creation of a joint Center for Peace and Commerce with Kroc and launched a Social Innovation Challenge that has grown beyond the campus. Last spring the Challenge awarded \$75,000 to eight teams of students from universities across San Diego for such ventures as building portable toilet seats for landmine victims in Uganda and opening a school in Ghana.

Marquez is a Venezuelan-born and University of California-Berkeley-educated anthropologist—her research was on street children in Caracas—who takes an iconoclastic approach to how Kroc should pursue its mission. “I’m not interested in the same old categories. If business is going to come up with solutions to social problems, we need to bring into the conversation people very different from us in their thinking,” said Marquez. “We do focus on peace, but we’re not training philosophers of peace. We’re training people who understand philosophy, sociology, anthropology, economics, and all these things to solve some of the most intractable problems in the twenty-first century.”

Her successor at the joint center, economics professor Stephen Conroy, said it occupies “a rare space that folks on either side quite



Study Abroad Director Kira Espiritu says 85 percent of sophomores given a short opportunity wind up studying abroad twice.

frankly might be somewhat uncomfortable with. But for me, being a force for good and trying to improve standards of living is what business should be all about.”

USD is also an Ashoka Foundation Change-maker Campus, part of a network of 30 universities seeking to incubate innovative approaches to solving global challenges.

### Priming the Pump for Study Abroad

Half the undergraduates who study abroad do so for a full semester. Students receive \$170,000 in need-based aid and get a 30 percent tuition discount on credits earned in short-term programs. As many as 100 faculty teach short-term courses overseas during January intersession and summer terms.

“We have centralized support from the international center. Graduate schools do their own programming as well,” said Dimon. “We offer a variety of study abroad programs, research missions, and service-learning activities, packaging them in different ways for students’ different needs.”

The study abroad staff is lean—Director Kira Espiritu and Associate Director Jessica Calhoun work with four advisers and an operations manager, handling all logistical arrangements and student service support—which means schools and faculty must shoulder some marketing and administrative burdens. Chemistry professor James Bolender said there are fewer such burdens than when he pioneered a field study class for science majors on Mexico’s Baja Peninsula in 2001.



Jessica Calhoun, associate director for study abroad

He remembers “flying by the seat of my pants” back then. Bolender has led students back to Baja ever since and worked alongside them on a humanitarian water quality project in Mbarara, Uganda.

### A Taste of International Education for Sophomores

USD’s lofty study abroad participation rate has also been helped by the Second Year Experience Abroad, part of a wider effort by the student affairs office to encourage freshmen to return for their second year. Students take a global studies seminar and travel in cohorts in January of their sophomore year to Florence, Italy, or



Peter Maribei of Kenya and Kedir Asseda Tessema guide fellow School of Leadership and Educational Services graduate students on gaining international experience.



Political scientist Mike Williams and senior Jennifer Bradshaw, who says his community-based class in South Africa changed her life.

Antigua, Guatemala. Courses offered run the gamut from language and art to chemistry and statistics. More than 10 percent of freshmen—150 students—sign up each year.

“I consider this a big retention strategy,” said Carmen Vazquez, vice president for student affairs. It’s also delivered striking results for the International Center. Espiritu said 85 percent of those sophomores wind up studying abroad again.

Piper Bloom transferred from a community college, so she missed that sophomore opportunity, but “immediately decided that I wanted to have some of that experience, even though I’m a little older than everyone else.” She chose a popular summer Shakespeare course in London. “You hear from friends who went and it just inspires you to go,” said the English major, who was headed to Japan after graduation to teach English.

## Building International Experiences into Graduate Curricula

International experiences are par for the course for many of USD’s graduate and professional schools. Dimon has a direct hand in that as she remains director of the Ahlers Center for International Business as well as associate provost. Ahlers has sent 150 MBA students to 13 countries to do international practicums, consulting directly for foreign companies or tackling projects in teams alongside MBA students from the local university. Notwithstanding that most are working professionals who are pursuing MBAs part time, a majority graduate with an international experience on their résumés, Dimon said.

