

SDMETRO

your business your life

NO. 2 VOL. XXXIX



Michael Chagala



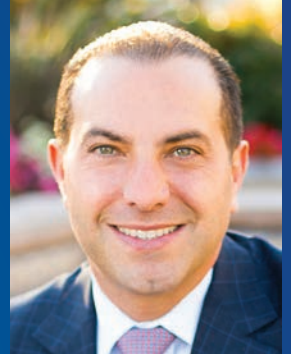
Jason Lee



Ron Morabito



Nathan Schmidt



Ronson Shamoun



John D. Drdek

San Diego's 2024 Men of Influence



Andrew Chapman



Jesus Nunez, Jr



Paul Hodge



Steve O'Connell



Scott Levin



Stath Karras



Morgan Appel

THE SD METRO INTERVIEW: SDSU's Jean M. Twenge on Generations. PAGE 10

SERVING SAN DIEGO, LOS ANGELES AND IRVINE

619-777-7700

RJS LAW
A TAX LAW FIRM

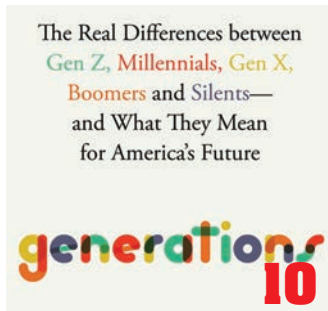
www.RJSlawfirm.com

Our mission is to always provide quality journalism for our readers by being fair, accurate and ethical and a credible resource for our advertisers.



COVER STORY: MEN OF INFLUENCE

The accomplishments of the top MEN of influence in San Diego.



THE SD METRO INTERVIEW:

San Diego State University's Jean M. Twenge spoke with SD METRO, sharing what she learned while writing her latest book, Generations, and how those coming up will impact the country's future. The interview can also be watched on sandiegometro.com.



SAN ANTONIO & TEXAS AUTHENTICITY

Travel writer Marlise Kast-Myers shows why San Antonio is more than just history. It's an American treasure.



A Record Amount Spent Influencing California's Government

A list of the companies and organizations spending the most to lobby the Golden State.

SDMETRO
your business your life

Chairman | CEO

Robert Page

BobPage@sandiegometro.com

Publisher

Rebeca Page

RebecaPage@sandiegometro.com

Managing Editor

Manny Cruz

Manny@sandiegometro.com

Associate Editor

Douglas R. Page

dpage@sandiegometro.com

Graphic Designer

Christopher Baker

cbaker@sandiegometro.com

Photography/Illustration

Benjamin Myers

Jim Childers

Vecteezy.com

Contributing Writers

Marsha Sutton

Alexi Koseff

David Rottenberg

Myrna Marston

Marlise Kast-Myers

Andrew Simmerman

Advertising

SALES & MARKETING DIRECTOR

Rebeca Page

Get in the loop with SD Metro's Daily Business Report. Sign up for daily emails on the latest business at sandiegometro.com

P.O. BOX 3679

RANCHO SANTA FE, CA 92067

858.461.4484

SD METRO magazine is published by REP Publishing, Inc. The entire contents of SD METRO is copyrighted, 2022, by REP Publishing, Inc. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited without prior written consent. All rights reserved. All editorial and advertising inquiries can be made by calling or writing to the above. Editorial and ad deadline is the 24th of the month preceding the month of publication. Mail subscriptions of SD METRO are available for \$50 a year for addresses within the United States. A PDF version of this issue is available at sandiegometro.com Additional information, including past articles, online-only content and the Daily Business Report can be found at sandiegometro.com. For reprints or plaques of articles published in SD METRO, please call Rebeca Page at 858-461-4484

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing Act which makes it illegal to advertise "any Preference limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or an intention, to make any preference, limitation or discrimination. "Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians; pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18. This magazine will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which in violation of this law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this magazine are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD Toll-Free at 1-800-669-9777. Th Toll-free telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

Read us online:
sandiegometro.com



RANK HARVEST

SEO & DIGITAL

Congratulations

Michael Chagala

Founder & CEO, Rank Harvest
SEO and Digital Advertising



Men Of Influence
Award



Inc.

CELEBRATING

OUR 3000TH
CUSTOMER

One of the fastest growing
digital marketing agencies
in San Diego!

RankHarvest.com



Michael Chagala

Founder & CEO, Rank Harvest



SAN DIEGO COUNTY'S **2024 Men of Influence & Accomplishment**



MICHAEL CHAGALA

Chagala is the founder and CEO of Rank Harvest SEO. Rank Harvest offers premium search engine optimization services to local and national businesses in competitive markets, difficult niche ranking challenges, product launches, and repairing damaged SEO for small bands to enterprise-size brands like the NFL, Sony, AIG, and Huawei. He is a member of the Forbes Agency Council and is renowned as a global thought leader in the highly competitive SEO space. He is a sought after presenter and consultant to other agencies. Rank Harvest has over 3,000 customers, and is one of San Diego's top SEO digital marketing agencies. Chagala initially started packaging do-it-yourself SEO ranking services for small businesses like Fiverr and grew it to a \$50,000 monthly digital marketing agency profit center. Rank Harvest's average order price is \$679 today. Rank Harvest serves startups to Fortune 500 companies nationwide with affordable SEO optimization and content marketing strategies. He is known as Robin Hood in an industry fraught with scammers and charlatans. He contributes to Oceanside-based TERI—Camus of Life, whose mission is to empower individuals with special needs. He was named a Silicon Review 30 Best CEOs of the year 2023.



JASON LEE

Lee is a multi-family real estate broker and CEO of JLM Real Estate, Inc.. It is a commercial real estate brokerage specializing in sales, financing and 1031 exchanges. He owns and operates a \$50 million real estate portfolio comprising more than one hundred units in San Diego County. He shares his real estate investing experience via online courses and master-mind mentorship groups. His favorite part of being a CEO is creating a positive company culture, a team with a strong bond, and teaching new agents the business. He bypasses traditional real estate marketing strategies for digital-based tactics in the buying and selling of properties. He uses his platform podcast and social media outlets—from YouTube, Instagram and Tik Tok to reach an audience his competition has not mastered. His YouTube channel has over 4,000 subscribers with 585 videos and Instagram 714 posts with 36,000 followers. He has represented over 150 real estate investors, closing \$300 million deals in over five years. He graduated magna cum laude while working part and fulltime. He started a digital marketing agency at SDSU where he helped local restaurants increase their online presence by building websites and creating marketing funnels for their businesses.



RON MORABITO

Morabito is president and CEO of V Group Signs/Print. V Group is recognized as a leading national sign company, specializing in delivering high quality, custom signage and print solutions to businesses and organizations of all sizes and industries. He has built a nationwide reputation for the company's innovative designs, exceptional customer service, and commitment to quality. He sits on the advisory board of Sports San Diego, whose mission is to drive visitor demand to economically benefit the San Diego region. His latest initiative is aptly called "What Can We Do for You-Wednesday" V Group chooses a different charity for a free signage giveaway every month. V Group's clients include DirectTV The Holiday Bowl, San Diego Padres, San Diego Seals, San Diego Gulls, San Diego FC, USCD Athletics, UC Irvine, SDSU and Point Loma Nazarene University. Non profit clients include the Alex Morgan Foundation and Junior Achievement. Morabito and his partner, Jack Leary, co-founded a spin-off company, Mascot Signs & Branding, SD METRO Magazine has honored him as 40 Under 40, and a Metro Mover to Watch.

NATHAN SCHMIDT

Schmidt is executive vice president, chief experience officer and Digital Channels at San Diego County Credit Union. He is a dedicated, influential and innovative leader. With over 25 years of financial services management and marketing experience, he is responsible for strategic planning, brand marketing, digital channels, product development, business development and community and media relations and the overall customer experience at SDCCU. SDCCU is the 18th largest credit union in the country by assets and largest locally owned financial institution in San Diego. Under his leadership, SDCCU launched new products and services and enhanced existing ones, including its online banking platform to meet the demand of its customers. SDCCU is the ninth most popular credit union on Facebook and its X account has more than 36,700 followers and over 76,000 fans on Facebook. He is a member of the board of directors for the San Diego Bowl Game Association. Under his leadership SDCCU provides complimentary ongoing financial wellness education for its members, SDCCU, under his leadership, was named a Live Well San Diego partner by the County of San Diego. He is a graduate of Cal State Sacramento and holds an MBA from Saint Mary's College.



