

Christine Blebea
ARCS Scholar, UC Santa Cruz

ARCS UPDATE: NOVEMBER 2026

A message from your Presidents:

ARCS NCC is in full swing, thanks to you, our dedicated members! Your enthusiasm has already made for a wonderful fall, with a successful September General Membership Meeting, our first Salon, a stellar Frontiers of Science, New Members Gathering, and four Meet and Greets with our partner universities. Three more Meet and Greets this month will complete our introduction to this year's 73 scholars, followed by a holiday celebration at our December General Membership Meeting.

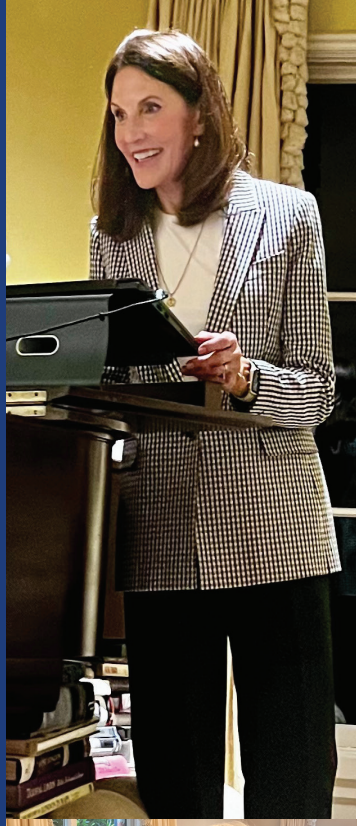
All of this is possible because of YOU—our talented, generous, and supportive members. We can't thank you enough and look forward to keeping this wonderful momentum going!

Heidi Huchberger, Julie Reis

ARCS FOUNDATION NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

Rachelle Stark,
ARCS Scholar,
University of California, Berkeley

"I grew up in a low-income community in San Bernardino, California, where I saw firsthand the harsh reality of how diet can contribute to disease. Many people in my community tragically lost their lives to diseases that, in many cases, could have been prevented. For these reasons, conducting research in nutrition and metabolism is deeply important and personally fulfilling to me. The ARCS Award gives me greater flexibility in choosing a lab, because I don't have to base that decision on the lab's available funding. Instead, I can choose based on my research interests and the work I am most passionate about. The funding also gives me more time to focus on the research that I find so important and fulfilling."









New this Year
ARCS Salons

September 10, 2026

The **Inaugural ARCS Salon** was made possible through the vision and efforts of Deborah Mann and Nancy Mueller of the Science Activities Committee.

ARCS member and UCSF cardiologist Dr. Anne Thorson graciously agreed to launch the series with an engaging presentation on heart health and disease. Francie Ostheimer generously opened her home as the venue, creating a warm and welcoming setting for the event, enthusiastically attended by more than 30 ARCS members.

Dr. Thorson presented an informative and fascinating hour-long program exploring heart health, cardiovascular disease, and the important differences in how these conditions affect women. She offered practical insights into prevention, including lifestyle choices women can make to reduce their risk and protect their cardiovascular health.

The enthusiastic response from attendees made the inaugural Salon a wonderful success and an exciting beginning to what we hope will become a valued ARCS tradition. Watch for upcoming salon dates and sign up early as they all have limited space and fill up quickly!.

Upcoming:

UNIVERSITY SITE VISITS

These are fabulous opportunities to get an in depth look at two of the universities for whom we fund scholars. This year, ARCS members will visit **UC Santa Cruz** and **San Francisco State University**.

These visits generally include detailed information about the current state of the university graduate programs from the Graduate Deans, presentations from a selection of this year's scholars, a short tour of a portion of campus... and lunch!

They will occur in the early part of next year. Watch your email for dates, sign-ups, and in the case of Santa Cruz, info for ride-sharing.

UNIVERSITY MEET AND GREETS

Get a "first look" at our incredible scholars on Zoom before you meet them in the spring at Supernova!

