



## Director's Message

Dear Friends,

I am always surprised at how Spring seems to come and welcome our new semester, even in January!

While the past two weeks have been a challenging time for public health, with changes to dietary recommendations and national vaccine guidance, our School of Public Health continues to stand tall.



In this first edition of 2026, we highlight a few of our faculty, who have received [recognition for their long-standing commitment to SDSU](#). We also highlight continuing work by Dr. Stigler Granados taking on the [Tijuana River sewage crisis](#). Thank you to you all for all you have done and continue to do for our students and communities!

Alum [Marissa Venn](#) shares a new co-edited environmental health textbook in which each chapter provides real-life case studies. On the two ends of our degree programs, we feature [Genesis Barzallo](#), a current doctoral student, and ARCS fellow, and [Krissa Jackson](#), an undergraduate public health major who has engaged in important student and cultural initiatives on campus.

We also will be continuing to feature our various programs, in this edition, our [Health Promotion and Behavioral Science](#) concentration. Meanwhile, our [podcast](#) features an interview with Darbi Berry, Director of the San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative Nonprofit, in consideration of how social structures interact with our environment on climate change impacts.

For students, this is admissions season! Please note our [admissions deadlines](#) and visit our [website](#) for more information regarding our various exciting degree programs.

If you are no longer at SDSU, please continue to stay in touch with us! For updates on the SPH and our events, please check our website and online calendar, our LinkedIn Alumni pages, and make sure you update your information in our alumni database: <https://publichealth.sdsu.edu/alumni/update-form>

Hope you are all staying cozy, while enjoying the gentle rays of January sunshine.

Warmly,

Eyal Oren, PhD, MS  
Director, SDSU School of Public Health

## Faculty Spotlight

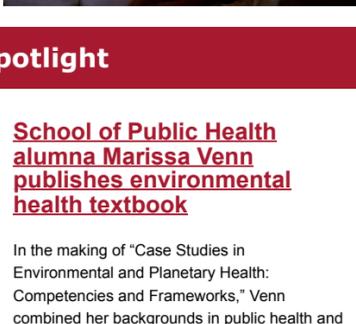


### Four School of Public Health faculty receive university Milestone Award

Penelope Quintana (30 years), Esmeralda Iniguez-Stevens (15 years), Kenneth Calvert (10 years), and Judith Harbertson (10 years), are recognized for their hard work and commitment to SDSU and the School of Public Health.

### SDSU at the front lines of South Bay air pollution crisis

School of Public Health professor Paula Stigler Granados is leading a study into the high levels of toxic gas coming from the Tijuana River. Her research into the hydrogen sulfide emissions informs public health actions on both sides of the border.



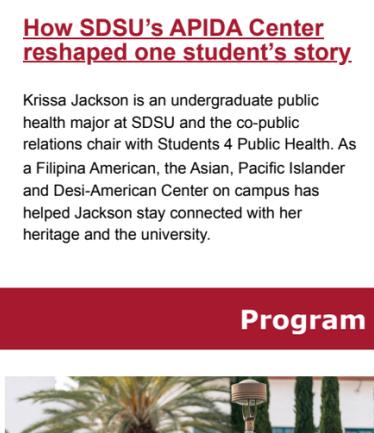
## Alumni Spotlight



### School of Public Health alumna Marissa Venn publishes environmental health textbook

In the making of "Case Studies in Environmental and Planetary Health: Competencies and Frameworks," Venn combined her backgrounds in public health and literature to create a textbook that helps students think critically about current public health issues.

## Student Spotlight



### Joint Doctoral Program scholar Genesis Barzallo receives ARCS fellowship

Barzallo is one of 11 SDSU students to receive the Achievement Rewards for College Scientists (ARCS) fellowship. She is in the global health track of the JDP, in which her research focuses on pesticides and smoke-related pollutants.

### How SDSU's APIDA Center reshaped one student's story

Krissa Jackson is an undergraduate public health major at SDSU and the co-public relations chair with Students 4 Public Health. As a Filipina American, the Asian, Pacific Islander and Desi-American Center on campus has helped Jackson stay connected with her heritage and the university.



