



# Creating Waves

**2024**

**FieldStone**  
  
LEADERSHIP NETWORK  
S A N D I E G O

# BE THE RIPPLE CREATE THE WAVE



LEADERSHIP

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Leadership revolves around effecting change and making a meaningful impact. Leaders aspire to transform the present reality into a vision of a "better" future. Merely maintaining the status quo is insufficient for leaders; they are driven to move forward and inspire progress along the way. At

Fieldstone, our mission aligns with this ethos – to offer the learning opportunities essential for honing the skills and knowledge needed for effective leadership, while fostering environments where trusted relationships can flourish, enabling collaboration and sustained advancement.

We recognize that when we influence an individual leader, that influence extends to all those they lead. This ripple effect perpetuates itself, creating a chain reaction of positive impact. Therefore, we understand that our investment in nurturing the leadership capacity of nonprofit professionals is crucial and serves as a potent means of contributing to the building of our community. We also understand that this is a communal effort made possible by many acts of reciprocity from our members and other community leaders who share their time, wisdom and resources with us. What a privilege it is to lead a Network that works together in this way! Everyday how we are turning those initial ripples into powerful waves of change for the greater good. It doesn't get more important than that.

*Janine Mason*

*Founder*

# NETWORK PROFILE

At the Fieldstone Leadership Network San Diego, we believe that people are the greatest asset of any nonprofit organization. This belief drives our commitment to helping those who have dedicated their careers to the social sector develop their talents, skills, and capacity to make a meaningful impact. Since our inception, we have focused on strengthening nonprofit leadership through a variety of innovative programs designed to support professionals at every stage of their careers.

Founded in partnership with nonprofit executives, the Fieldstone Leadership Network was originally established as a platform for peer learning. Over the years, it has evolved into a comprehensive continuum of leadership programs. Our experience has taught us several key insights about the needs of social sector leaders: the leadership capacity of a nonprofit executive is crucial to the organization's ability to achieve its mission; leaders benefit immensely from a trusted cohort of peers who can serve as resources and allies; and cross-generational, cross-sector learning opportunities are essential for broadening perspectives and effectively managing teams.

The Fieldstone Leadership Network San Diego offers a range of programs aimed at building and deepening personal and professional relationships among nonprofit leaders. These programs include workshops, learning groups, coaching, networking events, reading groups, retreats, experiential learning and team building activities, and sabbaticals.

Our goal is to strengthen individual leaders, increase the capacity of nonprofit organizations, and build trusted networks of leaders who can collaborate, problem-solve, and support each other, ultimately enhancing the impact of the social sector.





# YEAR IN REVIEW

Our work is centered on three key areas that we believe are essential for the success of nonprofits: **strengthening nonprofit leaders**, **increasing the capacity of nonprofit organizations**, and **supporting leaders in sustaining a vibrant network**.

We assess every program we offer based on its effectiveness in enhancing these skills and conditions. Survey data indicates a significant positive impact on these areas after participation in our programs .



Nonprofit Leaders Group



Nonprofit Leaders Group



Fieldstone Coachees



Executive Learning Group

# LEARNING GROUPS

*A six-month program designed to expand theoretical learning while building trusted relationship among sector leaders.*

*Torrey Dunlap joined the program as a facilitator after spending a year co-facilitating with long-time program facilitator, Tom Hall. We hosted three groups in 2024, two for nonprofit leaders and one for executive directors. Survey results demonstrate success in each of our three focus areas.*

## **Executive Leaders Learning Group**

### Developing Nonprofit Leaders

Participants gained greater clarity on their leadership legacy, increased their confidence, and developed stronger problem-solving skills. Many appreciated the opportunity to step away from daily challenges and engage in strategic thinking. The cohort experience, peer discussions, and curated readings helped deepen their understanding of leadership, while the problem-solving process validated their instincts and introduced new approaches. Leaders also found value in reflecting on their roles and how to grow their leadership skills effectively.

### Increasing Organizational Capacity

The program helped leaders improve board governance, strengthen staff management strategies, and bring new ideas and resources to their organizations. Several participants implemented changes that increased effectiveness, while others are still in the process of applying what they learned. Many cited increased awareness of leadership capacity and progress in addressing key organizational challenges.

