

PRESS RELEASE
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SB Museum of Natural History Announces Seven New Trustees

SANTA BARBARA, CA— The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History is proud to announce seven new members of its Board of Trustees: Lauren Booth, Melissa Fassett, Tim Kochis, Corinne Laverty, Keith Reichel, Sarah Sheshunoff, and Lotus Vermeer. Each brings a unique personal and professional skillset to assist in advancing the museum's mission to inspire a thirst for discovery and a passion for the natural world.



As a 5th generation Californian, **Loren Booth** is president of Booth Ranches, a vertically integrated family-run company that farms superior quality oranges from Fresno to Maricopa. Having studied at both Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and Cal Poly, Pomona, Booth credits much of her success to the California Agricultural Leadership Program. When not working, she enjoys spending time with her reining horses and family.



Melissa Fassett is a partner with the law firm of Price, Postel & Parma LLP. Her practice emphasizes advising and representing management in all aspects of labor and employment law and intellectual property. Fassett has advised many non-profits in the Santa Barbara community and she has been an active board member/volunteer on local boards. She and her husband enjoy the many outdoor activities offered by the Santa Barbara area, and support the goal of the SB Museum of Natural History to preserve and bring its nature and history to others.



R. Timothy Kochis is CEO of Kochis Global, a global financial services consultancy, and the former CEO and chairman of Aspiriant. Kochis has nearly 50 years of experience in personal financial and investment planning. He earned his master's degree in Business Administration from the University of Chicago, his law degree from the University of Michigan, and his undergraduate degree from Marquette University. Kochis served in the US Army, which included a tour of duty in Vietnam, where he received a Purple Heart for wounds received in action.

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Corinne Heyning Laverty is a research associate and fellow at the Natural History Museum, Los Angeles County, an associate of the Santa Cruz Island Foundation and a member of the All Eight Club, a geographic organization that tracks the people who have ever set foot on all eight Channel Islands. She holds undergraduate and graduate business degrees, from the University of Virginia, and University of Southern California, respectively. She retired from MUFG Union Bank, N.A. where she spent most of her professional career as a lender and in risk management and Treasury. Corinne is the bestselling author of *North America's Galapagos: The Historic Channel Islands Biological Survey*.



Native Santa Barbarian **Keith Reichel** was introduced to the natural sciences while attending after-school and summer SBMNH classes. These classes sparked a lifelong passion that led to a bachelor of science degree in Zoology from UC Davis. Keith returned to Santa Barbara to begin his career at a local start-up that develops and manufactures medical and aerospace grade specialty silicones. Keith retired as part of the executive team 28 years later. Keith is delighted and honored to come full circle with the museum that was so inspirational in enriching his life to be.



Originally from San Diego, **Sarah Sheshunoff** received a B.A. in Anthropology and Geography from UC Berkeley and a J.D. from UC Berkeley School of Law. Sarah then moved to Anchorage, Alaska where she clerked for both the Superior and Appellate Courts and practiced criminal defense. Eight years ago, Sarah, her husband, and her two boys moved first to Ojai, and then to Santa Barbara where they'd fallen in love with all the city has to offer, especially the SB Museum of Natural History. Most recently, Sarah has served as an Interim Executive Director for a small rare disease non-profit called RUNX1 Research Program, performed contract legal work, and helps support local nonprofits with meeting facilitation and program evaluation.



Lotus Vermeer is a marine biologist and primatologist by training. She was the Marine Director of the Global Sustainable Fisheries Program at The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Director of TNC's Channel Islands Program, and lead successful island restoration and endangered species recovery. She spent three years at Earthwatch Institute in Boston and 10+ years in the eastern Caribbean leading conservation efforts and educational outreach campaigns to provide protection for endangered sea turtles and other at-risk marine species. Lotus is the Assistant Dean for Partnerships & Development for the Bren School of Environmental Science & Management at UC Santa Barbara. Lotus has a Ph.D. in Marine Ecology from Dalhousie University, a MSc in Marine Resource and Environmental Management from the University of the West Indies, and a MSc and BSc in Behavioral Ecology and Primatology from McGill University.

The Board of Trustees executive committee includes Terrence Valeski as Chair, Christopher Knowlton as Immediate Past Chair, Venesa Faciane as Vice Chair Governance, Salvatore "Tory" Milazzo as Vice Chair Finance, Susan Parker as Vice Chair Development, Brad Willis as Secretary, and Hank Mitchell as Member at Large.

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

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About the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

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