



MARCH OF DIMES HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE WEEK



PANELIST PROFILE

Name: Mark Schmitt

College: Reed College
University of California, San Diego (UCSD)

Lab/Department: Office of the Chief Science Officer,
Salk Institute (CSO)

What do you do and why it is important? I work in the CSO office at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies, supporting the operation and management of our core facilities and providing transition support for investigators and laboratories that are joining or leaving the Institute. Core facilities are scientific resources used by multiple labs that impact research done across many labs at the institute. A well-run core facility is a hub of collaboration, innovation, and productivity and supporting these cores at the Salk Institute is an effective way to increase productivity and overall scientific impact. Providing a smooth transition for incoming investigators and laboratories increases the amount of time that a lab can do science and decreases the time the same lab spends moving their operations to the Institute. Managing an effective transition means the new investigator or lab can spend their time working on science questions as soon as they arrive at Salk.

How did you learn about this career and how long have you been doing it? I learned about this career through colleagues identifying the research need and benchmarking from positions created at other institutions. For core operations and laboratory transition work I learned through my own experience and the experience of colleagues in the past 30 years that I have worked at the Salk Institute.

Why are you passionate about your work? I have always had a passion for science and for working in a team environment. I renew this enthusiasm daily, whether it is listening to an interesting science talk, celebrating a graduate student's first paper, or seeing an established investigator build on their success.