The San Diego-based Comic-Con Museum is designed to activate the participatory spirit of the Comic-Con experience all year round. The Museum is a division of the nonprofit San Diego Comic Convention and it is dedicated to advancing the general public's awareness of and appreciation for comics and related popular art forms. The physical space is scheduled to open Summer 2021 in San Diego’s Balboa Park, though online programming is currently underway.
THE MAGIC OF COMIC-CON ALL YEAR ROUND
The Museum joins Balboa Park’s 17 museums, galleries and theaters, which collectively draw more than 20 million visitors annually.

The Museum is located in the historic Federal Building, formerly the Hall of Champions, that is in the Park’s southern section known as the Palisades area.

25,000 square feet of space will feature rotating exhibits. Spaces can be converted into program venues—ranging in capacity from 50 to 500 participants.

A year-round schedule of programs and experiences will be offered during the day and evening featuring panels, creator meet-and-greets, experiential cinema, watch parties, eSports, cosplay shows, concerts, and more.

Within the Education Center, more than 6,000 square feet of classroom space will exist to serve area educators, community groups and museum visitors seeking additional hands-on enrichment.

A Museum café will feature outdoor seating and food inspired by pop culture themes.

The Museum gift shop will include comics and graphic novels, branded souvenirs, art, t-shirts and other collectibles.

The existing theater will be enhanced both aesthetically and technically to function as a 4K video theater and presentation space.

The building’s Atrium can be converted into a large theater for special screenings, watch parties and experiential events, allowing up to 500 people to participate in an event.
The San Diego Comic Convention is a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation organized for charitable purposes and dedicated to creating the general public's awareness of and appreciation for comics and related popular art forms. Its focus includes participation in and support of public presentations, conventions, exhibits, museums and other public outreach activities which celebrate the historic and ongoing contribution of comics to art and culture.

The divisions of the San Diego Comic Convention include:

**COMIC-CON** *(also known as Comic-Con International)*: Recognized as the premier pop culture convention in the world, bringing together more than 135,000 attendees annually along with over 4,000 members of the global media. It all started out when a small group of comics, movie and science fiction fans from San Diego put on an event attended by just 300 people in 1970.

**COMIC-CON MUSEUM**: The physical museum space will open in San Diego’s Balboa Park in 2021.

**WONDERCON ANAHEIM**: The annual convention brings together fans of comic books, science fiction and films.

**SAM (Storytelling Across Media) SYMPOSIUM**: The one-day symposium that includes panels from comics and related popular arts greats.

San Diego Comic Convention inspires learning as well as a passion for comics and the popular arts, which is reflected through its related entities. Areas of focus include:

**ARTS PROMOTION**: Celebrating the popular arts by raising their visibility and public awareness in an effort to honor popular art forms, fuel creativity, imagination and innovation.

**EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING**: Using the educational power of popular culture to engage learners of all ages.

**WORLD CLASS EVENTS**: Each year, the organization puts on two large-scale events that blend art, education and entertainment in San Diego (Comic-Con) and Anaheim (WonderCon). In 2019, Comic-Con celebrated its 50th convention.

**COMMUNITY COLLABORATION**: Giving back is important. The organization works with key stakeholders to strengthen the community through blood drives, charitable donations and training more than 8,000 event volunteers annually.
MISSION

As a division of the nonprofit San Diego Comic Convention, the Comic-Con Museum is aligned with the mission of: “Creating the general public’s awareness of and appreciation for comics and related popular art forms through participation in and support of public presentations, conventions, exhibits, museums and other public outreach activities which celebrate the historic and ongoing contribution of comics to art and culture.”

The Museum strives to:

Build awareness and appreciation for the art forms that communicate popular culture
Provide a platform for fans to express their passions
Communicate and celebrate the historic and ongoing contribution of creators and their creations to the popular arts and culture
Provide a social setting for experiencing and expressing our shared mythologies
Leverage popular culture to support the education of a new generation of creators

VISION

The vision of the Comic-Con Museum is to:

Serve as a pop culture focal point, enhancing ways to celebrate its unique place in the popular culture landscape
Thrive as a world-class attraction and gateway to art, culture and life-long learning for San Diego residents and visiting tourists
Enhance the economic strength of the community
Become a sustainable model for equitable and environmentally-sound community service through our practices and offerings

VALUES

These values are the core beliefs of the Comic-Con Museum:

Access - The Museum is a place where everything is made to be accessible
Equity - Everyone will have an opportunity to participate
Inclusion - The Museum embraces diversity of all types and is a place where the audience has a voice and a sense of authorship
The Comic-Con Museum is dedicated to instilling a life-long passion for art and learning among people of all ages. In addition to general educational programming, special projects are being planned to support PreK-12 students and educators through collaborative resources and curriculum-aligned lessons that inspire learning through comics and popular culture. The nonprofit Museum is working with educators to build out these resources to support student achievement and career readiness.

