

Trustee



Phyllis Epstein

Phyllis Epstein's vibrant energy ratchets up a notch when she's talking about her long relationship with the University of California, San Diego, which began 25 years ago when she moved across the street from the campus. "A class was offered at UCSD Extension by John Stuart, called Returning Scholars, and it was just fabulous. The idea was to introduce anyone who was interested to all that UCSD had to offer. So that's what I learned, and how I got involved."

Although she is an alumna of UCLA (elementary education degree), Phyllis is as immersed in UC San Diego as any student, and then some – attending classes, lectures and arts events, taking and giving campus tours, joining support groups such as Chancellor's Associates and Town & Gown. She helps raise funds for ArtPower! and the School of International Relations and Pacific Studies. Her husband, Dan, has been an active member of the UC San Diego community as well.

From her college degree to her current activities, Phyllis is clearly passionate about education, and feels a responsibility to help public schools' precarious position in California. When asked what she finds most daunting about her increasing involvement with the university, she responds, "The economic challenges!"

In addition to UC San Diego-related commitments, Phyllis is involved with San Diego State University's Music Department. She is on the boards of the San Diego Center for Jewish Culture, the San Diego Symphony, the Board of Councilors of the Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education at USC, the USC School of Fine Arts.

Phyllis has served on the board of the Museum of Photographic Arts, has been president of the San Diego Center for Jewish Culture, and was a member the California Arts Council. As a result of earlier involvement on the California Arts Council, she co-founded the state-wide California Music Project, which provides services designed to strengthen music education and increase the number of future music educators in California's public school system.

Phyllis is a native of Los Angeles. She and her husband, Dan – a former UC San Diego Foundation Trustee – have a son and a daughter and three grandchildren.