SERVING SAN DIEGO, LOS ANGELES AND IRVINE

RJS LAW
A TAX LAW FIRM

TAX AUDITS, CIVIL & CRIMINAL TAX LITIGATION

- IRS Audits
- IRS Appeals
- IRS Collections
- OIC / Settlement
- Criminal Tax
- Innocent Spouse Relief
- Payroll Tax
- OVDP / Voluntary Disclosure
- SBOE / Sales Tax
- FTB / State Tax
- Estate Tax
- International Tax
- Corporate Law
- Real Estate Law
- EDD / California State Payroll Tax

Ronson J. Shamoun, Principal Attorney and CEO of RJS LAW, is an Adjunct Law Professor at the University of San Diego-School of Law where he teaches a Tax Practice and Penalties class. He was recently presented with the following awards:

- San Diego Metro Magazine- Best Attorney 2016
- San Diego Magazine- Top Attorney 2016
- San Diego Business Journal- Best of the Bar 2014, 2015 & 2016
- Martindale Hubbell's- AC Preeminent Rated 2014, 2015 & 2016
- San Diego Daily Transcript- Top Attorney 2014 & 2015
- San Diego Metro Magazine- 40 Under 40 - 2015

SAN DIEGO
BEST
ATTORNEY
2014 - 2016

FULL SERVICE STAFF OF 9 ATTORNEYS & 2 CPAs

619-777-7700

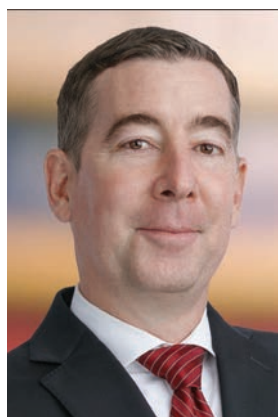
RJSLawFirm.com

SAN DIEGO | 303 A STREET STE 400 SAN DIEGO, CA 92101
IRVINE | 2 PARK PLAZA STE 125B IRVINE, CA 92614 BEVERLY HILLS | 8404 WILSHIRE BLVD STE 210 BEVERLY HILLS, CA 90211



RONSON J SHAMOUN

Shamoun is the founder and CEO of RJS Law, the leading tax law firm in San Diego. He is a three-time graduate of the University of San Diego, receiving his Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Accountancy, his Juris Doctor (JD) and his Master of Law in Taxation (LL.M). His legal practice involves federal and state taxation, with an emphasis on criminal tax defense, tax controversy, and international tax and estate planning. He has substantial experience representing individuals and businesses before the IRS, Franchise Tax Board, the Employment Development Department and the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration. He is dedicated to making a positive impact on the lives of others. He provides sleeping bags and hygiene items to homeless individuals. He is a consistent financial supporter of the University of San Diego and has established annual \$5,000 scholarships at both the USD School of Law and the USD School of Business. He annually donates billboard campaigns in San Diego to the Susan G Komen for the Cure, and other charitable organizations. Among his many awards and honors are the Martindale Hubbell AV Preeminent award for Excellence in Legal Ability and Ethical Practice and has consistently been named one of San Diego's best attorneys.



JOHN D. DRDEK

Drdek is an experienced litigation attorney. He has handled a broad range of high-stakes cases, including multi-million dollar contract disputes, labor and employment issues, and class action lawsuits. He served as lead associate for a \$54 million breach of contract case, which included 1,700 exhibits and 809 witnesses over a three year period. He is a Lieutenant Commander in the US Navy Reserve, where he serves as a public affairs officer. He deployed to Afghanistan in 2012 with the Special Operations Task Force and deployed to Pearl Harbor in 2019 to assist the Pacific Fleet's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. He has been honored for his significant commitment to pro bono work and successfully launched a veterans pro bono initiative that established partnerships with the Veterans Legal Institute, California Veterans Legal Task Force, and the Veterans Legal Clinic at the University of San Diego School of Law. Prior to law school, he was a successful Hollywood producer and writer, developing such projects as "Godzilla", "Hawaii Five -O" and "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles." He is a graduate of USC and Stanford University School of Law. He is Phi Beta Kappa and an Eagle Scout.



SCOTT LEVIN

Levin is a family law attorney, known as the chief peacekeeper in helping families navigate divorce peacefully without having to go to court. He has been a full time family attorney since 2004. He has a Juris Doctor from the University of Virginia School of Law and a Bachelor of Arts degree from New York University. He leverages an eclectic background in law, business and finance through his family and divorce mediation practice. He provides exclusive mediation services for divorce and family law disputes. He is passionate and dedicated to resolving conflict outside of court. He is known for helping clients understand their needs and goals. He brings a great deal of knowledge and experience to the negotiating table to help arrive at an agreement that benefits both parties.



ANDREW CHAPMAN

Chapman is a C C-36 licensed plumber after graduating from the Plumbing License School of San Diego. He is also a licensed real estate broker, credentialed from Duane Gomer Real Estate School. He holds a California Home Improvement License and has 20 years in the plumbing industry. Currently, he is director of training at the Bill Howe Blue Collar Academy (BCA). He is more than a plumber. He is a stalwart in his local church, proving his roots and values which run deep. He is a mentor to youth in his old neighborhood striving to uplift those battling with low-wage employment challenges. He established a 501-c 3 nonprofit focused on mentoring youth in plumbing, showcasing a knack for leadership and philanthropy. He has spent five years molding minds with the PHCC as an instructor. He also dedicated five years as an instructor with the HBI, proving his commitment to education in the trades.



JESUS (CHUY) NUNEZ, JR.

Nunez is the senior director of communications and corporate engagement of the Monarch School Project, the only public K-12 School in the country exclusively educating and supporting homeless youths. He has been at the Monarch School for twenty years. He has served in numerous capacities from teacher assistant athletic director. Monarch is scaling out its operation and sharing its blueprint for educating and supporting homeless youths in K-12 schools with other schools in the region and around the country. He started the physical education program at Monarch shortly after the opening of the state-of-the-art Nat and Flora Boss Campus. Despite not having athletic facilities or much equipment, Nunez helped start an athletic culture by using limited resources to the max by creating a physical education program and the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) program for high school athletics in 2014. Outside of sports programs, he serves as an associate pastor at Lighthouse Church in Eastlake and will run for a position next term in the 501-c 3 nonprofit Lighthouse Cares Foundation. Since 2022., he has led the CIFÍDÍ Frontier Conference as president and contributed to its greatest financial and athletic success. He has received the CIF San Diego Section Athletic Director of the Year award. He is a graduate of UCLA.

TAX PROBLEMS | TRUSTS

RJSLAW

WILLS | PROBATE | INT'L TAX

Congratulations to
Ronson J. Shamoun
for being recognized as one of the 2024
San Diego Metro Men of Influence



We are proud of all of your
accomplishments and are inspired
by your commitment to making
a difference in our community!

619-777-7700

SAN DIEGO | EL CAJON | ORANGE COUNTY

RJSLawFirm.com



STATH KARRAS

Karras is the executive director of the Burnham Moores Center for Real Estate at the University of San Diego Knauss School of Business. He is responsible for establishing and leveraging strategic priorities and initiatives for the Burnham Moores Center. He works closely with the faculty and the Center's team of professionals to create meaningful learning experiences for USD real estate students and works with students to enhance their career opportunities. He also cultivates relationships with key stakeholders to create fundraising strategies, activities and programs to sustain Burnham Moores Center operations. Prior to joining Burnham Moores he was an executive managing director with Cushman & Wakefield. He also served as president and chief executive officer at Burnham Real Estate. He is a past chairman of CONNECT, the Economic Development Council and LEAD San Diego. He is a board member of the San Diego Military Advisory Council, and a member of the Challenged Athletes Foundation. He is a graduate of the University of Utah with a BS in Mathematics and an MBA with emphasis in Finance.