OTHER EDUCATION-FOCUSED ACTIVITIES

Field Trips - A core way for students to experience the Museum. Supporting the field trip will be curriculum offered online so that learning extends beyond the day of the visit

Student Labs - Programs run by the education staff at the Museum, designed to connect with the four areas of programmatic emphasis

Family Education Events - Family focused education programs as pop-ups connected with special events or park-wide celebrations

Graphic Novel Book Clubs - The Museum will support the existing network of Comic-Con Graphic Novel Book Clubs

Panel Programs & Distinguished Lectures - A series of programs where industry professionals, fans and creators are invited to discuss their work, art and experiences in pop culture

Summer Camp and Mini-Camps - Non-residential offerings that feature science and art activities for youth and adults

AREAS OF EMPHASIS

Literacy & Language Arts - Improving literacy rates using comics and graphic novels to inspire a life-long love of reading

Visual and Performing Arts - Encouraging creative development and self-expression through project-based learning opportunities

STEAM - Inspiring the next generation of innovators through subjects such as science, technology, engineering, art and math including robotics, Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality

Career Readiness - Equipping learners with knowledge and skills that can be applied to the creative industries that represent one in ten of all jobs in California

EDUCATOR RESOURCES

Educational programming is being designed that aligns with educational standards

The Museum’s Educator Advisory Committee offers input on learning activities

Outreach programs include both distance learning systems and physical outreach, where Comic-Con Museum educators share engaging lessons

Educator Late Nights are designed to accommodate the busy schedules of educators and to offer approaches that encourage student learning through comics and popular arts
When will the Comic-Con Museum open?
The Comic-Con Museum is planned to open Summer 2021. An exact date will be announced soon.

What are the hours of operation?
The Comic-Con Museum will offer activities during the day and evening. Hours of operation will be posted on our website.

Where is the Comic-Con Museum located?
The Comic-Con Museum is located in Balboa Park, a 1,200-acre urban park located adjacent to downtown San Diego, California. Balboa Park is home to 17 museums and cultural institutions.

Why Balboa Park?
Balboa Park has been named one of the nation’s most beautiful urban parks, and is considered by many to be the cultural heart of San Diego.

What part of Balboa Park is the Comic-Con Museum located?
The Comic-Con Museum is located in the area of Balboa Park known as the Palisades. The nearest neighbors are the Air and Space Museum, Automotive Museum, Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theater and the public Gymnasium.

How much is admission?
Admission costs will be announced soon. The Comic-Con Museum will offer free admission to the citizens of San Diego as part of Balboa Park’s park-wide rotation known as “Free Tuesdays.” Charter Members receive free entry.

How do I become a Charter Member and what are the benefits?
Charter Members enjoy exclusive access to experiences, special events and more. There are several different tiers (or levels) of membership to choose from, with entry levels beginning at just $10. All memberships $50 and up include one year of admission to the Museum starting the day it opens. More information on the Charter Membership program is available here: donate.comic-conmuseum.org/campaign/membership-faqs/c292131

How will the Museum be participatory?
The Comic-Con Museum is engaging diverse voices and perspectives to shape experiences, exhibits, and programs. Key to this approach is “fan sourcing,” which takes into account the ideas and creative energy of the passionate and engaged Comic-Con fan base. This combination will create a truly inclusive space that is uniquely participatory and will be one of the things that defines the Comic-Con Museum.

What are some of the main features of the Comic-Con Museum?
To name just a few, the Comic-Con Museum will feature 25,000 square feet of space for exhibitions, including multiple spaces that can be transformed into different program venues. The Comic-Con Museum will also dedicate 6,000 square feet toward education space. Additional features include a theater and presentation space.

What other amenities does the Comic-Con Museum offer?
A gift shop and a cafe are planned for the new museum. One fun feature will be a changing menu of dishes and beverages that are creatively inspired by the themes of the rotating exhibit and program offerings. Beverages will include a range of choices for families as well as adults.
David Glanzer is the Chief Communications and Strategy Officer for Comic-Con where he oversees all advertising, sponsorship, promotional associations and over 4,000 members of the domestic and international media. He is also responsible for the public image of the organization and serves as spokesperson for the organization.

