

PRESS RELEASE
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SB Museum of Natural History Announces 2023 Board of Trustees

SANTA BARBARA, CA—The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History is pleased to announce three trustees joining the board in 2023, Barbara Evans Kinnear, John Demourkas, and Julie Heider-Gray, as well as a new slate of officers.

Barbara Evans Kinnear



Barbara “Bobbie” Evans Kinnear graduated from Texas Christian University with a B.S. degree in Nursing Science. Early in her career she became a pediatric nurse burn specialist and later worked for many years as an operating room/recovery room supervisor and as director of nursing. As a change of focus, Bobbie founded and operated a small importing/wholesale business with artists in China.

Bobbie and her husband John have lived in Santa Barbara since 1973. She has served on many local boards including Santa Barbara Visiting Nurses Association, Junior League of Santa Barbara, The Garden Club of Santa Barbara, Crane Country Day School, the National Charity League, Casa Del Herrero, and the Westmont Foundation Board of Directors. In September 2021, Bobbie published a book co-authored with her father, Colonel Richard Ernest Evans titled *Richard Eager: A Pilot’s Story from Tennessee Eagle Scout to General Montgomery’s “Flying Fortress”*.

Bobbie’s admiration for the Museum began in 1980 when she became a docent. What inspires her to this day is the Museum’s mission, which includes research, teaching science, and helping children of all ages understand our relationship with the natural world. She has served on the board numerous times and as chair from 2016–2017.

Julie Heider-Gray



Julie Heider-Gray is an intellectual property attorney with over 20 years of experience in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries. She was in-house counsel for over 10 years at Genentech, Inc., most recently as Associate Director, Assistant General Counsel, and head of the Cancer Immunology IP Group. Julie previously worked in the IP Groups of Foley & Lardner LLP and Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein & Fox, PLLC.

Prior to her career in law, Julie worked in the laboratories of Dr. Tom Shenk, studying human cytomegalovirus, and Dr. Maryellen Ruvolo, studying the molecular evolution of primates at the Peabody Museum, Harvard University. She has a J.D. from The George Washington University Law School, a Ph.D. in Molecular Biology from Princeton University, and a B.A. in Biology from Mount Holyoke College.

Julie enjoys playing tennis, riding horses, and spending time with her husband Cameron, and nine-year-old son Connor.

John L. Demourkas



John Louis Demourkas was born in Santa Barbara to immigrant parents and grew up on the Mesa. He attended Santa Barbara City College and UCSB, and while in college started his first corporation Sewell/Demourkas, Inc., a professional beauty products distributor. In 1979, he became a founding employee of Nexxus Products Company, an international producer and distributor of salon professional beauty products, headquartered in Santa Barbara. John ultimately became VP of Operations, COO, and CFO, remaining at the company until 2006 when he oversaw its sale to Alberto-Culver, Inc.

John and his wife Deneen are active with the Santa Barbara Yacht Club and have both sailed competitively throughout the USA, Europe, and the Caribbean. In 2015, he won the Rolex Farr40 World Championship. John served as the yacht club's Commodore in 2006 and was a member of the Santa Barbara Youth Sailing Foundation, serving as its treasurer for nearly ten years.

John married the love of his life Deneen nearly 25 years ago and together they support numerous non-profits and charities including Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church, VNA Hospice, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Opera Santa Barbara, CASA, Santa Barbara Zoo, and many others. John served the parish of Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church as Parish President for three terms.

The Museum is also pleased to announce Brad Willis as Chair, Terrence Valeski as Immediate Past Chair, Douglas Drier as Vice Chair Governance, Salvatore "Tory" Milazzo as Vice Chair Finance, Sarah Sheshunoff as Vice Chair Development, Keith Reichel as Vice Chair Master Plan, Hank Mitchel as Secretary, and S. Timothy Kochis as Member-at-Large.

For a full listing of the trustees and their bios, please visit sbnature.org/about/board.

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About the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

Powered by Science. Inspired by Nature. Founded in 1916, the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History inspires a thirst for discovery and a passion for the natural world. The Museum seeks to connect people to nature for the betterment of both, and prides itself on being *naturally different*. For more information, visit sbnature.org.