PAUL HODGE

Hodge is the CEO and founder of World Amenities, Inc, and the visionary of the San Diego-based trusted supplier of more than 245 stock lines and over 500 signature skincare brands for hotels, cruise lines, vacation rentals, salons, spas, businesses, medical and educational sites. The products include custom amenities, necessities and accessories in more than 150,000 hotel rooms per night in over 70 international markets. As CEO, his mission is to coach and watch his team of 18 employees drive performance, inspire A+ customer service and deliver profits. He envisioned the business model to be synergistically propelled by the goodwill, beliefs and drive of the people behind the products. In 2023, he implemented an EOS, Entrepreneurial Operations System. Today, the employees craft the vision, mission and core values. World Amenities supports San Diego's Ronald McDonald House with luxe bathroom amenities throughout the year. The company also supports the City of Hope, the Wounded Warrior Project, Make-A-Wish and Susan G. Komen Under his leadership, World Amenities' revenue doubled. He is a graduate of Queensland University of Technology and the University of Queensland in international business and trade law in Brisbane, Australia.



STEVE O'CONNELL

O'Connell is president and chief executive officer of North Island Credit Union. Under his leadership for the past 12 years, North Island has achieved outstanding financial performance and introduced numerous innovations to achieve significant transformational growth and member service enhancements. North Island's assets are close to \$5 billion and serves more than 200,000 members. In addition its consumer lending has reached an all time high. At his direction, an Innovation Department was created to launch industry-leading technologies to support member services. O'Connell serves as a board member of San Diego's Classroom of the Future Foundation, an organization designed to bridge gaps for at-risk youth and provide funding through private industry. North Island has contributed nearly \$750,000 in 2023 to assist hundreds of local schools, educators, military families, and community-based programs. Over the past five years North Island has invested over \$2 million in local communities North Island supports the USS Midway and Wounded Warriors. He is a graduate of Cal State Northridge.



MORGAN APPEL

Morgan founded Parent and Caregiver Education (PACE) programming at UC San Diego's Division of Extended Studies, impacting over 5,000 families across the state with credit bearing cost-free workshops in English and Spanish, delivered online and in person. He also oversees the educational channel at UCTV. He is a member of the board of Institutional Reviewers, and California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Appel's expertise in educational transformation and policy is evident through his collaborative efforts with school districts, universities and research institutes. He volunteers at Promises2Kids, Urban Discovery Schools, Reality Changers is a board member of Discovery STEAM Academy Charter Schools, Chula Vista. He is a graduate of UC Irvine and the Claremont Graduate University.

JAMES MCPHERSON

General Atomics
Aeronautical Systems

RYAN SISSON

Moniker Group

DOUG MORTON

San Diego Blood Bank

RON BRIENZA

Henselphelps

JOSEPH S. LEVENTHAL

Dinsmore



Congratulations

to our Founder and CEO, **Ron Morabito**,
on being named one of *SD METRO's*
Men of Influence in the San Diego
business community.

 **GROUP**
signs | print

Gen Z & America's Future

*SD METRO Associate Editor Douglas Page spoke recently with nationally known San Diego State University Psychology Professor Jean Twenge about her latest book, *Generations*, which discusses the differences between the six generations in the United States and what it means for the country's future. The following transcript was edited for brevity and clarity. A video of the interview can also be watched on sandiegometro.com.*

What was the impetus for the book?

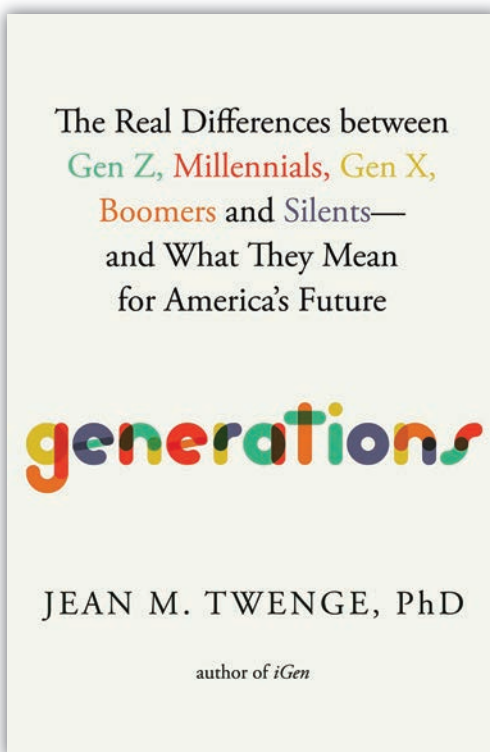
My previous book, called *iGen*, was about Gen Z (born 1995 – 2012) and how technology was shaping them. But when I gave talks on it, people would sometimes say, "Well, what about everybody else? Hasn't technology affected everyone else?" And it got me thinking, "Well, true." Plus, technology isn't just smartphones and social media. It's also the driver of so much cultural change. That's why it's different to live now versus 200 years ago, or 100 years ago, or 50 years ago, or even 20 years ago. Technology shapes our lives.

When you're talking technology, you're not just talking about the phone and the laptop. You're talking about television, radio, perhaps the microwave oven, indoor plumbing - everything.

Washing machines, better medical care. These are all things that have had a big impact on how we live our lives.

Is this the first time that we've seen six generations alive simultaneously?

It might be because technological change has sped up, and generations seem to be getting shorter. Now, there's different definitions of the word generation. It's originally used to mean a reproductive generation or your children, your grandchildren, your parents, your grandparents. But social generations, like, say, Baby Boomers, have gotten shorter. The cutoffs are somewhat



Generations: The Real Differences Between Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Boomers, and Silents -- and What They Mean for America's Future

Atria Books, 537 pages, \$32.50

arbitrary. Millennials, for example, didn't last as long, as I and many other people thought they would because the smartphone became popular. There's a fundamental difference if you went to high school in the time when people had smartphones versus when they didn't. That created the generational break between Millennials and Gen Z, much sooner than people thought it was going to. Originally people thought, "Oh, millennials, maybe they'll be like 1980 to 2000." But I put the cutoff in 1995 because that's the turning point for when the majority of Americans had a smartphone in terms of when someone might be in high school.

I was struck by one of your early sentences when you wrote that, "We're all part of a generation and yet many of us don't feel like we're a member of a generation that we're a part of." Have you seen this in every generation that you've studied?

Absolutely. It applies across many different types of groups. People think about their background or where they grew

up or their ethnic background, or their gender or religion. They may not necessarily feel like a typical member of that group. That's even more true for generations than it is for say, religion or political party because you don't choose which generation you are born in. So, someone might be a Gen Xer or but not completely feel like a Gen Xer. When we're talking about these group differences, we're talking about differences on average. So of course, there's plenty of variation within the generation, just like there's plenty of variation among Californians. There's plenty of variation among any big group of people.

In your book, you list about 17 pages of sources. How long did you spend doing the research for this book?

Well, I feel like I have been preparing my whole life to write this book because the direct time was several years of digging through the databases and so on. I've been doing this work since grad school in the 90s, and I feel like all of it built up to writing this book.

You mentioned a study about Gen Z, one of the youngest generations out, which you say feels incredibly isolated. Can you explain this?

Gen Z is the first generation to spend their entire adolescence in the age of the smartphone. I defined them as being born between 1995 and about 2012. And as they were growing older, this was when more people got a smartphone. Social media became the norm, almost mandatory for high school students. And at that same time, teens started spending a lot less time with each other face to face. And the same became true for young adults. A lot more Gen Z teens report feeling lonely, compared to Millennials, Gen X and Boomers at the same age. They spend a lot less time going out, going shopping, getting together with friends. Anything that has to do with being with peers face-to-face in leisure time, they do it a lot less often. In one survey of entering college students, the amount of time that students spent going to parties and socializing was cut by an hour a day.

An hour a day. Compared to?

Compared to Gen X in the 80s.

Compared to Gen X in the 80s. And would that be even larger compared to the Baby Boomer generation?

It would be if we had the data going back that far, but we don't.

I have two Gen Z sons, and I've noticed exactly with them what you're talking about. Is there a fear with this generation of interacting with someone face-to-face? Or is there something else that's driving it?

Communication moved online, and to social media, and that's where teen social interaction happens now. And it feels like it's less necessary to get together face-to-face. But the problem, of course, is that getting together online is not the same as getting together face-to-face. It's not the same for feeling an emotional connection with someone, and it's not the same for mental health. Teens who spend a lot of time with each other face-to-face tend to be happier, less depressed, and less lonely. For those who spend a lot of time online, it's the opposite – more likely to be depressed, unhappy, and lonely.