Glanzer has previously served as the Communications Director for a California State Assembly campaign and later as Press Secretary for the Assembly member. He has given testimony to the California Assembly Select Committee on San Diego Trade, Tourism and Job Creation and has been a featured speaker at the International Conference of the Public Relations Society of America. Glanzer has also lectured at the Asian Manga Summit in Japan and has spoken at various colleges, universities and organizations in the United States, Mexico, Japan and the Middle East. He has also been a guest at the United States Department of State’s Bureau of International Information Programs.

Glanzer is a movie fan and for a time worked on independent film production. He is a board member of LEAD San Diego, a nonpartisan, leadership development arm of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Melissa Peterman is the Vice President of Development for the Comic-Con Museum. In this role, under the direction of the San Diego Comic Convention Board of Directors, she is responsible for leading operations and fundraising efforts needed to bring the project to life. In close partnership with the Executive Director and other senior leaders, Peterman creates and implements strategies for stabilization, strategic growth and impact.

Previously she worked in the field of homelessness in San Diego for nearly 10 years. As Vice President of Homeless Housing Innovations with the San Diego Housing Commission, she led teams responsible for managing multimillion-dollar projects including the citywide strategic initiatives, Housing Our Heroes and HOUSING FIRST - SAN DIEGO, to permanently house 4,000 individuals experiencing homelessness.

Peterman serves on the board of the San Diego Young Leaders. A native San Diegan, she holds a Bachelor’s in political science from San Diego State University and a Master’s in political theory from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. When she’s not working, you can find her re-watching Parks and Rec, Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Harry Potter, or spending time with friends and family.
Patti Roscoe founded PRA Destination Management Company in 1981. In the mid-nineties, expansion plans led her to franchise five Southern California offices and in 2007, she sold her then nineteen offices to a European-based company, Allied International. Locally, she is a well-known philanthropist who has been involved in numerous nonprofits including the USS Midway, the San Diego Rotary Club and the San Diego Convention & Visitors Bureau (now San Diego Tourism Authority).

Roscoe is an active San Diego State University volunteer, chairing its Sounding Board and the Board of Advisors of the L. Robert Payne School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, of which she was a co-founder. The University has recognized her with its prestigious President’s Medal and in May 2014, she was conferred with an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters.

She has been honored by the San Diego County Hotel-Motel Association and the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International with their highest recognition, the Gold Key Award. She is the recipient of the Neil Morgan Visionary Award for Lifetime Achievement from LEAD/San Diego Chamber of Commerce and Girl Scouts of San Diego has named her as one of their Cool Women. She was the first woman president of the San Diego International Sports Council and served on two Super Bowl Steering Committees. She is also a Lifetime Laureate with Junior Achievement of San Diego.

Her favorite comic character is Wonder Woman who has superhuman powers, as all women need. Roscoe and partner, Jim Tiffany, live in Bankers Hill with their cat Ms. Molly.

Marlee J Ehrenfeld is an acclaimed chief creative officer specializing in brand development and engagement strategies. She paid her dues as a rock music journalist and critic. With her writing and communications skills sharpened, she moved into the world of banking and finance where she mastered public relations, sales and marketing. Her work now weaves together all the facets of her expertise from integrated marketing programs for private and private organizations to brand platforms and memorable identities.

Ehrenfeld’s creative discipline in writing, photography and film have earned her 16 regional Emmy® Awards and 70 national Telly Awards for documentary and commercial work. Her diverse clientele includes corporations like XEROX and UPS, and public agencies like the City of San Diego, City of La Mesa, Port of San Diego, San Diego Tourism Marketing District, San Diego International Airport and San Diego Association of Governments. She works collaboratively with clients offering a fresh set of eyes and ideas to bring life to their visions and strategies. She has helped craft marketing and communications programs addressing a variety of issues, including transportation, social services, parks and recreation, and tourism.

A second-generation San Diegan, Ehrenfeld has been recognized as a leader and role model in her community for her dedication to making a tangible difference in the lives of County residents. She has served on the boards of the San Diego Gaslamp Foundation, U.S.S. Midway, NTC Foundation at Liberty Station, San Diego Ad Club and president of the San Diego Holiday Bowl. She was 2019’s Otto Bos Hall of Fame inductee for the Public Relations Society of American (PRSA San Diego Chapter). She is a graduate of San Diego State University.
Rodger Dougherty is the Senior Director of Public Affairs & Communications for Kaiser Permanente San Diego County. He leads all marketing and public relations activities including: development and execution of local marketing strategy, internal and external communications, community relations, community health, government affairs, issues management, crisis communications, and brand management.

