

2009 Dickson Awardee: Peter Farrell

Peter Farrell was a longtime faculty member of the Department of Music and former principal cellist with the La Jolla Symphony. While teaching at the University of Illinois, Peter came to UC San Diego on a sabbatical in 1969 and joined the faculty as cellist in 1972. During his tenure at UC San Diego, Peter taught cello, undergraduate music theory, and graduate seminars on a range of topics involving contemporary performance practice. He was a founding member of SONOR, the contemporary music ensemble of the department at the time and, as the ensemble's cellist, he premiered numerous new works and performed and recorded many established pieces from the contemporary music canon. He was a central figure in arranging the tour by SONOR to the 1988 Darmstadt Summer Music Course in Darmstadt, Germany.



Peter was chair of the Department of Music from 1988 to 1990 and guided the department in a time marked by rapid growth of both the faculty and student body. After his retirement in 1991, he became active in the UC San Diego Emeriti Association, eventually becoming its chair and being honored, in 2008, with the prestigious Edward A. Dickson Emeriti Professorship award for exceptional contributions and leadership by an emeritus faculty member.

After his retirement from UC San Diego until June 2013, Peter was cellist in the La Jolla Symphony, serving as section principal until 2010. After leaving the orchestra, Peter was active in mentorship programs for its student members. He was also selflessly devoted to the growth of the UCSD Retirement and Emeriti Associations, and was elected Vice President and President between 1994 and 1996; he also served as principal liaison officer between the two associations, and helped propose the construction of the Retirement Resource Center to house the groups, which was successfully opened in 2007.

Peter Farrell passed away on May 13, 2018 at the age of 93, and is survived by two sons.