



Atlanta -Gracia Conn

If anyone ever met the criteria to be ARCS Light it is **Gracia Conn**. She has taken an active role on the Atlanta Board in some capacity since she first joined ARCS in 2002 and immediately became Historian – a challenging job for anyone,

let alone a new member. She then moved on to other important jobs such as Newsletter editor, ARCS Scholar vice-chair, Scholar Luncheon co-chair, VP for Communications, and Database chair. After she agreed to be president-elect she was called upon to take on the responsibility early when the president became ill. Then Gracia had her own battle with cancer while serving as Chapter President. Now, as assistant to the president, she continues to take on a leadership role in ARCS, an organization in which she clearly believes. Her dedication, competency, loyalty and commitment make her an excellent representative of our chapter!



Colorado – Joan Obert

Joan Obert was born in Edgerton, WI where she was raised by their music teacher mother. Joan loved school and worked as the lab assistant to Dr. John Stauffer, chairman of the Botany Department. In 1965, she had a technical

paper published on the emerging antibiotic resistance in Staphylococcus aureus. After relocating to Iowa, she received a B.S. in Botany from Iowa State University, then taught Biology near Des Moines. After moving to Denver in 1976 she returned to the science classroom at Smoky Hill High School in 1984.

In 2000 Joan and Bill Obert were married at the Air Force Academy, and was able to retire in 2004. Joan was introduced to ARCS and immediately found an outlet for an abiding desire to promote science education. About Joan's ARCS friends she says: "I can't imagine a more genuine and enthusiastic group than my ARCS friends."

Joan quietly goes about arranging for all meetings and for the past three years has also been in charge of the Gala. With Joan, the chapter gets two for the price of one. Col. Bill Obert is always by Joan's side to help us to set up and break down for events. Joan Obert is the epitome of what an ARCS Light represents.



Hawaii – Pat Cooper

Pat Cooper recruited many of the current ARCS Honolulu Chapter members, including President Patty Lee and Past President Cheryl Ernst. She has held several positions on the board, both before and after serving as Chapter President 2000–2002. She can

be counted on for sage advice at meetings and delicious baked goods at events.

Pat, a Short Hills, New Jersey native studied at the University of Hawai'i at Ma'noa, earning a PhD focusing on marine geophysics. She joined the Department of Geology and Geophysics faculty, teaching, doing outreach and participating in numerous research cruises investigating the formation and composition of the ocean floor. Pat served as associate dean of the School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology and as dean of the university's Graduate Division. Her career-long commitment to education includes advocacy for and mentoring of women in science and service as a co-principal investigator of the NSF-funded Center for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence program to improve science literacy about the ocean. Since retiring, she has relished in her more recent role as Gramie.



Illinois – Tara Fowler

Tara Fowler has been an active and devoted member of ARCS since the mid-1990s when she joined the Chicago Chapter. Shortly after joining she was recruited to serve as communications liaison to news outlets throughout the city to which she regularly submitted photographs and stories of ARCS events. In 2008, she assumed the position of Recording Secretary, and has served loyally in that capacity ever since. Throughout the years, Tara also worked on committees for the Scholar Awards Luncheon and the Annual Benefit.

Born in Chicago, Tara spent most of her early years in Hinsdale. Following graduation from Hinsdale High School, she pursued a degree from Stanford University and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in history. Upon graduating from Stanford, she returned to Chicago to accept a staff position in a large law office and for the next 30 years, moved up the ranks, eventually attaining the position of general office manager.

Tara enjoys serving on the Women's Board of the Lincoln Park Zoo and lending support to worthy organizations throughout the city. She is an active member of the Haute Couture Club and is an accomplished seamstress. She and her husband, Paul, enjoy traveling to visit their children and grandchildren



Los Angeles – Virginia Young

After graduating from college, **Virginia Young** began working for Litton Industries as a Legal Secretary and held various positions during her 36-year career there, culminating in Vice President and Corporate Secretary.

One of Virginia's responsibilities at Litton was to head the Foundation of the Litton Industries, where she first heard of ARCS Foundation, Inc., and the mission. Virginia and Litton were proud to be among the aerospace/defense companies in Los Angeles that supported the mission of ARCS Foundation in a big way. Upon retiring from Litton in 2001, ARCS Foundation came into her life (as a member), and ARCS has been a big part of it ever since.

Virginia and her husband Greg live in Beverly Hills with their two, long-time loyal canine companions, Toby and Suki. Virginia's daughter Leslie is also a Director of ARCS Foundation, lives nearby and brings her dog Chloe over for nanny care while she is at work.



Metro Washington – Karen Finkbiner

Karen Finkbiner is the 2016-2017 Metro Washington Chapter ARCS Light. She joined the chapter in 1996 and has always been a key member of the group and a delight to work with. Before joining the Chapter, she was a member of the Los Angeles Chapter since

1994.

In 2004, she was named an ARCS Angel. Throughout the years, she has served on many Standing Committees including the Nominating, Special Events, Activities, the Silent Auction Committee. In 2011-12 she co-chaired the Benefit Gala. In 2012-13 she served as Secretary on the Board of Directors. Most recently she served as co-president with Lynn Dillon and Sally Burns. In this position, she represented our Chapter and assisted her co-presidents by traveling to ARCS Foundation National Meetings.