Dougherty, who began his career as a firefighter, progressed to the rank of Fire Captain/Paramedic and also Public Information Officer in the suburbs surrounding Tucson, Arizona. After leaving the fire service, Dougherty led public relations and marketing departments for Rural/Metro Corporation, Cox Communications and neo-IT, a dot-com startup in the San Francisco Bay Area.

He is active in the San Diego community, serving as a member of the board of directors for the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, Downtown San Diego Partnership, San Diego Bowl Game Association (“Red Coats”), an advisory board member for the Foundation for Navy SEAL Veterans, and is an ex officio board member for Junior Achievement and the Midway Aircraft Carrier Museum. He is also a member of QED, the San Diego Nice Guys, the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick, Rotary International Club 33 and B.P.O.E. Lodge 1812.

Dougherty was born and raised in Denver, Colorado, where he fell in love with all things science fiction (but mainly Star Trek and Star Wars). He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Arizona State University and holds a Master of Business Administration from the University of Phoenix. He and his wife De Anna live in Rancho San Diego, California and have five children.

Dr. Joyce Gattas is Special Assistant to the President of San Diego State University. Prior to this role, she served as Dean of the College of Professional Studies and Fine Arts at SDSU where she led 10 schools with centers and research institutes. Before her role as Dean, she served as the Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs at SDSU and taught at CSU Long Beach and Hayward.

Well known in the San Diego civic and philanthropic communities, Gattas currently serves as the immediate Past Chair of the Balboa Park Conservancy Board of Trustees and has chaired the ConVis Board (now the San Diego Tourism Authority) and the Commission for Arts and Culture. She currently serves on the boards of the San Diego Museum of Art and Inewsource.

Her many honors include 50 People to Watch, 10 Cool Women, Who's Who in San Diego, Women Who Mean Business, the “Ginger Award” for Outstanding Contributions to the Arts, and a Women of Dedication Honoree. Gattas has a PhD from the University of California at Berkeley and is a graduate of the Institute for Educational Management at Harvard University. Her favorite comic book character is Wonder Woman after learning more from reading Jill Lepore’s “The Secret History of Wonder Woman.”
Gordon Kovtun is the founder of KCM Group, a full-service construction management consulting firm that offers a multidisciplinary approach to clients that includes government, commercial, tribal, education, residential and non-profit sectors. The firm’s high-profile projects include affordable housing, environmentally-friendly cooling systems for industrial spaces, and spaces that foster community engagement.

Kovtun started the firm in 2000 and he has expanded the company’s capabilities to serve residential, commercial and institutional clients of all sizes while creating a culture of quality service and client satisfaction. Kovtun has nearly 30 years of experience in the construction profession in both private and public sector projects. He has held managerial and principal positions in firms specializing in general building contracting, general engineering contracting, construction management and specialty and forensic consulting resulting in a comprehensive understanding of construction project design and construction practices.

He is active in the San Diego community, previously serving on the boards of the Balboa Park Conservancy, Reuben H. Fleet Science Center Museum and the Museum of Man. Additionally, Kovtun has served as chairman of the Facilities Committee for the Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center. In 2004, he was appointed the consul to Norway for San Diego County. Kovtun earned a Bachelor of Science in civil engineering from Cal Poly Pomona, a Master of Science in civil engineering from the University of Southern California and holds licensure for both general building and general engineering disciplines.

Elvin Lai is a fourth generation owner-operator of the 71 room Ocean Park Inn hotel in Pacific Beach. As an entrepreneur, with six different businesses in four different sectors, his greatest passions are building relationships, creating strategic alignments, supporting growth of the San Diego economy and tourism industry, and working to better our community for future generations. In addition to his hotel, Lai’s other business ventures include G4 Risk & Insurance, HOTELbeat.com, Abnormal Company Beer and Wine, and a restaurant called The Cork and Craft @ Abnormal.

He is an active member of the lodging associations serving as Vice Chair of the San Diego Convention Center Corporation and immediate past President of the San Diego County Lodging Association. Previously, Lai has served as Board Chair of the California Hotel and Lodging Association and Executive Board Member of San Diego Tourism Authority. Additionally, he also serves his local community as past President of the Pacific Beach Business Improvement District called Discover PB, Board member of the Asian Business Association, and on the San Diego County Alcohol Policy Panel as a Sector Leader. He was also previously appointed to the City of San Diego Parking Advisory Board representing District 2 and the Mayor’s API Advisory Committee. Lai earned his Bachelor of Arts in Biology and minor in Chemistry from the University of San Diego.
OMAR PASSONS
SD County HHSA

Omar Passons is the Director of Integrative Services within the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency. Integrative Services focuses on housing, homelessness and inclusive economic growth to ensure every San Diegan can attain the Live Well San Diego vision of being healthy, safe and thriving. He works to improve neighborhoods, create opportunity for youth and make the San Diego business community more successful, more progressive, and more uniquely San Diego.

