

# SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

## JUDY GRADWOHL PRESIDENT AND CEO SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM



Judy Gradwohl assumed the role of president and CEO of the San Diego Natural History Museum in July 2016. Before joining The Nat, Judy worked at a number of units within the Smithsonian Institution, starting at the National Zoo where she spent three years focusing on behavioral research, education, and exhibits featuring behavior seen in the wild. She became involved in early efforts to conserve tropical forests and co-authored a book on positive approaches to conserve and sustainably use tropical forests. She also curated a major traveling exhibition, *Tropical Forests: A Disappearing Treasure*, planning, developing, and successfully touring the exhibition across 14 U.S. cities, while also raising support for the program.

Judy then went on to establish the Smithsonian's Office of Environmental Awareness. In this role, she raised major funding toward operations and projects, and curated another large traveling exhibition, *Ocean Planet*. During the development process, a colleague from NASA recommended she consider using the "World Wide Web" to supplement the exhibition. The result was the creation of the Smithsonian's first website in 1994. The recognition that this could be a powerful tool led to Judy's next role, a study project on the value and role of the Internet in museum communication and outreach.

In 1997, Judy was asked to join the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, where until 2003 she supervised the development of the museum's web presence. In 2004, she became part of the senior leadership team, assuming the role of associate director for education and public engagement. She was honored by her position becoming endowed in 2011.

The 50-year-old American History Museum building was sorely in need of renovation, and the decision was made to close the museum in 2005 for 20 months. Judy was asked to direct the reopening, which included fundraising and planning for reinstallation of exhibitions, rethinking public programs and visitor experience, and organizing a social media presence. Judy successfully integrated and managed 27 individual projects to open the museum on time and within budget, attracting five million visitors in the first year. She oversaw a new approach to public programming by bringing theatre into public spaces and expanding volunteer presence on the museum floor.

Following the re-opening and a strategic plan calling for a more family-friendly museum, Judy began to work on the West Wing Project. She participated in master planning and design of a 20,000-square-foot education center which opened in July 2015. She raised

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\$34 million to build and endow staffing for exhibitions, operations, and activity spaces that provide lively and engaging new visitor experiences. The education center contains the Smithsonian's first space dedicated to children under six years of age, a hands-on invention room, interactive galleries, a performance plaza with a demonstration kitchen, and a state-of-the-art conference center for onsite and digitally-produced teacher professional development.

Judy received degrees in zoology from the University of California at Berkeley. During her undergraduate studies she was awarded a fellowship to conduct research on tropical forest birds at the Smithsonian's Tropical Research Institute in Panama, which solidified her interest in ornithology, and formed the basis of her bachelor's and master's degrees.

A participant in the Getty Leadership Program and the Noyce Leadership Institute, Judy has received many awards and recognition for her work. She has published several books and many articles on scientific and environmental topics. She is delighted to return to California and join the staff at The Nat.

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## **MICHAEL WALL, PH.D. VICE PRESIDENT OF SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM**



Michael Wall, Ph.D. joined the San Diego Natural History Museum (The Nat) as curator of entomology in January 2006 and was subsequently named director of the Biodiversity Research Center of the Californias (BRCC). He also currently serves as vice president of science and conservation.

Dr. Wall is passionate about collections-based research and regional exploration. In 2008, Dr. Wall coordinated the Museum's first-ever BioBlitz in which 1,035 species were discovered in Balboa Park over a 24-hour period. He is currently working to develop online resources that will increase public accessibility to the Museum's rich biological collections.

Dr. Wall's interest in natural history began with plants. While working on both a bachelor of science (B.S.) and master of science (M.S.) in botany at Auburn University, he became interested in the ecological relationships between plants and insects. After completing his doctorate of philosophy (Ph.D.) in entomology at University of Connecticut in 2004, Dr. Wall received a postdoctoral fellowship to join a global biodiversity inventory (organized by the American Museum of Natural History and the Australian Museum). He is an award-winning teacher and Fulbright Fellow.

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## BETH REDMOND-JONES VICE PRESIDENT OF ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM



Beth Redmond-Jones is an accomplished and award-winning museum professional, business owner, and former consultant, with a wide range of management, leadership, design, and hands-on project experience. Beth's strong suits are strategic planning, exhibitions, museum programming, museum operations, donor cultivation, grant writing, human resources, and financial management.

In her present position as vice president of engagement and education at the San Diego Natural History Museum (The Nat), Beth oversees the Exhibits, Education, and Volunteer departments. She has developed, designed, and project managed exhibitions and public programs for numerous cultural institutions and has held a number of executive and senior management positions at museums over the past 29 years. Beth has managed budgets as large as \$9 million, has been involved in several capital improvement projects, and has experience with master and interpretive planning.

During her tenure at The Nat, the Museum has won several awards including, most recently, an Honorable Mention for the 2017 Annual Excellence in Exhibition Competition for the permanent exhibition *Extraordinary Ideas from Ordinary People: A History of Citizen Science*. Other awards include the Overall Excellence Award for the 2016 Annual Excellence in Exhibitions Competition, the 2016 Sustainability Excellence Award, and the 2015 Excellence in Label Writing Award, all of which were for the permanent exhibition *Coast to Cactus in Southern California*. The digital team also won a 2016 Media and Technology MUSE Award for the three-part video series, *Punk Skunk*.

In 2006, Beth was recognized as a next-generation leader who demonstrates creativity and innovation in leadership, learning, and organizational change, by the convergence of Museum Talent Project. She has been very active exploring how museums can more effectively serve those in the autism community and those with sensory processing challenges.

Beth holds a master's degree in museum studies from John F. Kennedy University and a bachelor's degree in art history from the University of New Hampshire. She serves on the board of the National Association for Museum Exhibition, a professional network of the American Alliance of Museums.

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## **KAREN LEVYSZPIRO BINATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM MANAGER SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM**



Karen Levyszpiro came to the San Diego Natural History Museum (The Nat) in 2004 as binational education program manager. Her responsibilities include managing the Museum's binational education program, [PROBEA](#); coordinating teacher trainings and community events; coordinating internal and external communications with the PROBEA team and its clients, as well as supporting curriculum and marketing materials development; and translating educational materials, brochures, and research papers.

Karen has a profound understanding of cross-cultural relationships and is fluent in Spanish, English, and French; she is also a professional translator in those languages.

Karen is an experienced educator, administrator, and translator. She has combined her early interests in languages with her inherent teaching ability and her formal education to extend these talents across the spectrum of public and private educational institutions, non-profit organizations, and business enterprises for more than 25 years.

Karen holds a bachelor's degree in education from the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. She has also earned certificates in language education for Spanish and English, and for four years (1998–2001) she owned and operated her own pre-school in Tijuana, Mexico. She integrated the environment into her school curricula through nature field trips, establishing schoolyard gardens, and educating students about our shared Tijuana-San Diego bioregion.