PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Participating in a professional association is an effective way of learning about careers and meeting people in that field.

What is a professional association?
- An organization of individuals in a given occupation who meet to network and learn.
- Many professional associations have national headquarters and local chapters.
- Most professional associations charge annual dues and event fees. They frequently offer event and membership discounts for students.

How do professional associations benefit students?
- Many professional association websites provide information about career options, industry trends and relevant employers.
- Most professional associations offer events where you can meet professionals and learn about internships and entry-level job opportunities.

Networking tips
- When attending networking events, conferences, and “meet and greets,” introduce yourself with a firm handshake and a smile. Show an interest in others by maintaining eye contact and listening actively.
- Ask questions about organizations, work responsibilities, and trends in the field. Ask for job search advice.
- Volunteer to work for a committee or assist at an upcoming event.
- Request business cards for future reference.

Where can I locate these associations?
- Professional Associations in San Diego
  [www.sandiego.edu/careers/resources/online/professional_associations.php](http://www.sandiego.edu/careers/resources/online/professional_associations.php)
- Weddle’s Association Directory
  [www.weddles.com/associations/index.cfm](http://www.weddles.com/associations/index.cfm)
- Encyclopedia of Associations – located in Copley Library
- Many professional associations have LinkedIn groups that allow participants to ask questions, share ideas, post positions, and network.
- Some USD student organizations are student chapters sponsored by national professional associations. Examples include Rotaract, Amnesty International, Association of Environmental Professionals, Net Impact, and Model United Nations. [http://sandiego.collegiatelink.net/organizations](http://sandiego.collegiatelink.net/organizations)