



## UC San Diego Foundation Trustee



# James B. Morris

Passion often just *is*, but sometimes, passion can be created. Jim Morris is an example of this; he can largely be credited with exciting community passion for and commitment to the remarkably motivated student-athletes at UC San Diego.

For many in the community it's a surprise that there is an athletics program at UCSD. It not only exists, it is a thriving Division II program that is turning out leaders. "We're investing in these kids," says Jim, founder and previous chair of the UCSD Athletics Board. "We want student-athletes to reach their full potential so we raise funds for coaches and facilities, to give these kids the tools they rightfully deserve. We've also cultivated and introduced new major donors to the university who were never involved before, but who are passionate about athletics and the unique role that athletics plays at UCSD."

Jim was asked to join the UC San Diego Foundation when his efforts for Triton Athletics and their results created visibility for a program that tended to be downplayed on a campus renowned for rigorous academics. But Jim has always understood the power of college sports in building student and alumni connectivity. Between the two of them, Jim and his wife Susan hold degrees from three of California's most spirited colleges – UC Berkeley (*Go Bears!!*) for his bachelor's degree, Stanford (*Beat Cal!!*) for hers, and USC (*Fight On!!*) for both of their MBAs.

Jim is also adamant that athletics and academics not only go hand-in-hand, but build a better individual. "They're competitive and high-achieving athletes, and they're also world-class and winning students. I've said that more leaders will come out of this program than a business school, recognizing they're not mutually exclusive programs." Jim points to a GPA that tends to be higher among student-athletes than the general student population, and a culture of commitment and self sacrifice for the advancement of the whole over the individual.

A trustee on the UC San Diego Foundation Board now, Jim's involvement is largely focused on students, coaches and sports facilities. He is a pure community volunteer with no previous ties to the campus, except proximity: His house is nearby and he has run on campus since 1990. He has also been involved in San Diego State University's Entrepreneurial Management Center, which he proudly says is ranked as one of the top programs in the country and it has a tremendous global reach with its top-ranked annual business plan competition.



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This is a natural offshoot of his entrepreneurialism. Jim is the President of JBM Properties, Inc., an investment firm that has been an active investor in private equities and commercial real estate acquisitions and development.

In addition to the Foundation and Athletics at UC San Diego, he has been a Chancellor's Associates donor and a member of the Campaign Steering Committee that launched the university's successful \$1 billion Campaign for UCSD. Jim is a former Trustee of the UC Berkeley Foundation.

Jim and Susan's two sons attend Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles; his daughter attends La Jolla Country Day School.