

Chapter Profile: Southern California Chapter

July 21, 2010



Recently, we spent time with **Susanne Molina, IIDA**, Outgoing President of the **Southern California Chapter**, to learn more about what's going on in her Chapter.

DesignMatters: How do you ensure working well together as a Board?

Susanne Molina: This past year we instigated a new "event" for the board. At the beginning of the year--as opposed to when the new term starts--after everyone has had an opportunity to get adjusted to their new position, we held a 2-day strategic planning session to review the Mission of the Chapter, discuss issues at hand, get to know one another better, and map out the balance of the year. This event was extremely valuable to everyone and will continue for years to come.

DesignMatters: How do you ensure working well together as a Board?

Susanne Molina continued: From day to day, our Board is comprised of working professionals; therefore, time is of a premium and we all recognize that. In addition to our monthly conference calls and quarterly Board Meetings, we communicate through e-mail and targeted conference calls.

It has been my goal to make myself available to the entire Board as needed for support and direction. Our Board Members have taken this further through the City Centers and their respective Committees. This past year, in an effort to support the increasing technology that many of our Board members utilize on a daily basis, we have made some adjustments with our Executive Director to provide the electronic support necessary.



Calibre Committee 2010 from left to right: Robyn Taylor, Assoc. IIDA; Tim Penczar, Ind. IIDA (HBF); Elizabeth Dea (Herman Miller); Hilary Luckenbaugh, Affiliate IIDA (Environmental Contracting Corporation); Dave Friedlund (Wirt Design); Sandy Wilson, Affiliate IIDA (Systems Source); Jeffrey Greenbaum, Affiliate IIDA (HOK); Eric Magallon, (Nuespace); Norene Nye, Ind. IIDA (Bentley Prince Street); Betty Friedrichs, Ind. IIDA (Tandus); Leigh Robbins; Marci Loftin (Corporate Contractors); Karen Rector (Haworth); Mary Davis, Ind. IIDA (Luna Textiles); Roy Huebner (WOLCOTT).

DM: What are you most proud of as outgoing President?

SM: Having just stepped down as President, I am most proud to see those Board members who have decided to continue on for another year, as well as the new Board members that we have been able to recruit.

They say you are only as strong as your weakest link. Looking at our Board, we must be doing something right to have these individuals (and their companies) give up their professional and personal time to represent our Chapter and to support the Profession at large.



I am equally proud that after many years, the Southern California Chapter has returned to the National stage with the [Leaders Breakfast](#). We are a large Chapter from which many National IIDA Presidents have been recruited, including our current President, Viveca Bissonnette, and it is time that Southern California once again joined this esteemed group of Chapters.

DM: What's the composition of the Chapter?



SM: The Chapter spans Southern California from Santa Barbara down to the Border. Predominantly, our Members are practicing commercial designers for contract, hospitality and higher education. Many of our Members are former IBD members that continued on as IIDA was formed. We also have a very strong Membership base of manufacturers, contractors and instructors – without whose support our Chapter would not be where it is today.

DM: Do you have any particular goals for 2010 that you can share with us?

SM:

1. To strengthen the infrastructure of the Chapter to provide a strong support to both the Board and the Chapter Members.
2. To continue the momentum of the previous Chapter Presidents that attracts a highly qualified individual to join the Board and give back to the Profession.
3. To increase interaction with other Chapters. This year we are planning on holding a regional CLC with the Northern California, Northern Pacific and Oregon Chapters for an open exchange.
4. To continue the good fight of legislation – although this is not one to be realized any time soon, it is my continued goal to help others understand why it is important and to support it when the time for action comes again.

DM: What is your favorite Chapter event of the year?

SM: Calibre, hands down, is THE EVENT of the year. It is certainly the biggest event for our Chapter and draws its attendees from the local as well as national scene. It is a time when we recognize our industry partners through the Team awards.



We all know that behind every great design project is a team that brought it to realization. To cap it off, we also have the pleasure of having our esteemed CEO and Executive VP, Cheryl Durst, speak to the Chapter.

DM: What three words would you use to describe the Southern California Chapter?

SM: Robust, Talented, Innovative

DM: Just for fun, what are three things that Susanne Molina can't live without?

SM: Family, friends and wine