Passons has spent the last decade working to stimulate and foster local businesses, including the craft beer community and providing workers with a path to advancing their dreams and careers. He was formerly a Healthy Policy Analyst for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, a land use and construction attorney as well as a community and workforce development executive. He grew up in San Diego County's foster care system and brings a unique perspective to leadership on homelessness issues in the region.

He has been named as one of San Diego Magazine’s 50 People to Watch and awarded the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce Innovator Award and the Blue Heart Foundation Rising Star Award. Passons has served on the boards of CDC Small Business Finance, San Diego Workforce Partnership, Earl B. Gilliam Bar Association, Voices4Children, Catholic Charities Homeless Women’s Services and the North Park Community Association. He received his Bachelor of Arts in philosophy and Master of Public Health from University of Arizona. He also attended George Mason University School of Law for his Juris Doctor. In his free time he enjoys spending time with his family, trying new craft beer and riding his bike.

RIP RIPPETOE
San Diego Convention Center

Clifford “Rip” Rippetoe, CVE, is a convention, entertainment, sport and venue industry veteran who currently serves as President & CEO of the San Diego Convention Center Corporation. He is also a Certified Venues Executive and published author. Rippetoe has a long and successful career in venue management and operations working in the for-profit sector as well as not-for-profit and governmental organizations.

Through his career, he has worked for organizations hosting and providing services to top national trade shows, conventions and major sporting events including the Olympic Winter Games of 2002 and large-scale public assembly facilities such as the Las Vegas Convention Center, the Salt Palace Convention Center in Salt Lake and the Kentucky Expo Center. He has implemented new techniques to significantly improve communication, create transparency, advocate for space expansion, address operations and maintenance, improve labor relations, increase revenues and develop emergency crisis responses.

Rippetoe currently serves as Chair of the Board for the International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM). He serves locally in San Diego as a Board Member for the Downtown San Diego Partnership, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, the San Diego Economic Development Corporation and the Jacobs Cushman San Diego Food Bank, as well as an Advisor for the San Diego Hotel/Motel Association. He received his Bachelor of Science from Oklahoma State University.
Eugene Wesley “Rod” Roddenberry, Jr. is the chief executive officer of Roddenberry Entertainment. He is a science fiction leader who serves as guardian of the Roddenberry legacy, which traces back to the original Star Trek. Through inspiring science fiction projects and philanthropy, he champions its timeless and universal ideals as embodied by the philosophy of IDIC: Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations.

The son of legendary science fiction producer Gene Roddenberry, whose Star Trek series continues to inspire today, he has followed in his father’s footsteps to be a catalyst in the creation of a world where humanity works together for the greater good. Roddenberry Entertainment builds on the best of Gene Roddenberry’s work and continues to develop a multimedia slate of thought-provoking projects spanning film, television, graphic novels, comic strips, podcasts and other mediums. He is executive producer of Star Trek: Discovery, heading into its third season in 2020, as well as the live-action Star Trek: Picard and the animated series Star Trek: Lower Decks, to debut in 2020. He also spearheads the Roddenberry Podcast Network, whose Mission Log is distinguished as the most downloaded of all Star Trek podcasts.

In 2011, the critically acclaimed documentary Trek Nation chronicled his decade-long journey to explore his father’s life. The undertaking inspired him to fully embrace the vision Gene had for the world and invest himself in its future. One expression of this was the founding of the Roddenberry Foundation, which funds innovative solutions that address humanity’s greatest challenges across such areas as science, technology, education and the environment.

Phil Rudolph is a retired corporate executive with over 30 years of experience providing strategic, legal, governance, ethics and corporate responsibility leadership and support to foodservice, retail and other industries. He was most recently the Executive Vice President, Chief Legal & Risk Officer and Corporate Secretary for Jack in the Box Inc., where he provided strategic, enterprise-wide leadership including overseeing the company’s legal and risk functions, and helping lead an executive team that fundamentally transformed the company’s business model.