## Program Spotlight



### Health Promotion and Behavioral Science program provides career readiness to students

The program is one of four concentrations within the School of Public Health master's program and helps students develop their skills and abilities to address health needs in various communities. Applications for the on-campus program are open until Feb. 1.

## Events



### Application opens for summer study abroad program to Thailand

The application for the International Health and Social Services trip to Thailand opens Jan. 26 at 9 a.m. Applications close Monday, March 16 at 11:59 p.m. To apply, complete the advising steps and program application [here](#).

**PUBLIC HEALTH**

**Doctoral Dissertation Defense**

by

**Linda Salgin**

Understanding Challenges and Opportunities for Tobacco Screening and Cessation Counseling to Support Co-Creation of Tobacco Cessation Workflows within a Federally Qualified Health Center

**Degree to be awarded:**  
PhD in Public Health (Health Behavior)

<p style="text-align: center;">Thursday February 12, 2026 12:00pm PT</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>In-Person</b> Institute for Behavioral and Community Health (IBACH) <b>Zoom</b> <a href="https://SDSU.zoom.us/j/85418687775">https://SDSU.zoom.us/j/85418687775</a></p>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Committee:</b></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;">  San Diego State University Jerel Calzo, PhD, MPH (Chair) Jennifer Felner, PhD, MPH                 </td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;">                  Borsika Rabin, PhD, MPH, PharmD Marva Seifert, PhD David Strong, PhD             </td> </tr> </table>		San Diego State University Jerel Calzo, PhD, MPH (Chair) Jennifer Felner, PhD, MPH	Borsika Rabin, PhD, MPH, PharmD Marva Seifert, PhD David Strong, PhD
San Diego State University Jerel Calzo, PhD, MPH (Chair) Jennifer Felner, PhD, MPH	Borsika Rabin, PhD, MPH, PharmD Marva Seifert, PhD David Strong, PhD		

School of Public Health

# Applications Now Open

FOR SDSU'S MASTERS AND DOCTORAL PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS

APPLY BY FEBRUARY 1<sup>ST</sup>

CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO:

[publichealth.sdsu.edu/admissions](https://publichealth.sdsu.edu/admissions)

## Podcast

### Season 11, Episode 4

On this episode of the If I Could Change One Thing Podcast, Dr. Britnie Bloom and student co-host Karsen Caroll welcome Darbi Berry, Director of the San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative Nonprofit and Professor at San Diego State University.

In this episode, we learn how social structures within our environmental systems can perpetuate climate change and environmental vulnerability. Darbi offers us ways to adapt and create an "equity first" approach to learning how climate change impacts our planet and how we can be mindful about our contributions to climate change.

@sdsu.changeone thing

SDSU SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH PRESENTS:

## If I Could Change One Thing

Episode 4: The Climate Connection: Equity, Adaptation, and Resilience within Public Health

With special guest:  
**Darbi Berry**  
Director of the San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative, Professor, Climate Activist

Darbi has worked on a vast number of initiatives that focus on climate adaptation, resilience, and resource management, which include nonprofit initiatives like The San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative (SDRCC) and the Regional Plan Tracker, which both serve as a resource for promoting a more sustainable future in the local San Diego Community. Finally, Darbi reminds us about the importance of community – when we want to go fast - we go alone; when we want to go far - we go together!

## Reading Corner

### Multi-level barriers and facilitators to implementing tobacco screening and cessation counseling in a Federally Qualified Health Center

Check out this [new article](#) featuring [Linda Salgin](#), [Jennifer Felner](#), [Amanda Velasquez](#), and [Jerel Calzo](#)!

Send us your ideas for stories or newsletter contributions!



DONATE TO THE SDSU SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

For SDSU SPH updates and our events, please check our website, our online calendar, our Alumni LinkedIn Pages, and make sure you update your information in our [alumni database](#).

Thoughts or suggestions? Contact us with any stories you would like to share!

CONTACT US

