People choose to work at UC San Diego for various reasons. For some, it’s the reputation; for others, it’s the research program; and for a few, it’s the opportunity to impact change. For Ginger Hazen, she came for all three reasons but stayed for the latter. Ginger came to UC San Diego as a postdoc, but quickly realized that she could make a greater difference through campus administration.

Ginger was hired as the Professional Development Coordinator, a newly created position in the Office of the Postdoctoral and Visiting Scholars Affairs (OPVSA). Her responsibilities include the development and implementation of career development programs that enhance the postdoc experience and support the campus’s research mission. This was no easy task as UC San Diego is home to 1300 postdocs, the largest in the UC system. Since her appointment, Ginger has coordinated over 160 individual postdoc programs, increasing the number of annual training events by four-times and individual postdoc attendance by 41%. Ginger has conceptualized and delivered 14 new training events and counseled over 65 postdocs in individual career advising sessions. Ginger’s productivity and influence are astounding, but perhaps more remarkable is her ability to personalize the training with her deep understanding of postdocs’ needs.

Postdocs across campus first meet Ginger during the monthly new postdoc orientation – making her the de facto ‘face’ of the university for many postdocs. The campus couldn’t have asked for a better representative. Ginger’s warmth, concern for their well-being, and commitment to postdocs is evident in all that she does. This can’t be undervalued as many postdocs feel isolated in labs, and many are from other countries. They stay connected to the OPVSA through her weekly newsletters, counseling sessions, and career development workshops. Ginger’s warmth empowers postdocs to connect with campus and with each other. Ginger’s ability to build new and maintain existing relationships and partnerships within and beyond campus is exceptional. She leads the Torrey Pines Training Consortium, which includes the Salk, TSRI, SBP, and UC San Diego. Her openness and enterprising spirit make her a natural collaborator and campus liaison. In many ways, Ginger is also the “glue” that holds these organizations together and helps them be effective.

Last year, Ginger implemented the EPIC Program, a career development curriculum that provides postdocs with training opportunities for multiple career paths. A testament to Ginger’s relationship-building, this program created partnerships with Rady, the Career Service Center, Innovation and Commercialization, Teaching-Learning Commons, International Faculty and Scholars Office, Postdoctoral Association, Faculty and Staff Assistance Program, the Graduate Division and Extension. Ginger mobilized over 20 subject matter experts and mentors, including faculty in Theatre and Dance to the School of Medicine. This program is a tour-de-force of organization and the first of its kind in the nation for postdocs. This program directly reflects Ginger’s commitment to postdoc training, her holistic approach to postdoc advising, and her ability to unify individuals towards a common goal.

Ginger is also the official Advisor to the UC San Diego Postdoctoral Association (PDA). To enhance the experience, Ginger incorporated a 360-degree feedback leadership program that provides members personalized reflections on their management styles. Ginger’s efforts to build partnerships extend to her volunteer work outside of UC San Diego. She is a long-standing member of the Association of Women in Science (AWIS), which creates ties between the non-profit and industry partners. Ginger also volunteers as a speaker at career days and even as the committed driver of her van pool. By all the standards mentioned, Ginger is a truly exceptional employee. Her dedication to advance the training of postdocs and visiting scholars at UC San Diego contributes to an environment that promotes success in its many forms. Ginger is unquestionable deserving of this recognition and award.