UC Merced, Thursday, Nov. 12 12-1pm
San Francisco State, Thursday, Nov. 19 3-4pm
UC Berkeley, Friday, Nov. 20 9-10 am

September

General Meeting

SCHOLAR PRESENTATION

Wednesday, September 16



New ARCS Presidents Julie Reis and Heidi Huchberger



ARCS's first meeting of the year was well attended, with more than 50 members and guests gathering at the Town and Country Club in San Francisco.

Following an overview of ARCS goals and a preview of the year ahead, we heard from Zoe Platow, a fourth-year neuroscience PhD student at UCSF. Zoe studies the brain and how its cells communicate, with a particular focus on Alzheimer's disease and women's health.

Her research examines the molecular mechanisms behind Alzheimer's, including how APOE4—the most common genetic risk factor for the disease—affects how neurons produce, secrete, and break down proteins. Her work is helping explore why Alzheimer's develops and why women face a higher risk—essentially, what happens when proteins in the brain go rogue. After a spirited Q&A, members and guests all enjoyed the traditional post meeting lunch while catching up with friends after the summer break.

Frontiers of Science

Wednesday, October 28, 2026

Gladstone Institutes, Mission Bay, San Francisco

We had a great turnout of over 80 ARCS members and interested guests attended this fascinating presentation, a yearly gem in the ARCS schedule. A special thank you to Merrill Randoll, Deborah Mann and Jan Goodson for their efforts to bring us this spectacular evening.

Featured Speaker

Dr. Regis B. Kelly, PhD, OBE

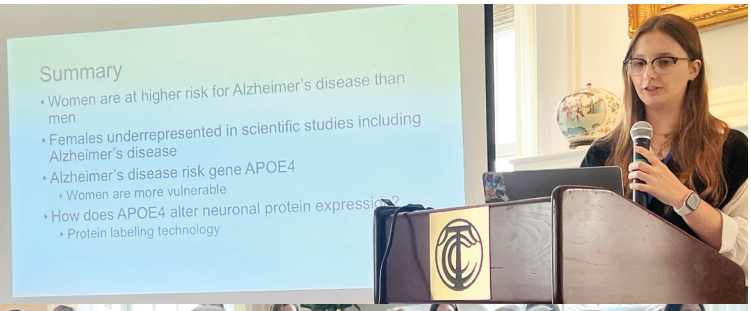
Professor Emeritus, Biochemistry & Biophysics | UCSF

ABOUT THE TALK

How Women's Health Research Is Shaping the Future of Medicine

After years of neglect, growing investment in women's health research reflects, in part, the discovery that many conditions affecting women are closely connected to the biology of aging—a process that concerns everyone. GLP-1s and similar drugs, for example, show promise beyond weight management, with potential to reduce the risk of major age-related diseases, including heart attacks and vision and hearing loss. They may also benefit younger women with certain reproductive disorders. Understanding how these drugs affect women at different stages of life could reveal new ways to prevent disease, extend healthy lifespans, and transform medicine.

A surprise addition to the evening, Dr. Marina Sirota from the UCSF Computational Health Sciences Institute added valuable insights to the evening's discussion on the state of data collection using AI.













Upcoming dates:

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:

Tuesday, December 1
General membership meeting and holiday lunch - The Francisca Club

Starburst 2027

Date and speaker TBD

Supernova 2027

Monday, April 26, 2027
San Francisco City Club
More news to come for this years signature, Annual Supernova Scholar Awards Celebration and Symposium. Prepare to be awed by this year's cohort of 73 outstanding scholars in fields covering the gamut of STEM science. As always an exceptional experience!

Scholar Award Giving:

With the year drawing to a close, now is an ideal time to make a 2026 contribution to the ARCScholar Award Fund. A year end gift not only offers potential tax benefits, subject to your individual circumstances, but also makes a meaningful investment in the future of scientific research and innovation.

By contributing now, you help us build a strong foundation for this year's Scholar Award Fund, which will be disbursed to our University Partners in June. This year's Fund will ensure that our 2027-2028 Scholars will have the resources and freedom to pursue their groundbreaking research.

Your generosity helps ARCS plan ahead with confidence, ensuring that we can continue to provide critical, unrestricted, financial support to exceptional PhD students at leading Northern California research universities.



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