It doesn't bring about a compelling case to hang on Facebook or anywhere else does it?



Congratulations
Steve O'Connell, *President & CEO*
of North Island Credit Union



San Diego Metro Magazine
2024 Men of Accomplishment Award

WINNER



northisland.ccu.com @ f in X @northislandcu

Well, yes. However, the algorithms on all of those sites are designed to keep us on for as long as possible, because that's how the companies make the most money.

Sure. Let's do this -- sum up each generation in just a few words. When you think about the Silent Generation, how would you describe them in a few words?

Born between 1925 and 1945, their name is really a misnomer because they were at the forefront of a lot of the changes, like civil rights and the feminist movements. Two famous members of that generation include the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Baby Boomers.

Born 1946 to 1964, their name comes from the huge increase in the birth rate during those years. They're like the 800 lbs.-gorilla in the room because their voting power was considerable. They follow a very interesting trajectory, even more exaggerated than what usually happens with age. They started as a very liberal generation. They are ending as a conservative ones.

They became their parents?

Not quite, because a lot of the changes that they fought for took place and happened, like desegregation and women in the workforce, for example. They're not like their greatest generation parents. But there's this phenomenon that happens sometimes where people might fight for change when they're younger and then, when they get older, they're like, "Okay, that's good. Stop the world. I want to get off. We've changed enough."

Gen X?

Born 1965 to 1979. I'm a Gen Xer. In the whole generational consideration, we are very ignored. Everybody always forgets about Gen X. We are the middle child of generations in terms of where we fit among the five adult generations, and also just with being ignored. Gen X really straddles the two worlds, the last to grow up in an analog world and the first to discover the digital world. That's one of the things that characterizes them the most. The other from that background is toughness. A lot of Gen Xers pride themselves on being tough, especially in comparison to younger generations.

And what makes them tough compared to younger generations? How do they see that?

I think that's based on that analog childhood and exploring the early years of the digital world. Plus, just being together face-to-face with people and being in what some people call the "meet world." And fighting in that arena is just a different experience from, say, having an argument online.

Millennials?

Born between 1980 to 1994, one of their cardinal influences is individualism. So that's affected all generations, but it reached its peak with Millennials in terms of being very optimistic and having positive self-views. The general trope about Millennials being economically downtrodden turns out not to be the case. Median incomes are actually at all-time highs. Their homeownership rates are only a couple percentage points below where boomers and Gen Xers were at the same age. The idea that they need three jobs or they're never going to own a house turns out not to be true when you look at data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Gen Z?

Born between 1995 to 2012, this is the first generation to spend their adolescence in the age of the smartphone. And that's had ripple effects across so many areas of their lives. It's why they are not spending as much time with each other face-to-face. And it's also why, I argue, their rates of depression, self-harm and suicide are at all-time highs.

The last generation you mentioned in your book, the Polars, which is the youngest and, at most, about 10 years old. How do you describe them?

The term Polars comes from melting polar ice caps and political polarization. So, two things having a big impact now that I think will continue to have a big impact on this generation. They've had some of the same influences as Gen Z. But for them, it's not just that they spent their adolescence in the age of the smartphone and iPads. It's that they spent their whole lives in the age of those things. We don't have a lot of data on them yet, but what we do have shows the impact of kids being handed an iPad as soon as they can walk. They're not getting as much exercise and childhood obesity is very high.

And they're probably in school, probably not reading hard copy books either. Are we correct about that or is that just an assumption?

Reading is interesting because if you're reading a book on a Kindle or an iPad, that's still reading a book. It's just the format is different. But high school students reading books or newspapers or pretty much any kind of long form text has plummeted. And that was true long before Gen Alpha or even Gen Z. That decline started with Gen X.

When you talk about individualism, I suspect there are people out there who might think it's interchangeable with narcissism. Can you define the differences?

Individualism is a cultural system that places more emphasis on the self and less on others. It's often rooted in technology because as technology increases, we can do more things for ourselves. It ends up having the result of more independence. Pretty much

every individualistic country in the world is more technologically advanced. But not every technologically advanced country is individualistic.

Narcissism is individualism taken to a next level that becomes maladaptive for the society and for people around you. Narcissism is focusing so much on the self that you don't have any left for others, and just having a very inflated sense of self. Thinking you're the best ever.

Don't generations define themselves by life events, meaning historical events?

Major events have an impact, with the COVID-19 pandemic being probably the biggest recent example. However, their long-term impact and their impact on people's day-to-day lives doesn't even approach the impact of technology. Consider someone who lived 200 years ago and look at why their life is different. Well, sure, wars and economic recessions, depressions and pandemics have an impact. But so much of the difference is due to faster transportation, labor saving devices, communication being faster and cheaper. That's what has really changed our lives because that has downstream effects. It has a downstream effect on individualism. It has a downstream effect on gender roles. It has a downstream effect on how quickly or slowly people grow up. So it's just one example. It's called the slow life strategy, which is one of the other big effects of technology.

People get married much later than their grandparents or great-grandparents did. So that's one example of a slow life strategy. It's all of these ways technology has put its fingers into so many of these different realms of life. You can't really say that as much for major events. Partially, because they don't happen often. In the last a hundred years, there are only two events that have had an enormous impact on most people's day-to-day lives, COVID and World War II. So why are millennials the way they are? Is it because of The Great Recession? No, because they're doing fairly well economically. But their childhood culture emphasizing individualism is still with them.

The Silent Generation must've seen or experienced quite a bit of societal change, probably the most that's ever been seen in the United States.

The changes seem to have accelerated because of technology. And you think about the world the Silent Generation was born into, between the 1930s or the early 1940s, and compare that to how we live now. It's night and day. Not just the technology, but also things like women working and more racial equality and same-sex marriage. Those are just three examples. And those were things that were not at all accepted in the 1930s and early 40s.

Sure. And certainly not in the 1950s either until recently, too.

Even in the 2000s that wasn't something people thought they'd see in their lifetime.

You say the Silent Generation is very trusting of others. What brings this about? Does it extend to

CONGRATULATIONS SCOTT LEVIN!



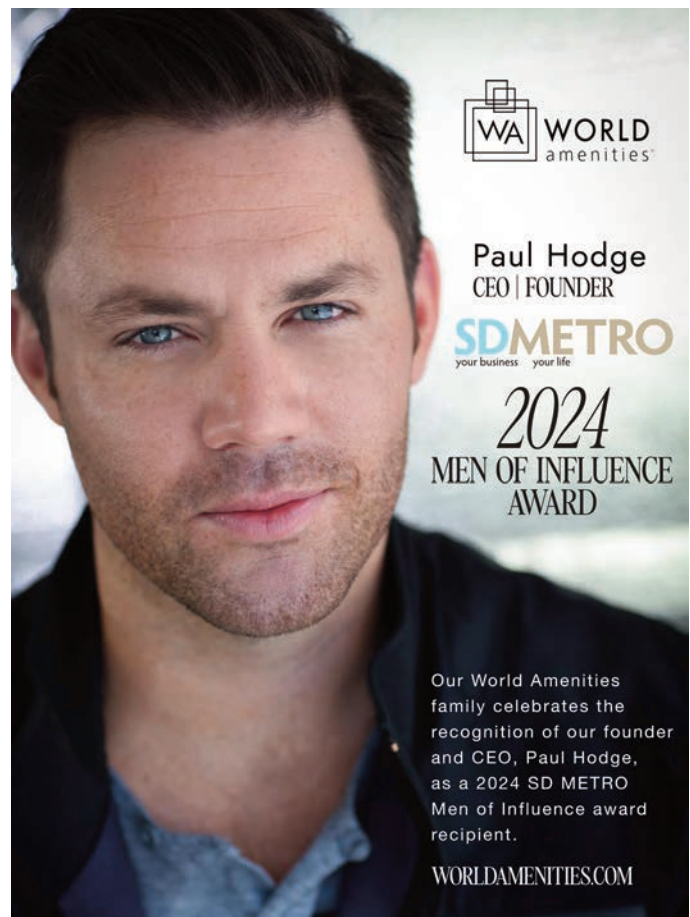
**SAN DIEGO
MEDIATION**
DIVORCE & FAMILY LAW
Scott F. Levin Esq

Divorce Done Right.