Previously, Rudolph worked as an Ethics and CSR consultant representing multinational clients, as an executive at McDonald’s Corporation, and as a partner at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP. He is a seasoned board advisor and strategic leader with extensive experience working with boards and senior management teams on the development of best practices in areas such as corporate governance, crisis and enterprise risk management, and ethics, as well as role-modeling broader strategic organizational leadership.

He currently serves on the boards of the Corporate Directors Forum (current Chairman) and the Alliance of the Children’s Rights in Los Angeles (Secretary and Executive Committee Member). He previously served on the San Diego Chapter of the Association of Corporate Counsel and Pro Kids/First Tee of San Diego. Rudolph received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of California at Irvine and his Juris Doctor from the University of Chicago. He and his wife Dawn have been married for 37 years and have three children - including a daughter who works for DC Comics. In his free time he enjoys running, writing and watching the Dodgers. His current favorite graphic novels include The Sandman, Watchmen, Fun Home and Clyde Fans.
Lorin Stewart is currently the Vice President, Regional Board Relations for USO, Inc., the global non-profit military service organization headquartered in Arlington, Virginia. In this newly formed position, Stewart supports the global CEO, COO, CDMO and Regional Presidents in the development, management and stewardship of USO’s regional and local boards across the United States and in merger integrations and transformation.

He has over thirty years of progressive leadership experience in the business and nonprofit arena. After serving as the local President & CEO for USO San Diego from 2017-2019, Stewart was promoted to the United Service Organizations’ Interim Regional President and successfully led the “stand up” of the newly formed West Region operations, expeditionary support and development efforts through 9 Western states from Alaska to Arizona. From April 2016 to September 2017, he served as Interim CEO of LEAD San Diego. From 2008 to 2016, Stewart served as the founding Executive Director of the San Diego Tourism Marketing District Corporation (SDTMD).

Stewart has served on numerous boards and commissions including the 2007-2008 California Chamber of Commerce board of directors. He was board chairman for the San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau, the San Diego Asian Film Festival and was the 2002 and 2005 chairman of Fleet Week San Diego. He was a member of the Super Bowl XXXVII Host Committee, a San Diego Arts & Culture Commissioner, a Trustee of the Midway Aircraft Carrier Museum (SDACM) and served on the Holiday Bowl Committee for seven years. Stewart has been honored with the San Diego Hotel Motel Association’s 2015 “Allied Person of the Year,” the San Diego Downtown Partnership’s “Alonzo Award” and the Gaslamp Quarter Historical Foundation’s “Kate Sessions Award.” Stewart was twice named as one of San Diego Magazine’s “50 People to Watch.” In 2016, the San Diego Business Journal featured Stewart as one of “San Diego’s 500 Influential Business Leaders.”

Stewart enjoys woodworking and following the F1 racing circuit. His favorite childhood superhero was “Tobor” from the cartoon series “8th Man.” He received a Bachelor of Arts from Santa Clara University in 1980.

Joe Terzi was the President and CEO for the San Diego Tourism Authority (SDTA) from 2009-2020. Under his stewardship, the SDTA received numerous industry recognitions and San Diego was recognized by such notable organizations as National Geographic, Money Magazine and Worth. The SDTA is recognized as one of the best in the business and continues to set the standard for Destination Marketing Organizations. He began his hospitality career with ITT Sheraton Corporation in 1972. During his tenure with the company, he distinguished himself as General Manager for a diverse set of hotels from coast-to-coast. Shortly after the acquisition of ITT Sheraton by Starwood in 1998, Terzi was promoted to Vice President of Operations with responsibility for all Starwood brands in California and Nevada. In 2002, he was promoted to Senior Vice President for Starwood Hotels & Resorts where he remained until 2009.

In recognition of his performance and leadership, Terzi has received numerous awards during his tenure in hotel management, which includes twice helming Sheraton Corporation’s Hotel of the Year at the Sheraton Seattle and Sheraton San Diego. In addition, he was honored with the ITT Ring of Quality, the highest award given for exceptional leadership. Terzi was a founding member of the San Diego Tourism Marketing District and currently serves as a Board of Directors Member. Additionally, he serves on the Board of Directors for the U.S. Travel Association, California Travel Association, Visit California and the Jack & Jill Foundation.

In his free time Terzi loves to travel - he has visited all eight continents. He also enjoys golfing and going to the beach. His favorite superhero is Superman and considers him the father of all superheroes. Terzi and his wife, Ann Marie, have resided in Poway, CA for 28 years.
Sam Trego is the Founding Director of Imagination Entertainment. He has produced over 3,000 corporate general sessions, product reveals, awards banquets and theatrical productions for clients such as IBM, Honeywell, Samsung, the 2000 Sydney Olympics, Firestone, Continental Casualty Companies, MCI, McDonald’s, Pontiac, and many more.