Ahlers has forged close ties with EGADE Graduate Business School of the Tecnológico de Monterrey in Mexico, whose retired dean, Jaime Alonso Gomez, is now a USD distinguished professor of strategy and international business. He teaches business students and executives that in addition to the proverbial three Ps—people, products, and profits—they need to treat peace and prosperity as equally important considerations for their bottom lines. “That is

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the true meaning of education: bringing not only material wealth, but building better communities, better neighbors, better everything,” Gomez said.

SOLES, the leadership and education graduate school, since 2008 has required every student to participate in an international experience. “We didn’t do it on a whim. We take it very seriously,” said Linda Dews, assistant dean of the School of Leadership and Education Sciences. “We’re seeing that it’s making a difference for the way students approach their professional career.”

Most students spend only brief periods abroad, but that does not tell the full picture, said Assefa Tessema, a doctoral student from Ethiopia who directs the school’s Global Center. “When people hear it’s a one-week or 10-day program, they may assume it’s superficial work. But it’s very intensive engagement for students and for faculty, who start planning a year in advance.”

### An Emphasis on Service as Well as Learning

Many study abroad programs encourage students to perform service. Political science professor Mike Williams weaves that into the summer course he teaches in South Africa. “I’m a cheerleader and also an organizer,” he said, “trying to get more people to think about how we advance our social justice mission and how to do this in their classes.”

A conversation with Williams convinced Jennifer Bradshaw to switch majors from business to international relations and to follow Williams to the village of Makuleke, where the group slept in huts, worked alongside community leaders, and mentored youth. “They were some of the most genuine, welcoming people I’ve ever met. That experience made me rethink my own life here in the U.S. I think about it every day,” said Bradshaw.

The Mulvaney Center for Community, Awareness and Social Action arranges service immersion trips to Jamaica, Guatemala, and other countries, but also guides students to assist immigrants, the homeless, and poor in San Diego’s Linda Vista section, Tijuana, and other border towns.

In a Jamaica program led by John Loggins, director of community-based learning, students learn the history of the Atlantic slave trade, tutor kids, and participate in activities from cooking classes



Assistant Provost Chris Nayve, Michelle Padilla, and John Loggins lead community engagement work.



Vice President for Student Affairs Carmen Vazquez views study abroad as an excellent retention strategy.



Chemistry professor James Bolender brings students to Uganda for service learning.

to jam sessions in the town of Duncan near Montego Bay. “There’s all kinds of different ways they can learn,” said Loggins, an alumnus and former Peace Corps volunteer in Jamaica. “It’s really transformed the dynamic in that community.”

“We’re doing this international work because it’s good education,” said Chris Nayve, an assistant provost and the center’s director who has three USD degrees (BA, JD, and MBA). “It’s not just the content of the class. It’s about who are you becoming.” **IE**

**CHRISTOPHER CONNELL** is a veteran Washington, D.C. education writer and author of NAFSA’s annual *Internationalizing the Campus* reports.

# Lessons Learned

## INVOLVE ALL SEGMENTS.

Committing to global education requires involvement by “the entire institution,” said former President Mary Lyons. “That means all the departments, the schools, the faculty, and the staff.” Student affairs, residence life, human resources, and the IT department all played a part in gearing up for the new Madrid Center. It was USD’s biggest international undertaking “but maybe the easiest because so many people were behind it,” said Denise Dimon, associate provost for international affairs.

## INCREASE INTERNATIONAL VISIBILITY.

Decisions await a new president and strategic plan, but after planting the flag in Madrid, Provost Andrew Allen would like to “see more locations for us to call home. A global footprint has to be more than one foot.”

**BECOME A PLAYER.** Allen said USD’s international programs got a big boost from leaders’ active participation in NAFSA, including at the annual conference held in San Diego in 2014. His advice for other

schools seeking to expand their international programs and profile: “You want to be a player, not just an observer.”

## INCENTIVES TO INTERNATIONALIZE CURRICULUM.

The International Center paid stipends to faculty to attend workshops on how to design and improve their study abroad classes. Faculty got \$500 just for attending and \$400 more if they rewrote syllabi and measured results.

## AN APP FOR STUDY ABROAD.

The enterprising IT department has developed a web and mobile app for professors and students studying abroad to share maps, photos, and other materials and to conduct interactive conversations in real time. USD hopes to patent and sell its World Interactive Study Environment (WISE) app to other universities as an aid for learning, not to mention helping keep students from getting lost.

