

2025 EXCELLENCE IN STEWARDSHIP

AWARDEE BIO



SCOTT PAULSON '84

Exhibits and Events Coordinator, UC San Diego Library

Paulson's whimsical and adventurous spirit make him the perfect person to steward one of UC San Diego's most cherished gifts — the Irene Rubinger/Institute for Continued Learning Memorial Carillon. His ongoing dedication to this extraordinary gift and the vision of its donor embodies a unique commitment to its immeasurable cultural value. Most people would not climb into a small room atop a 110-foot building to play the obscure (albeit beautiful) instrument on a regular basis, but Paulson is not most people. Anyone who has the good fortune to walk past the Geisel Library at the right moment has heard the carillon bells' melodious chime thanks to him.

The carillon was donated in 1989 by Joe Rubinger and named after his late wife, Irene, with whom he founded the Institute for Continued Learning. Paulson arrived at UC San Diego as a student studying music and linguistics and stayed to become an exhibits and events coordinator at the Geisel Library. For more than 30 years, he has honored Joe Rubinger by playing his favorite songs live from Geisel's rooftop carillon room. He has weaved the instrument into UC San Diego's cultural fabric by fulfilling personal song requests, collaborating with student and faculty composers, and bringing new life to the carillon through innovative public art projects.

Paulson has demonstrated how philanthropy can have a lasting, dynamic impact over time by ensuring that a donor's gift remains relevant and vibrant every day. He has reimagined the often-understated carillon as an instrument that can inject fun and joy into day-to-day life on campus and he invites Rubinger's family to take part in its ongoing celebration. Rubinger's legacy lives on through Paulson's commitment to enduring creative stewardship of this gift, which reflects a deep respect for the donor's original vision.

Paulson's passion for the carillon and its significance to campus life is clear, from hourly chimes to weekly and celebratory performances on Rubinger's birthday, the first day of classes, Veterans Day, and many other occasions. His approach to stewardship serves as an inspiring model and a living embodiment of UC San Diego's dedication to valuing and actively nurturing philanthropic contributions long after they are made.