Mediation: A compassionate,
child-focused, low-cost
alternative to litigation

858.255.1321

sandiegofamilylawyer.net



institutions too?

It does. I think that's one of the big changes that you can see across all of the generations, is this breakdown in trust in others and trust in institutions. You take the Silent Generation who grew up in the 1950s where there was just a lot more trust among individual people, a lot more trust in institutions. And it's not true anymore. I think the media has a lot to do with that. It tends to emphasize the negative. It tends to tear, as it's some purpose in life, down certain presumptions, often things that maybe need to be questioned, but that also starts to break down a lot of trust.

You also say the Silent Generation is less likely to suffer from mental distress. Why is this and how are you defining mental distress?

Mental distress can be depression or anxiety. It's a function of the survey data that we have. That's how we're measuring it. So, it's really striking that the Silent Generation has less mental distress than either of the generations on either side of them. They have less than the Greatest Generation and less than the Boomers. I think it's maybe because they were not drafted to fight a war. Not as many of them were. Some were drafted to fight in Korea. But there was a lot less than World War II and Vietnam on either side of them. They grew up in a time that emphasized family and social relationships. They still put a lot of emphasis on that. They really have that bedrock sense of being connected to others, and that's something that's important for mental health.

Do they have more face-to-face connections compared to the generations that have gone after them?

Certainly, while growing up, that's pretty indisputable. They didn't have any other solution.

You say Baby Boomers are dying of despair. What is bringing this about?

Boomers compared to the Silent Generation are much more likely to die these deaths of despair from suicide or drug overdoses. Some of that is because Boomers did more drugs since adolescence, a stark generational difference.

When the Silent Generation were teens and young adults it was uncommon to use marijuana or really any kind of illicit drug. With Boomers, that became much more common. And I think that's one of the things that we're seeing with Boomers.

It's often assumed that Boomers are the perpetrators of income inequality. The idea that they climbed the ladder and then they pulled it up so Millennials couldn't climb it. Well, that's not true because Millennials are doing better economically than most people think. But also, when you look at the timing, it's actually the Greatest Generation. Those politicians who enforced the policies, which seemed to lead to more income inequality. That really started in the early 1980s. Boomers weren't in power at that

point. They were the first victims of income inequality. And that's why you see the biggest impacts among those without a college education. So a lot of those things hit them the hardest. Maybe they're the last generation to think, "Okay, I can graduate from high school, go get a factory job." But then those factory jobs went away.

You write that Gen X, when they were children, were pretty much isolated or didn't have a lot of parental supervision. Has that impacted the way they live their lives? Has it done anything to them that you have not seen in other generations?

I think it continues some of the trends from Boomers and the Silents. Those two generations also didn't have as much supervision as children do now. So, Gen X feels like it's the last generation that had more freedom during their childhood, more independence. And I think that's one of the reasons they pride themselves on being tough and on knowing how to solve problems in the real world.

The largest generation alive today is the Millennials. Am I correct?

Yes.

There's been this criticism I've heard - perhaps you've heard it, too - that they have been slow to grow up. What's bringing this about? Is this all technology? Is there something else going on?

Technology is at the root, but in a good way. Better medical care has meant longer lives. So people have more time. Because of technology, like birth control, people have fewer children and nurture them more carefully. So all of this leads to what's called a slow life strategy, of people taking longer to grow up. And that has had an impact on all the generations beginning with Boomers. For Millennials, it manifests in that they get married later and have children later and settle into careers later than previous generations. But that's not necessarily a bad thing, and it's something that we're seeing across the board. Another manifestation of slow life strategy is middle-aged people look and feel younger than their parents and grandparents did at the same age. So it's the idea that 60 is the new 50, 50 is the new 40. That's also part of the slow life strategy.

You also mentioned that Boomers, because they experienced a lot of harsh discipline growing up in comparison, wanted warmer, more positive relationships with their children. Does that help foster the slow life strategy with Millennials?

It's also that Boomers had their kids later and have fewer of them. And so that can change the family dynamic in a way that

does tend to pull for kids being more carefully protected.

You also seem very critical about Millennials, talking about their self-confidence and saying it seems, compared to other previous generations, off the charts. What are you seeing?

I should put that in context that I don't think any generation is all good or all bad. They have their trade-offs. There's plenty of variation within each. I think what did happen with Millennials is they really came to the peak of the emphasis on not just individualism, but everybody is special, everybody gets a trophy. These types of ideas in childhood – that we have to boost everybody's self-esteem – so that's going to lead to good things. Too bad that actually wasn't based on any research and isn't true. So, we have people going into the real world, saying, "Oh my God, nobody treats me as special." And what a lot of Millennials will say to that is, "That wasn't our fault." Well, yeah, actually, I agree with that because these are big cultural changes, and they did happen. And that, many people would argue, did them a disservice.

And do we blame their Baby Boomer parents for this?

I really don't think we should be using blame or fault or any of those things. I think it's counterproductive and encourages a bunch of finger-pointing and fighting, when the reality is things have changed. It's not just parents. It's everything. It's media. It's the structure of society. It's technology. It's so many things that any one person, any one parent, doesn't control. You could try to raise your kid saying, "Self-esteem isn't particularly important." But then they're going to learn it at school. So, overall, that's not really the point of trying to understand generations and these differences because we're all in this together. It's about

understanding each other better. And that's really why I wrote the book. Let's try to understand each other better.

Let's talk Millennials and sexuality. You write that lesbian sexual experience quadrupled from Boomers to Millennials, while gay male sex doubled from Boomers to Millennials. What's bringing this about?

A lot of it is greater acceptance. It's just individualism at the root of this, of people are different, including their sexuality.

Is it the same thing with drugs? That more accepted with Millennials compared to previous generations?

It's not as linear. There's some collinear patterns that happen there. If you look at high school students, the vast majority of drug use is marijuana. So that was really high in the late 70s with the Boomers. Then it actually went down for Gen Z. Then it came back for Millennials, maybe because they had Boomer parents, some people have speculated. And then it's been pretty stable, at least among high school students. It's gone up a lot more among young adults. But it's been stable for the last 10 or 15 years or so. It definitely has connections to individualism, but there's a lot of other factors too.

Millennials, you say, are less religious. Why?

So, I think that's also individualism. With religion, you have to believe in something bigger than yourself, and you have to follow certain rules. And that's not a great fit in a culture that says it's all about you. And that's not just Millennials. That trend has been going on for a while. I put that in the Millennial chapter because that's when there's a little bit of an inflection point. But it has been happening for several decades.



HAHN LOESER CONGRATULATES JOHN D. DRDEK

for his selection as one of SD Metro's 2024 *Men of Influence*.

John carries a constant commitment to clients and displays an unwavering dedication to his pro bono work with U.S. Veterans.

Congratulations to John and all of San Diego's *Men of Influence*.

HAHN LOESER
attorneys at law

HAHN LOESER & PARKS LLP | HAHNLAW.COM | 619.810.4300
600 WEST BROADWAY | SUITE 1500 | SAN DIEGO, CA 92101

SAN DIEGO | CHICAGO | CLEVELAND | COLUMBUS | FORT MYERS | NAPLES

When you think about Gen Z, is there anything else you've noticed that makes them stand out?

The other thing that's really striking about Gen Z is their relationship with gender. They're much more likely than other generations to say there's more than two genders. They're more likely to identify as transgender. They're more likely to identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. A lot of Gen Zers have a lot of language around gender and around sexual orientation, that many of their Gen X parents have never heard of. A lot of Gen Xers have learned a lot of language around gender and sexual orientation from Gen Z kids

You've done a lot of work. It's very, very clear from the books I've seen. I've read. Let me ask you this, what do all these generational differences mean for the country? Do you have any speculation, any ideas, of where you see things going?

That's the last chapter of the book, the future. What can we take from these datasets to figure out where we're going next? So one thing I dug into recently in my Substack (substack.com/@jeanmtwenge) was to update some of the data on attitudes around work. There's certainly some good news in this area. Gen Z, for example, is more likely to say they want a job that's directly helpful to others compared to previous generations. But there's also some striking trends just in the last couple years around work ethic or work-life balance. Fewer 18-year-olds say they're willing to work overtime. And this is a really quick change. This is in 2021, data 2022, compared to just 2020 and 2019.