She is known by her sunny disposition, her cheerful smile and her calm and pleasant ways. We know her by her willingness to always actively participate throughout the years in ways that fulfill the many needs of our Chapter. She has also been known to turn her attention to learning to play the piano. Karen is recognized for her desire to step in when needed and to be helpful in every situation.



Minnesota – Kristen Sheikh

Kristen Sheikh is recognized by the Minnesota Chapter for her ongoing contributions since becoming a founding member of the Chapter in 2009. She has served in various leadership roles, and is currently the VP of Public Relations.

Her passion for ARCS Foundation stems from the significant effect on her family's life. Her husband, Suneel Sheikh Ph.D., was the recipient of ARCS scholar awards while he earned his doctorate from the University of Maryland. Kristen joined ARCS Metro Washington in 2005, where she was the first spouse of an ARCS Scholar Alumni to become part of their chapter.

Outside of ARCS, Kristen sits on the Board of Directors of her husband's navigation technology company, ASTER Labs, Inc., the owner and principal designer of Bruit de la Mode Inc., an interior design firm, and is a professional member of both the ASID and IIDA. Kristen holds a B.S. in Textiles and Clothing from the University of Minnesota and a B.A. in Interior Design from Marymount University, Virginia.

Kristen, Suneel and friends/family are very active as organizers of the Institute of Navigation's Autonomous Snowplow Competition. For family life Kristen and Suneel are proud parents to a seven year- old son, who shows strengths in both the arts and science.



Northern California– Deborah Mann

Deborah Mann joined the Northern California Chapter in 2014. A professional event planner, she chaired our Scholar Awards Luncheon in 2015 and applied her years of experience to the new Scholar Awards Celebration in November 2016. She expanded our annual "friend-raising"

luncheon by reaching out to a new evening audience and including a fundraising element. Her vision, energy and professionalism led to a very successful inaugural event.

Born in Syracuse, NY, Deborah graduated from U.C. Berkeley with a B.A. in French and went on to receive her M.A. in Bilingual/Bicultural Education from the University of San Francisco. After a career in management and merchandising in high-end women's fashions for I. Magnin, Saks Fifth Avenue and Neiman Marcus, she changed her focus and went to work for Wells Fargo in retail bank management. After chairing a fundraiser for the San Francisco Opera Guild, she was asked to interview for a nonprofit event-planning contract. For the past 18+ years, Deborah has enjoyed a successful career producing nonprofit, private and corporate events.

Over the years, Deborah has supported a variety of community, cultural and education-based organizations. She enjoys travel, films, politics; food and wine, performance arts, sports, dogs, and historical fiction. Family and friends are the center of her world.



Orange County– Judy Greenspon

From U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer to Founder of an Engineering Design Services Firm to Global Philanthropist, **Judy Greenspon** likes to share how growing up in Indiana propelled her to explore more than 25 countries, develop

an exciting career and seek solutions to global humanitarian and environmental challenges and opportunities. For the past 30 years, she applied her creative analytical education with the wisdom and cultural gems of her journeys to unique product development management acumen.

Although Judy leads a company on the forefront of technology, she is deeply committed to being a good corporate citizen through her ongoing involvement philanthropic organizations such as Orange County ARCS Foundation. She is also involved in National Peace Corps Association, St. Mary's College of Notre Dame, University of California, Irvine Samueli School of Engineering, Science@OC and AISS. Judy enjoys the benefits of technology to manage her life simply and remotely while freeing her up to focus the next chapter of her life – GIVING BACK – while still maintaining ownership of her 20-year-old company NPI Services, Inc. in Costa Mesa California.



Phoenix – Sandy Kennedy

“The purpose and people of ARCS are what drew me to the organization,” says **Sandy Kennedy**, Phoenix Chapter ARCS Light. Sandy has been an ARCS member since 1997, when she accepted Nancy Spetzler’s invitation to a field trip and decided to join in

the mission. A mother of two, she graduated from Northwestern University with a major in Art History and moved with her family to Phoenix thirty years ago. She and Dick, her husband of fifteen years, have a combined family of seven grown children and thirteen grandchildren. They love to travel and have hiked and camped the Inca Trail at Machu Picchu and journeyed on the Mont-Blanc Express in France and Switzerland. Other activities that Sandy enjoys are tennis, golf (with a decent handicap), riding bikes, gardening, and reading.

Sandy has long been a loyal, active member of our ARCS chapter and has contributed greatly, serving as Vice President of both University Relations and Membership and as Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Historian, Parliamentarian, and director of Field Trips and Hospitality.



Pittsburgh – Jennifer Martin

Jennifer Martin has a long leadership history as a “professional volunteer” (and many awards to show for her effectiveness) in various civic and educational organizations in Northern and Southern California and then Pittsburgh.

