



Scientist Alessandro Sette (on right) learned to fence as a kid in Italy

A Scientist At The Cutting Edge

The societal stereotype of the wild-haired, nerdy scientist sporting black horn-rimmed glasses, a lab coat, and waving a test tube doesn't jibe with scientists seen at the regal research institutes lining San Diego's Torrey Pines Mesa.

A case in point — those at the La Jolla Institute for Allergy & Immunology, an international leader in immunology research with distinguished scientists who focus on complex disease issues by day and relax with widely varying extracurricular activities. There's a painter of intricate Japanese art, a scientist whose architectural drawings could rival a seasoned professional, a faculty member who composes and performs music with his own band, and a scientist who fences and performs opera, to name a few. The fencing scientist, Alessandro Sette, Dr.Biol.Sc., an Italian native and world expert in vaccine

biology, says he learned how to fence as a kid in Italy. "When I came to San Diego, I continued my instruction with the Cabrillo Academy of the Sword," says Sette, who practices with the Academy a couple of times a week, is nationally ranked, and participates in tournaments. In addition, he makes time for his other hobby — opera — and has appeared in several productions with the San Diego Opera. Sette views his pursuits

as a fun outlet, but also sees parallels between art and science, both being activities that require creative thinking. Both are also decidedly un-nerdy. Mitchell Kronenberg, PhD, the Institute's president and chief scientific officer, himself an avid jogger, agrees and says Sette is an athletic, accomplished researcher who is much more a reflection of the typical scientist than societal caricatures. "We joke about the geeky depictions because we know science is actually a vibrant environment that attracts dynamic individuals," he notes. "The nerdy stuff is not science. It's science fiction." BONNIE WARD



Alessandro Sette

Offering A Hand Up

When Vivian Glyck became a mother, she worried about the small stuff, like germs on the shopping cart at Costco. "Then I started thinking about Africa," she says. "Every 30 seconds a child dies of malaria — a treatable disease — and tens of millions of kids have been orphaned by AIDS."

These sobering statistics encouraged Glyck to tap into her entrepreneurial spirit. In 2006, she founded Just Like My Child, a nonprofit that empowers thousands of women and children in rural Uganda.

The organization takes a multi-prong, "deep development" approach, which includes improved healthcare, education, and microfinance loans. Just Like My Child also tackles social justice issues, teaching women and girls to fight back against rape and domestic violence. The idea is to give "a hand up, not a hand out," says Glyck. "We've been able to focus on the community needs and not just wave a magic wand.

"It truly is Just Like My Child," she continues. "I would never want my child to be dependent on me. I want [our recipients] to learn to be truly self-sufficient. People can't have dignity and hold themselves up if we're constantly giving them aid and making them dependent on us for the continuity of that."

On October 13, Just Like My Child hosts its fifth annual fundraising gala at the El Cortez's historic Don Room. The event features a very special keynote speaker, Jared Cohen, the young dynamo formerly of the State Department and currently the head of Google Ideas. He will discuss why Africa is a focal point in achieving global stability. (www.justlikemychild.org) ANNAMARIA STEPHENS



Nyangoma Rachel and Vivian Glyck