So less likely to say that work's going to be a central part of their lives, less likely to say they would work even if they had enough money. Less likely to say that they think their chosen job is going to be very satisfying. We're probably at the beginning of a real reckoning around the meaning of work. And I think that will continue to play out, especially as more and more Gen Zers enter the workforce. The oldest Gen Zers are 29. So, if you're thinking your youngest employees are Millennials, they're not anymore.

Gen Z is very different from Millennials, so that's another thing. They're much more pessimistic compared to millennials at the same age.

Another thing on the horizon, is the birth rate coming back up? My answer to that is very simple. No. Because not only has that been on a substantial decline since 2007, but in the last five to 10 years, for the first time, there's been a decline in the number of 18-year-olds who say they want to have children. That had been at a very high level and stable since the 1970s, until the transition between Millennials and Gen Z. So, Millennials brought down the birth rate, and Gen Z is going to keep it there because they're not even saying they want kids when they're 18.

But don't views change between, say, the time you're 18, to the time you're 35 to 40? Or who you are at 18, does**that pretty much carry through the rest of your life?**

There certainly can be some changes. But I think the reason I don't think that particular attitude is going to change is that it's rooted in things that tend to be fairly stable. So like having an optimistic versus pessimistic point of view, that can certainly change with the way things go in the country. But that's a fundamental worldview that tends to be relatively stable.

When you think about the studies that you've done on generations, what scares you the most? What do you get worried about? What keeps you awake when you're thinking about what you've learned? Is there something on the horizon that most people are not recognizing?

The most concerning trend is the huge increase in depression and self-harm among teens and young adults. There are big increases. Teen depression doubled between 2011 and 2019. In other words, before the pandemic. And it kept going up during the pandemic. And that spread to young adults, and now it's spreading to adults in their 30s. And so if many people are struggling with mental health issues and depression, what does that mean? What does that mean for the people who say therapists and other people in the mental health field are overwhelmed? What does it mean for just the number of people suffering? What does it mean for the workplace? What does it mean for family life?

What drives your passion for this? You've been doing this for a long time, so it's obviously more than just a job for you, it would seem. What's bringing this all about?

I like understanding people and trying to help us understand each other better. That's definitely a core passion. But even better, I like trying to do that by listening to what people say in surveys and then crunching that data. I have come to realize that my favorite thing is opening up those datasets and seeing what it can tell me.

They're what people say about themselves. It's about listening. And I think that's one of the amazing things that you can do, in some of these datasets. Some of them have millions of people. I can listen to what is happening to people, how they're feeling, how they're spending their time, and what's important to them, by looking at these big survey datasets. These huge rows of numbers represent people's lives, and that's what I like the most about it.

You teach at San Diego State University. What are you seeing in students today? What are they like compared to when you were going to college?

The class I teach the most often is Personality Psychology. It's a large lecture class. The downside of that is I don't get to know my students personally as much. But I can certainly see some of the generational trends showing up. Students now are not as

talkative as they were 15 years ago, when it was Millennials. I've noticed that transition, which makes a lot of sense, given the psychological profile of those groups. The good news is they're also not as entitled. The Gen Z students are not quite as likely to show some of those symptoms of, "Hey, I need to ..." Because I had Millennial students say to me a long time ago, "Oh, I need to take the final late going to Vegas for my birthday." Really? What's your boss going to say? This is a senior.

So, I was like, "What's your boss going to say in three months when you say, 'I can't make the big presentation because I'm going to Vegas for my buddy's birthday', or whatever -- Seriously? So, you don't see as much of that anymore. My students are very, very nice, and they validated a research result that I just saw, that there'd been some issues with empathy declining among college students. And then that turned around after 2009 and it came back up. And I absolutely see that in my students. They care a lot about their fellow students in the world, and I think maybe because of that higher level of empathy, they're pleasant, nice, and very considerate.

Thank you, Dr. Twenge.

Coming in our March issue:

OUR GUIDE TO
SAN DIEGO COUNTY'S

TOP ATTORNEYS 2024

Help select San Diego's Best Attorneys.

Send us your nominations by March 1 via
our website sandiegometro.com or directly to
Rebeca Page at rebecapage@sandiegometro.com

SDMETRO
your business your life



BURNHAM-MOORES
CENTER FOR REAL ESTATE
KNAUSS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO

Congratulations STATH KARRAS

The Knauss School of Business at the University of San Diego and the Burnham-Moores Center for Real Estate (BMC) team proudly congratulate Stath Karras, executive director of the BMC, for being named one of SD Metro Magazine's 2024 Men of Influence.

A BETTER WAY TO BUSINESS sandiego.edu/business



San Antonio Offers a “Peace” of Home

By Marlise Kast-Myers | Photos by Benjamin Myers

It was November 5th when daylight savings time hit us with its annual reminder that the world can be a dark place. Not only was it creeping night into our day, but it introduced rain as if a switch had been flipped to turn off the sun. My husband, Benjamin and I were tired, both mentally and physically from running three businesses out of our home. And so, we took advantage of Veteran's Day weekend by booking a flight and running to the unknown.

In this case, it was San Antonio.

Neither of us had ever been, nor had we visited Texas in decades. When we first started dating, we learned our parents attended the same college in Dallas. Ironically, we “knew” each other as toddlers and spent the next 30 years following one another around the world from Washington and Germany to Spain and California.

Now married and nomadic, we would be returning to the Lone Star State as a drained duo looking for food, culture, and above all, a place to rest.

Hotel Emma delivered, especially on the last part, with a king bed, Frette linens, and black-out curtains that defied jetlag. Yet it was the lobby that had me creating Instagram stories at

check-in, lured by the industrial-meets-Texas-smokeasy style. Leather chesterfields and fireplace nooks dotted the warehouse-esqe foyer where towering machinery replaced bouquets on mahogany tables.

Back in 1894, the landmark property made its debut as Pearl's Brewhouse, designed by Chicago architect August Maritzen. As San Antonio's only brewery to survive Prohibition, the Pearl resurrected as “Emma” in 2015 after a 14-year closure.

Despite the passing of time, Maritzen's blueprints are still trending, with the riverfront hotel serving as the flagship for Pearl's culinary and cultural hub. The city has Pace Picante Sauce to thank for that . . . well, sort of. In 1994, Christopher “Kit” Goldsbury, sold Pace Foods to Campbell Soup for over \$1 billion in cash. Among other things, Kit invested his fortune back into his hometown of San Antonio with the development of the Pearl.

Not a bad move considering growth was everywhere, with many developers following the Pearl's pattern of restoring history to improve the future. As one Uber driver put it, “It's like every developer in the city decided to start construction on the same day.”



San Antonio Missions National Park is part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Albeit true, it meant progress was on the horizon. For now, that horizon is made up of scaffolding, cranes, and signs reading “pardon our dust.” After margaritas in the hotel Library, we followed that dust to the historic River Walk in downtown (also under construction).

As the leading attraction in Texas, the urban river was the brainchild of Robert H. H. Hugman, an architect who envisioned winding pathways skirting the channel. Not only would it navigate heavy rains, but it would serve as a pedestrian zone lined with shops and restaurants. Hugman’s proposal dating back to 1929 came to fruition, now drawing its biggest crowd during the holidays when 100,000 Christmas lights illuminate the River Walk.

For now, we would settle for that year-round florescent glow of purple, blue, and green, and pink that bounced off the water, reflecting images of Parisian bridges and rainbow umbrellas. The scent of brewing storms and beef brisket took us to Smoke restaurant where we ordered Texas BBQ, baked beans, and mac and cheese. I held onto the menu, looking for something familiar and less colossal.

“They don’t have salad, if that’s what you’re looking for,” my husband said.

I was, and I didn’t find it. But that’s okay, because “Y’all know everything’s bigger in Texas,” our waitress told us.

Ain’t that the truth. Not only is it bigger, but it might even be better. Well, at least that’s what the locals say, many of whom transferred from the “C” word to capitalize on affordable housing, low cost of living, conservative politics, and open employment opportunities.

Understandably so. There’s a Texas pride and independent spirit that can almost be felt from the tips of your boots to the brim of your hat. After dinner, we hopped aboard GO RIO’s 35-minute San Antonio River Walk boat tour. Speaking over a microphone to beer-cozied passengers, our guide pointed out highlights along the 15-mile River Walk that connects Brackenridge Park to five Spanish missions.