He started his career when he was chosen at the age of 16 to be a member of the internationally touring performance troupe “The Young Americans.” Beginning in 1987, he made the transition from performer to producer and worked next to Joe Esposito to extend the Business Theater concept that Esposito had founded at the MGM Grand/Bally’s Hotel in Las Vegas. In 1996 Sam started the troupe now known throughout the world as “iL CirCo.” Trego also produced the hit show at SeaWorld San Diego “Cirque de la Mer,” which ran for 19 years. Sam has won awards throughout the world for his productions’ unique artistry.

Trego is a Co-Founder of the International Association of Corporate Entertainment Producers and is the Past Chairman of the Board for the Association of Entertainment Professionals Worldwide. He served as the Chairman of the Board for Missiongathering Christian Church for four years as the organization focused on homeless youth in San Diego. Trego is the recipient of Event Solutions Magazine’s coveted “Spotlight Award” for the Best Theatrical Producer.

Trego received a Bachelor of Music degree in 1984 from Oakland University’s School of Performing Arts in Rochester, Michigan. In his spare time, you can often find him travelling and studying foreign cultures, attending art festivals and theatrical festivals or bringing Broadway shows in New York City.

David Uslan began his career as an intern with D.C. Comics, Walter Cronkite’s production company and Wild Brain Animation Studios. After he graduated, he joined International Creative Management (ICM), one of the leading international talent agencies. In late 2003, he went to work for his mentor and father, Michael Uslan, originator and executive producer of the Batman movie franchise. Alongside his father, Uslan assisted in developing films including “Batman Begins,” “Constantine” and “The Spirit.” His own producing credits include the Emmy award winning animated series “Sabrina: Secrets of a Teenage Witch,” “Valentine’s Day Massacre,” AMC Mob Week documentary series and “American Icons.”

Uslan is primarily focusing his time and energy on strengthening relationships between the US and Asian media markets, including the building of global franchises through international co-productions. He is also a partner at TDG MENA and serves as Director of TDG Media, the entertainment division of The Digit Group, a next generation real estate company specializing in smart city strategies and solutions in China, The Middle East, the US and across the world.

Along with his career in the feature film, television, gaming and publishing industry, Uslan has consulted for Genius Brands International, Smithsonian Enterprises, VenSat Animation, the Hong Kong International Film Festival, the Shanghai International Film Festival’s Film Finance Forum and the Asian Film Awards. In 2016, he was awarded the Korean Culture Supporters award by KOCCA, the Korean Creative Content Agency. Uslan is a member of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences and the Producers Guild of America. He is also a member of the Board of Advisors for the NAB Show, an advisory board member for the Stan Lee Foundation, as well as being on the Board of Directors for Team Prime Time, an after school organization based in Los Angeles.
Michael Uslan is the originator and executive producer of the Batman movie franchise including the 1989 “Batman,” the Dark Knight trilogy, 2019’s “Joker” and the upcoming “The Batman.” He was also producer of “Batman: Mask of the Phantasm,” “Constantine” and “Spirit” as well as associate producer of “National Treasure” and originating producer of “Shazam.” Uslan currently works with Genius Brands overseeing The Stan Lee Universe and the legacy of 100 characters created by Stan Lee post-Marvel.

Uslan has written a memoir “The Boy Who Loved Batman” and a sequel, “Batman’s Batman” is scheduled to be released in 2021. He is the instructor of the first accredited college course and correspondence course on comic books as well as the creator, along with Stan Lee and David Uslan, of the Smithsonian Institution’s first online course on the rise of the superheroes and their impact on pop culture. Uslan is also the author of the first textbook on comics as well as a number of other books including a children’s book. He is the creator of museum exhibits on the history and art of comic books for The Montclair Art Museum and The Lilly Library at Indiana University and has been an advisor for comic book exhibitions at The Museum of Modern Art, The New York Historical Society and The Smithsonian Institution.

He is the recipient of many awards including the CINE Motion Picture Industry Trailblazer Award, NOVA Film Legend Award, Peace Film Festival’s Lifetime Achievement Award, The Inkpot Award (the highest honor from Comic-Con for lifetime achievement) and many more. Uslan also received the world’s first Doctorate of Comic Books and an Honorary Doctor of Arts degree. He has been involved in many boards including the Discovery Channel Global Education Partnership, Association of Film Commissioners International, Wild Brain Animation Studio, Center for Excellence in Education, National Endowment for the Humanities, New Jersey Film Commission, Thomas Edison/Black Maria Film Festival and Asbury Park Music & Film Festival.