Jennifer made a positive, lasting impact on ARCS Pittsburgh as an essential member of the Finance Committee. Her commitment to do whatever was necessary was especially valued when our bookkeeping was very much in flux. We were changing from a system in QuickBooks and spreadsheets to relying on the ARCS website database. The transition required voluminous amounts of data input and understanding of finances both of which Jennifer provided. Plus, she is such fun to work that she made a pretty onerous task enjoyable. Also, she was indispensable on our Nominating Committee, always willing to call people to discuss board roles and, she was good at it since her contacts usually accepted the positions. Most recently she served as chair of our Program Committee, organizing, and communicating about six or more programs for our members each year. Throughout her enthusiastic ARCS membership, she has been a sparkling support to all our board members.



Oregon – Jamie Anderson

Jamie Anderson, ARCS Oregon member since 2010, is quiet and gracious, ready to volunteer and accept any tasks asked of her. She is an Oregon State University, (OSU), graduate with many interests and

talents - a master gardener, writer, artist, reader, hiker, excellent cook and photographer. Jamie has served as VP of Communications, Nominating Committee Chair and newsletter editor. She attends ARCS events and meetings, photographing members and scholars, keeping informed about committee work. Jamie has mastered MailChimp, with colorful graphics, coordinating with committees to announce events in a timely manner and alerting members to scholar thesis defenses. She and her husband have joined in 3 scholar awards, supporting scholars at OSU, Oregon Health & Science University and University of Oregon, (UO). They have endowed a scholar award at UO. This fall, her 93-year-old father will give a scholar award. Jamie and her family are major supporters of the ALS Association.



San Diego -Bobbie Vandervoort

Barbara “Bobbie” Vandervoort first joined ARCS as a member of the Chicago Chapter in 1999. She immediately became a member of the Chapter Board, serving as Scholar Alumni Director.

Bobbie is an Illinois Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and retired as Director of Women’s Services for the YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago. She and her husband lived in downtown Chicago for eleven years. After she retired from the YWCA, Bobbie filled her hours with volunteer service for many local organizations such as Lincoln Park Zoo, the Terra Museum of American Art, and the Art Institute of Chicago as well as Women’s Association of the Chicago Symphony.

Bobbie transferred to the San Diego Chapter after moving to California on husband Dick’s retirement in 2007. Committed to the ARCS mission, Bobbie served on the board for five years as director of Meetings and Properties and then vice president of Membership. Currently, she is director of New Members, and for 2017 she will be vice president of Administration. Bobbie is the consummate volunteer and has enthusiastically contributed many (perhaps zillions of) hours to ARCS San Diego.



Seattle – Lynn Manley

2017 marks the tenth year that **Lynn Manley** and her husband, Lex Lindsey, have hosted the ARCS convocation for third-year fellows from the University of Washington (UW). Says Lynn, “Watching the scholars give their presentations creates a feeling of awe; it just never wears off.”

The Seattle Chapter is pleased to present Lynn with the 2017 ARCS Light Award. After joining ARCS in 2002, Lynn became an active board member and served as the organization’s vice president of finance. Through their family’s foundation, Lynn and Lex fund two UW endowments and are currently funding their tenth ARCS Fellowship.

Lynn’s background includes 40 years of banking, with clients including Fortune 500 companies, for Rainier Bank and U.S. Bank. She has volunteered for the Seattle Repertory Theatre, the Seattle Repertory Theatre Foundation, WSU’s College of Business, PATH and the Lauren Rogers Museum of Art; she’s currently a co-chair representing the UW’s School of Natural Sciences in the capital campaign.

“ARCS is the perfect storm of science and education,” says Lynn. “I’m thrilled by the honor of this award.” Lynn, with her exemplary dedication, is exceptionally deserving of this year’s ARCS Light Award.



Utah- Laura Springhetti

Laura Springhetti moved to Utah shortly before the ARCS Utah Chapter was established. Laura joined the Utah Chapter and has served on the board in various capacities including President Elect and President. She has also served as Chair of the National ARCS Council of

Presidents.

Laura received her Masters of Science in Nurse Anesthesia and currently provides various contract anesthesia services via her company. She has worked in numerous hospital settings in Washington, Tennessee, Colorado, and Utah and has been with the University of Utah Moran Eye Center and Veteran’s Administration Medical Center since she first started her practice.

Laura has been recognized for her exceptional work at various National Conferences and serving as the State Government Relations Chair for the Utah State Anesthesia Board She has also volunteered her time on global surgery trips ranging from Haiti to Vietnam. Laura’s work at the Utah State Capital foundationally developed better relations amongst anesthesia providers and successfully passed unprecedented joint legislation. In her free time, she travels, spends time with family and friends, and participate in most any activity involving a side of a mountain. She is passionate about staying connected with our ARCS scholars and keeping the ARCS mission modernized.



Honorary: Tampa Bay – Teresa Greely

Teresa Greely, President of the Tampa Bay Chapter, has been named as an Honorary 2017 ARCS Light for her courage, dedication and service to her Chapter. The Executive Committee of

the National Board has awarded Teresa this honor in recognition of her extraordinary efforts during the past two years.



ARCS LIGHT 2017 AWARDS

Hyatt Regency, Denver
Tech Center
June 2017