With great gusto, he told us that Texas—once an independent nation—is the only state that can fly its flag at the same height as the American flag. The U.S. Flag Code would state otherwise, but hey, if the boat captain wants to spread his hometown love, who am I to complain if he “breaks his own arm patting himself on the back,” as the locals say.

Texas has an authentic culture, one I envy just a bit, where loving your neighbor actually means something; where terms like “ma’am” and “sir” are still heard; where football is a lifestyle, and the First Amendment is a priority; where a bootstrapping resilience and Texan pride has the power to withstand ridicule and opposing views in an ongoing fight for freedom.

We felt that patriotism, right there at the Alamo. Established in 1718 as Mission San Antonio de Valero, this fortress is where the Battle of the Alamo ended in 1836 with Mexico conquering Texas.

Congratulations! Andrew Chapman

Training Director | Bill Howe Plumbing



San Diego Metro's Men of Influence 2024

“Thank you for inspiring the next generation of plumbers, your tireless commitment to our community, and helping to create an environment of growth at Bill Howe!”



NAMED ONE OF SD METRO'S MEN OF INFLUENCE



CONGRATULATIONS

MORGAN APPEL

ASSISTANT DEAN,
EDUCATION and COMMUNITY OUTREACH

UC San Diego
EXTENDED STUDIES

extendedstudies.ucsd.edu



Hotel Emma lures with a style of industrial-meets-smokeasy.

Nearly 200 Texans were killed in their fight for independence, including Davy Crockett, making the 13-day battle a turning point in the Texas Revolution.

There was plenty of history to experience including the Spanish-mission complex, the Alamo Church, the living-history encampment, and the Alamo Exhibit in the new Ralston Family Collections Center housing hundreds of artifacts—many of which were donated by musician, Phil Collins.

Less than a mile from this compound that had made history was a restaurant trying to join it. In 1992, Rosario's was rescued from bankruptcy and reinvented as Rosario's ComidaMex and Bar serving from-scratch Mexican comfort food. Powerful margaritas, fire-roasted salsa and chips, and enchiladas gave us plenty of reasons to "walk it off" at the Spanish Colonial Missions.

The Alamo, Mission Concepcion, Mission San Jose, Mission San Juan, and Mission Espada comprise San Antonio's five missions—four of which are protected and preserved by San Antonio Missions National Historical Park.

In 2015, the park's collection of Spanish Colonial architecture earned it the title as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the first and only in Texas. Perhaps it was the rain or the darkness of the sky, but the missions felt somber and sacred, as if the walls wanted to cry out with stories of the indigenous people from 300 years ago.

With its rich history alone, you could easily spend a day at the park, and many do. Bikes are available for rent at the visitor center, meaning you can pedal your way from mission-to-mission (via River Foundation Project, Confluence Park) along the 15-mile San Antonio River Walk Trail.

We Ubered.

One, because it was raining, and two because we wanted to eat. And eat we did, this time at Silo Prime. Located at the Fairmount Hotel, the property made international news—and the Guinness World Record—in 1985 when it was lifted onto rollers and moved

five blocks to its current location. Saved from demolition, the 1906 Fairmount is still one of the grandest structures in the city.

But it was the steakhouse inside that wooed us with its dim lighting, live piano, and a menu by Chef Gary Boatman. From the open kitchen, flames were flying and skillets were flipping, leaving us with choices like BBQ shrimp, Texas quail, and 14-ounce ribeye.

We took the waiter's advice of "everything tastes better with bacon," and opted for the signature fried oysters with apples, bacon, and hollandaise sauce. My husband ordered the filet, and I got the sea bass with lobster knuckles and tarragon butter. The portions were Texas size, of course.

"Help me," I begged, holding up my fork. I could feel my arteries clogging like a drain.

"Look at my plate," he countered. "These shoestring fries are the size of telephone poles."

After dinner, we loaded our bellies into an Uber, one of 16 trips we made in four days. When we asked about nightlife, our driver spoke of blue-collar workers that rise early and prioritize faith and family.

"We'll shut down early around here," he added.

And so, we adopted that mentality, sleeping deeply at Hotel Emma so we could rise early for the day ahead. But first, coffee.

The nearby Crème awakened our minds, teasing San Antonio on the brink of a boom. This emerging city had already grabbed our attention with the Pearl, and now even more so when we learned of The Creamery district. Dating back to 1938, this former Borden Dairy facility is slated to be a mixed-use neighborhood with offices, restaurants, shops, and apartments to work, play, and live. For now, the Parisian-inspired Crème was the test project that had passed with flying colors; the place was packed with patrons who appeared to have the freedom to work, or not.

We followed suit, heading to San Antonio Museum of Art (SAMA) for our non-working getaway. Spanning 5,000 years, the impressive art collection is housed in the former Lone Star Brewery. SAMA has the largest collection of Greek, Roman, and Egyptian art in the southern U.S, as well as works from Korea, India, Japan, China, and the Americas.

That afternoon was spent getting lost in the right direction; first with a walk through Hemisfair Park, followed by a trip up the 750-foot Tower of the Americas. This 1968 World's Fair site is being redeveloped into a walkable green-space neighborhood. From the observation deck, we pointed out landmarks to see just how far we had come, and where we had yet to go.

After powering up with lunch at The Good Kind (they have salad), we swung by Hopscotch, an immersive, interactive art space. And boy did I interact.

"Look, a ball pit!" I dove in headfirst, while my husband closed his eyes in front of the light-therapy installation. I ran from room-to-room, pushing buttons and clapping at the outcome. Meanwhile, Benjamin had written "I love Marliese" in flawless graffiti-style with laser spray cans on a brick wall. From a neon labyrinth to a cave

made out of plastic bags, the child-like wonder continued at the bar with my cocktail rimmed with Pop Rocks.

That evening, the sky opened, and the rain poured. For us, it didn't matter. We had the best spot in the house at Camp Hot Wells. On the south side of town, this bath house has sulfur-spring-fed soaking tubs. Drinks and nibbles can be delivered at the push of a button, but we saved our charcuterie appetites for Cured.

Helmed by six-time James Beard Foundation Award Finalist, Chef Steve McHugh, Cured greets you with penny-tile floors and a charcuterie case of signature meats. The tin ceiling and bistro chairs set the stage for hand-crafted, farmhouse dishes that are made in house; Jams, pickles, mustards, bitters, vinegars — all as homemade as it gets.

Chorizo, pork belly, tuna — about a dozen types of cured meats grace the charcuterie list, as well as local cheeses which we tried and

loved. Needless to say, we went out with a bang, adding Cured as one of favorite restaurants of all time.

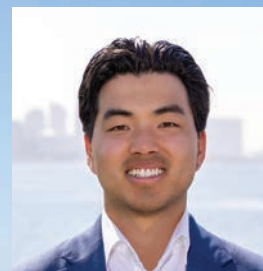
Before our flight home, I swam laps in the pool while Benjamin explored the weekly Farmer's Market at the Pearl. Clinging to the edge, I gazed up the brick wall of the 19th century brewhouse-turned-hotel.

I thought about "Kit" Goldsbury and the Pearl where all could shine in the present under the spotlight of the past. I thought about our cocktails at Emma "paid" with wooden nickels and the noble integrity of architects gone before. I thought about the limestone walls of the Alamo and the privilege of walking in the steps of heroes. I thought about how the second biggest city in Texas had the power to win me over with a wink of small-town charm.

I guess sometimes, you just need to run away to the unknown to find a "peace" of home.

CONGRATULATIONS

TO OUR CEO, JASON LEE, on his well-deserved recognition as a San Diego Man of Influence by SD METRO magazine! Jason's passion for fostering a positive company culture, nurturing strong team bonds, and mentoring new agents exemplifies his commitment to leadership. Join us as we celebrate his inspiring leadership and his outstanding accomplishments in the San Diego real estate industry.