Rita Vandergaw is a retired senior executive in the tourism and transportation industry with over 25 years of senior management experience. She was most recently the Senior Director of Marketing & Communications for the Port of San Diego as well as Director of Marketing & Advertising for two major airline carriers. She currently serves as strategic counsel to various public and private entities, including port authorities, marketing, public relations and advertising firms.

She was one of the founding Commissioners for the State of California Travel and Tourism Commission and has served on the California Tourism Association board and the American Port Authority Association Cruise Committee. Vandergaw has been recognized by the Cruise Line Industry Association (CLIA) as non-cruise line executive of the year as well as one of the State of Colorado’s Working Mother of the Year. She has received many awards including the Gold Key Award from Hotel Motel Association as non-industry executive of the year, a national CLIO award for a television ad and two for multiple direct mail campaign and a crisis communication award from Airline Association of America.

Vandergaw attended the University of Texas. She considers her most significant accomplishment being married for almost 40 years and partnering with her husband Dale to raise three grown sons and a daughter and now enjoying being Grandma to three grandchildren. Her favorite comic book character is Batman because he is human, fallible, doesn’t follow orders and he makes a difference with no super powers.
Pedro Villegas is Director of Community Relations for the San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sempra Energy, a Fortune 500 company based in San Diego, California. Villegas is responsible for SDG&E’s corporate philanthropy and relations with non-profit and community-based organizations in San Diego County and south Orange County. His career includes several positions managing external, regulatory, legislative, policy, and international affairs in private, state government and non-profit sectors.

In addition to serving in several posts in the Sempra Energy family of companies, he served the State of California in the State Assembly as Deputy Director of the Speaker’s Office of International Relations and Protocol, as Principal Consultant to the Standing Committee on Jobs, the Economy, and Economic Development, and as Senior Consultant to the Select Committee on California-Mexico Affairs. He has also worked at the Pacific Council on International Policy and was a Research Fellow of the Center for U.S.-Mexico Studies and a Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellow of the Center for Iberian and Latin American Studies, both at the University of California, San Diego.

Villegas holds a Master of Pacific International Affairs degree from the Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies of the University of California, San Diego. He received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Notre Dame. He serves on the board of directors of the San Diego Foundation, RISE San Diego, the National Conflict Resolution Center, the San Diego Tourism Authority, the Downtown San Diego Partnership and CONNECT. Some of his favorite comic characters include El Chapulín Colorado, Space Ghost, Fat Albert, Racer X, Animal from the Muppets, and Captain Caveman.

Theresa Wulf is the Director of Community Engagement and Sustainability Program at the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership (BPCP). She facilitates the advocacy of the BPCP’s member organizations with local and state elected officials, community leaders and cultural partners as well as oversees the parkwide Sustainability, Community Access Pass and ViP Patron programs. Her role is to ensure that the BPCP is working and communicating effectively with their members and that their relationships in the broader community are strong.

Wulf was previously the Director of Public Affairs and Community Relations for San Diego Junior Theatre where she also served as Interim Executive Director. She was pivotal in expanding marketing, publicity, administrative and partnering efforts for this nationally renowned youth theatre education organization. She has also served as Community Issues Advisor to former San Diego Mayor Susan Golding, advising the Mayor on all policy and outreach issues related to arts and culture.

She has served as a member of the San Diego Regional Arts and Culture Coalition, Balboa Park Central Board of Directors, the San Diego League, the San Diego Performing Arts League, the Warren-Walker School Board of Directors and the SDSU Young Alumni Association. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from San Diego State University and is a graduate of the Fieldstone Foundation Emerging Leaders Program. She now lives in Point Loma with her husband, Jeff, and their wonderdog the Duke of Chatsworth. As a result of her lifelong crush on Paul Rudd, she is Ant-Man’s biggest fan.
Mark Yturralde is currently CTO of Comic-Con International as well as serving on the Comic-Con International Board of Directors. He is responsible for all technology at the convention, in house development and working with technology partners.

Yturralde has been a technical judge for the Anasari X-Prize Qualcomm Tri-Corder challenge and has been a technical leader serving in director level positions or higher for more than 15 years for organizations like Cardinal Health, PatientSafe Solutions and San Diego Comic-Con.

He has also served on the board of the San Diego Air and Space Museum. Yturralde is a father to four and a grandfather to two. He likes to say his favorite comic characters are the Metal Men, but secretly he’d have to admit it’s Dazzler.