

THE PEOPLE OF BCA



PROFILE: SUSAN SCOTT, BCA SECRETARY

Interview by Dar Goatley

Tell us about your personal history.

I grew up in the San Diego area. When I was in high school, my parents sponsored a Mexican family's immigration to the United States, supporting them and taking them into our home until they could establish themselves. This was my first acquaintance with someone one from Mexico. I later travelled extensively in Mexico, including living with a Mexican family. I came to love the Mexican culture and people, who are warm, engaging and kind.

I went to the University of Arizona as an undergrad. I then lived for years in San Francisco and in Seattle. I moved to Sonoita, Arizona in 2013.

How did you come to be involved with BCA?

Friends told me about the BCA Spain Tour and I went on the tour in 2018. Jerry Haas, past Executive Director, Alex La Pierre, Program Director and Pat Trulock were on the trip with me. In nice, long talks they introduced me to the mission of BCA. A few months later I joined the Board.

Living in Arizona I realized that Mexico is not well known to the rest of the country. Children are not learning about Mexico in school. Snowbirds come here, but are not always learning about their Mexican neighbors. I think that the BCA Tours and Forums help to spread the word about Mexico and I wanted to contribute to that effort.

What roles have you had in BCA?

I have served as Secretary of the Board of Directors since 2019. I assisted with the hiring of the current Director of Operations and developed an Employee Handbook. I have also gone on several BCA Tours, expanding my knowledge of Mexico.

What life experiences and skills have you been able to share with BCA?

Before retiring to Arizona I was the Director of Human Resources for Levi Strauss & Co. In Seattle, I established a community foundation and was on the board of an organization helping at risk students I have also been a member of Rotary International. I have been active with the Patagonia Regional Community Fund,

which supports community needs through grants and scholarships for nonprofit organizations and students.

How does BCA reflect your personal humanitarian values?

BCA is inclusive and I am inclusive. I value the fact that BCA takes the position that we are open to all people, regardless of their political views.

The mission of BCA is to open our eyes to different people, step into their shoes and not make assumptions, which I strongly support. We are bombarded with information about Mexico, but it is often not factual. The BCA Tours present the lives and culture of Mexican people, so we can learn first-hand about the people and culture.

How have you been influenced by being involved with BCA?

I enjoy being around like-minded people - the people of BCA - who are all trying to make a positive contribution. I have also had fun attending forums and learning more about the history and culture of Mexico.

How do you plan to continue your work with BCA?

I am interested in continuing to work on Human Resource development at BCA, perhaps adding handbooks for volunteers and interns. I would also like to be involved with the continued development of BCA, which is moving toward a more formalized and professional nonprofit organization.

How would you like to see BCA move into the future?

I would like to see the BCA become better known in this area. I would like to see our programs expanded to all residents of Santa Cruz County. Those in Green Valley present a unique opportunity for us as many are snow birds who can take back their BCA experiences to their primary states. While we are currently unable to continue our cross-border tours with the pandemic, I would like us to look for opportunities to explore historical and cultural locations where we live much of which has been influenced by our Mexican neighbors. There are a number of historical places in the Sonoita area, for example, which would be valuable to share with people. I think it would be valuable to get kids in grades K-12 learn more about the Mexican culture and heritage - often their own heritage.