



## FROM THE REP

### Making the Most of a Big Conference #4

I'm writing this column as I start my travel to San Diego for the Ocean Sciences Meeting, but I think these tips will be useful in lots of other settings. This month, we're talking about how to talk to *new* people.

1. Regardless of whether you consider yourself "outgoing," you are likely to benefit from interacting with people during conferences and departmental events. It's okay to start small: try introducing yourself to the person sitting next to you!
2. If it's a social setting, you might want to connect with others without specific scientific or networking intentions. In these cases, start with a smile, and look for any common ground you might have with the other person: "I traveled from Boston and I'm really excited to be in San Diego! How about you?"
3. If you want to talk science, introduce yourself and your scientific interests in general terms. Keep this to about two sentences, and let the other person ask for clarification or elaboration about your work. Then, you might tell them that you liked their presentation or recent paper and use that as a launching-off point for a scientific conversation that interests you both.
4. A super effective conversational tactic is "insight-and-question." Offer a comment or observation about something (e.g., the venue, the presentation, the art on the walls), and then ask your companion for their opinion or give them space to direct the conversation. This give-and-take method helps keep everyone engaged in the interaction!

Good luck! I'll be at OSM all next week—if you're there, please come to the early career events. I'd love to meet you!

— Chrissy



## TOS STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

**ALI REZA PAYANDEH.** I am a fourth-year PhD student at Louisiana State University (LSU) where I collect measurements in the field and utilize high-resolution numerical models to study the connectivity between an estuary and the coastal ocean. Before coming to the United States, I received a BS in civil engineering and MS in coastal/environmental engineering from the University of Tehran. I was born in Tehran, Iran, and because of the travel ban, I have not been able to return home in the last four years. Being far from family is part of the challenges and realities that are familiar to international students. When I was accepted in the Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences at LSU, I was unaware of all of the academic and research opportunities I would have over next four years. I have conducted research in the Louisiana bight and collected field measurements and samples in bar-built estuaries of the region.

It can be difficult to find time to commit to activities beyond one's own research, but seeing the amount of pollution and environmental problems in the ocean has left me frustrated and overwhelmed. Those feelings motivated and empowered me to create change. So, I started a podcast about the ocean where I talk in Persian about a wide range of ocean topics to raise awareness. I hope to inspire my listeners to live an ocean-friendly life. I started my podcast six months ago, and so far it has been listened to 40,000 times and it is growing fast. Other than ocean, I love poetry and I play old Persian musical instruments called the setar and tar.

## OSM EVENT RUNDOWN

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16

#### STUDENT AND EARLY CAREER CONFERENCE

8:30 am–4:00 pm  
San Diego Convention Center (SDCC),  
1A, Upper Level

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17

#### STUDENT AND EARLY CAREER POP-UP TALKS

12:45–1:45 pm  
SDCC, Poster Hall C,  
Career Center & Student Lounge

#### STUDENT MIXER

6:00–7:30 pm  
SDCC, West Mezzanine Terrace

#### EARLY CAREER MIXER

6:00–7:30 pm  
SDCC, West Terrace

### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18

#### MEET YOUR AGENCY PROGRAM MANAGER BREAKFAST

6:45–7:45 am  
Marriott Marquis, Santa Rosa Room

#### TUESDAY CAREER PANEL

12:45–1:45 pm  
SDCC, Poster Hall C,  
Career Center & Student Lounge

#### JAM SESSION

7:30–11:00 pm  
Tin Roof Live, 401 G St., San Diego, CA  
(corner of 4th and G)

### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19

#### MEET YOUR AGENCY PROGRAM MANAGER BREAKFAST

6:45–7:45 am  
Marriott Marquis, Santa Rosa Room

#### 5K FUN RUN/WALK

7:00 am  
Marriott Marquis, along the Embarcadero

#### WEDNESDAY CAREER PANEL

12:45–1:45 pm  
SDCC, Poster Hall C,  
Career Center & Student Lounge

### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20

#### MEET YOUR AGENCY PROGRAM MANAGER BREAKFAST

6:45–7:45 am  
Marriott Marquis, Santa Rosa Room

#### THURSDAY CAREER PANEL

12:45–1:45 pm  
SDCC, Poster Hall C,  
Career Center & Student Lounge

**VISIT TOS AT BOOTH #109!**

## SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK!

Have questions or comments for the Student Rep? We need your input!  
studentrep@tos.org  
and @fishy\_chrissy



## ADDITIONAL DETAILS

Get up to date information at  
<https://www.agu.org/Ocean-Sciences-Meeting/Pages/Student-and-Early-Career-Attendees>