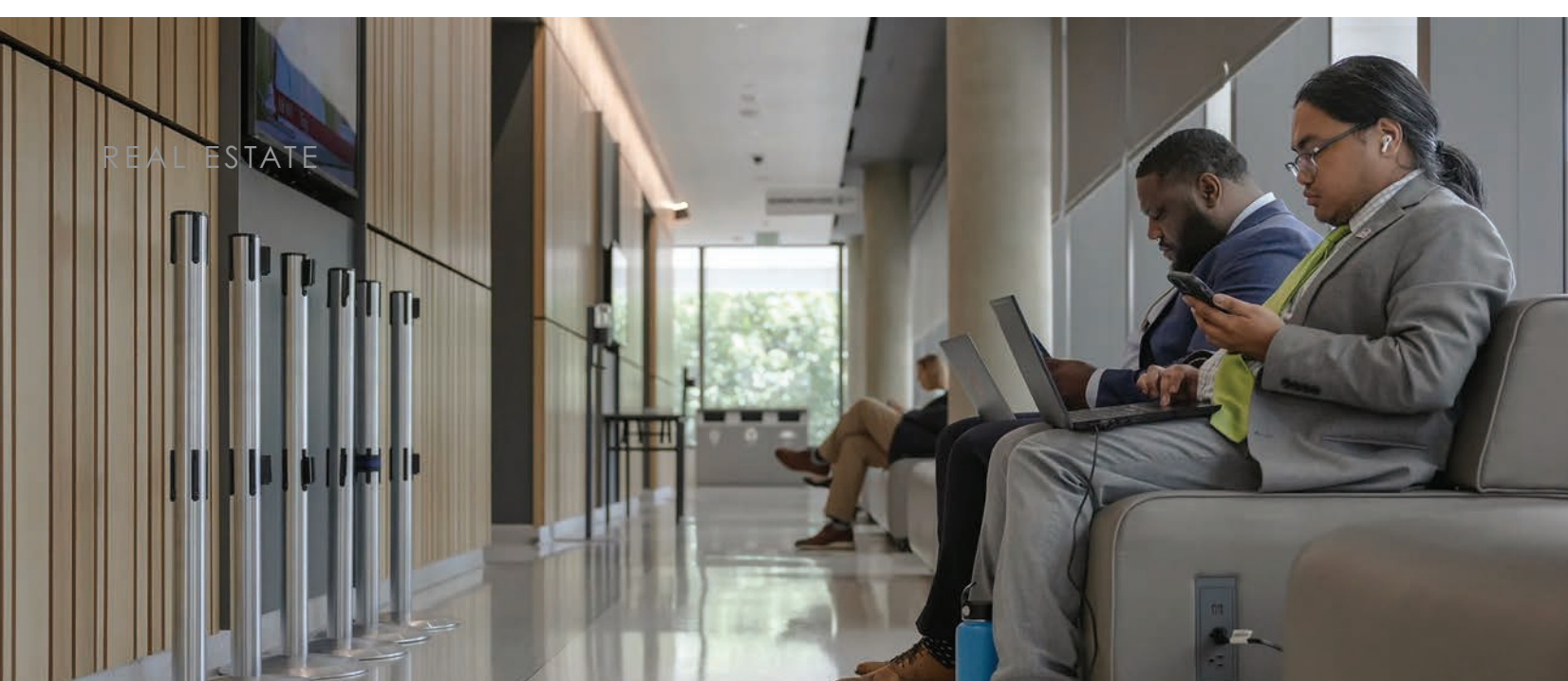
Congratulations JESUS "CHUY" NUÑEZ 2023-24 Men of Influence

Thank you, Chuy, for being a leader of our organization for 20+ years!
Your dedication to the unhoused community – whom we serve at Monarch School Project and the wider San Diego community.
Thank you for reminding us to "Win the Day!"



monarch school project
monarchschooldproject.org

Monarch School Project nurtures resilience in unhoused youth and their families. We empower students to influence their own growth in academic and social emotional learning. We reinforce the existing strength of families so that students can thrive in school and in life.



James Michael Agpalo, an intern lobbyist, views the state Senate Appropriations Committee session on suspense file day at the state Capitol in Sacramento on Sept. 1, 2023. Photo by Rahul Lal for CalMatters

A Record Amount Spent Influencing California's Government

By CalMatters

Last year was a good year to be a lobbyist in California. Advocacy efforts shattered records in 2023, with nearly \$480 million poured into influencing legislation and regulatory decisions making their way through state government.

That amount eclipsed the previous high of \$440 million spent in 2022, based on figures from the California Secretary of State.

Here are the 10 companies and organizations that spent the most on lobbying California's state government last year.

#1: Chevron

The California-based oil company forked over \$74.5 million since 2005 to influence state government. In the final quarter of 2023, Chevron reported spending \$1.2 million to try and get its way with state officials, including Gov. Gavin Newsom, and several state agencies, such as the Public Utilities Commission, the Air Resources Board and the Energy Commission.

#2: Hawaiian Garden Casino

The Los Angeles County-based Hawaiian Garden Casino spent more than four-fifths of all the lobbying dollars it has invested over the past two decades. It continued to lobby on a so-far unsuccessful bill related to casino regulations and reported trying to influence the Bureau of Gambling Control on a

blackjack proposal.

#3: Western States Petroleum Association

The oil industry trade group is consistently a top employer of lobbyists and has been one of the top three spenders in every legislative session going back at least a decade. In the fourth quarter of 2023, it reported lobbying the Legislature and the governor's office and other state agencies.

The trade group lobbied on a proposed windfall profit tax on refining gas that was eventually watered down.

#4: McDonald's

The fast-food restaurant spent more than \$5.6 million on lobbying in 2023, making it the fourth largest spender. That level of spending on state advocacy is new for the company, which had previously spent only \$100,000 lobbying the state government since 2005.

Why the push? McDonalds, along with other fast-food chains, fought against a fast-food council charged with setting workplace standards. The industry successfully got a referendum on the ballot to repeal the law, but a compromise was reached with AB 1228, which modified the jurisdiction of the council, and the industry agreed to pull the referendum off the ballot.

#5: PacifiCorp

A power company with customers in California, Oregon and Washington, it spent more than \$5 million in 2023, making it the fifth largest spender last year. It lobbied the Public Utilities Commission on several issues, including rates and an application to construct a substation in Shasta County that was originally submitted nearly a decade ago. The company has spent nearly \$15 million on lobbying in the state in the last 15 years.

#6: SEIU

This organization, which represents workers, including public employees, spent \$3.9 million last year, making it the sixth largest lobbyist employer for the year. Since January 2005, the group has dropped more than \$73 million on hired advocates.

#7: Energy Foundation

The Foundation spent \$4.3 million last year. The San Francisco-based nonprofit gives grants for clean energy projects and tried to influence the Air Resources Board's implementation of "clean fleet" regulations.

#8: Waymo

A subsidiary of Alphabet, which also owns Google, it spent \$3.8 million on lobbying efforts last year. The "robotaxi" company reported trying to persuade the Legislature on a bill that would require human back-up truck drivers. The bill was vetoed by Gov. Newsom. Two months later, the company contributed \$9,500 to the governor's campaign committee supporting Proposition 1, the mental health measure on the March 5 ballot. In 2022, Waymo contributed \$5,000 to Newsom's re-election campaign.

#9: California Hospital Association

A trade group for more than 400 hospitals and health care systems, it spent more than \$3.5 million on lobbying last year. It has spent more than \$57 million since 2005. It lobbied the Legislature on 17 bills, most related to health care workers and hospital regulations.

#10: California Chamber of Commerce

The group reported trying to influence more than 150 bills, at a cost of more than \$3.4 million during the year. The chamber has spent nearly \$60 million on lobbying the state since 2005.

Improving the Communities We Serve

At SDCCU, people come first and profits second.
We support many non-profits throughout Southern California.



SDCCU Stuff the Bus®
Over 1.7 million school supplies provided to students in need



SDCCU Super Shred Event® and Shred Days
Over 3.4 million pounds of paper recycled



Presents for Paws
Nearly \$114,000 raised for local animal shelters and rescues



SDCCU Blood Drives
Nearly 1,300 units of blood collected, saving over 3,875 lives

AND SO MUCH MORE! Learn More at sdccu.com/community.

sdccu.com®

(877) 732-2848

Membership required. Federally insured by NCUA. Results from 2015 to present.



PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #3175
SAN DIEGO, CA



AND IT'S JUST THE BEGINNING OF YOUR ASCENT.

Congratulations
from Alaska Airlines
to San Diego's
Men of Influence.
Your ambition and
success are what
keeps taking you—
and San Diego—to
new heights.

Alaska
AIRLINES