### Sustaining a Vibrant Professional Network

Participants expanded their professional networks, built trusted relationships, and gained insights from leaders outside their nonprofit subsector. Many expressed appreciation for the solidarity and shared learning within the group. The majority indicated a strong interest in continued engagement with Fieldstone's leadership programs, including coaching, leadership reading groups, and Fieldstone@4.

The program was widely praised for its facilitation, structure, and impact, with participants overwhelmingly recommending it to others. They valued the opportunity to problem-solve with peers, gain strategic insights, and build lasting connections. The Fieldstone Executive Leaders Learning Group continues to be a vital resource for nonprofit leaders seeking to grow, strengthen their organizations, and expand their networks.

“Fieldstone's nonprofit leaders learning group ignited my passion to be an empathetic leader. Being around like-minded and powerful nonprofit leaders changed my mindset and healed my passion. Just do it! You won't regret it! Worth your time- very minimal commitment for the level of support, guidance, and learning that you receive.”

2024 Participant

## Nonprofit Leaders Learning Group A

Participants expressed that they achieved their initial hopes for the experience through discussions, readings, and problem-solving sessions. Many reported gaining confidence, leadership skills, and new strategies to support their staff and organizations. Some even moved into higher leadership positions as a direct result of their learnings.

*Fieldstone has turned out to be a hidden gem for my career development! I appreciate the various offerings and resources available – they have truly met me “where I’m at” at each step of my career over the years since I’ve ventured into the nonprofit space.*

### Problem-Solving & Organizational Challenges

The structured problem-solving process was highly effective. Participants received valuable feedback, explored solutions, and implemented new approaches within their organizations. Some are still working through complex challenges but feel more equipped with insights and strategies.

### Leadership Development

- 100% strengthened their problem-solving skills and peer-learning appreciation
- 86% increased their confidence as leaders
- 71% gained clarity on their leadership legacy and applied leadership skills more effectively
- Many developed systemic thinking and expanded their leadership styles

### Impact on Organizational Capacity & Effectiveness

Most participants successfully applied learning group insights to improve team meetings, evaluate roles, strengthen DEI efforts, and address leadership transitions. Some have begun implementing problem-solving methods with their teams.

### Professional Network & Collaboration

- 100% grew their professional network
- 86% gained insights from leaders outside their nonprofit subsector and built trusted relationships
- Some explored potential collaborations, though not all materialized



*The Fieldstone Learning Group provided a space for me to learn and grow alongside colleagues and friends; it is difficult to have these types of conversations with partners or colleagues, and yet they are crucial to our professional and personal growth. Fieldstone created a space for me to get better alongside others looking to do the same.”*  
2024 Participant

## Nonprofit Leaders Learning Group B

### Developing Nonprofit Leaders

Through the Learning Group experience, participants made significant strides in their leadership development.

**100% gained clarity on their leadership legacy and how they want to work.**

**100% increased confidence as leaders.**

**100% deepened their appreciation for interdisciplinary and peer learning.**

**75% strengthened their ability to problem solve as leaders.**

**75% further developed systemic thinking in their leadership practice.**

**50% improved their ability to apply leadership skills more effectively.**

Participants highlighted the value of structured problem-solving exercises, sector-wide insights, and peer discussions in shaping their leadership growth. Many plan to implement learned strategies such as delegation techniques, completed work processes, and energy management to enhance their effectiveness.

### Building Organizational Capacity

The Learning Group experience helped nonprofit leaders enhance the effectiveness of their organizations by equipping them with practical strategies and leadership insights.

**100% increased awareness of their leadership capacity.**

**88% learned to distinguish between managing and leading.**

**75% brought new resources, ideas, and wisdom to their organizations through group connections**

**63% developed strategies to manage staff more effectively.**

**63% made progress on an organizational challenge.**

**50% increased collaboration with other leaders and organizations.**

Participants reported tangible impacts, such as successfully advocating for additional organizational resources, strengthening team structures, and applying structured problem-solving techniques. They also emphasized the importance of fostering a culture of ownership and autonomy among their teams.

### Sustaining a Vibrant Network of Peers

Strong professional connections emerged as a hallmark of the Learning Group experience.

**88% expanded their professional networks.**

**88% gained insights from leaders outside their nonprofit subsector.**

**88% built trusted relationships with colleagues for future consultation.**

**75% exchanged resources with other nonprofit leaders.**

**50% grew their networks multi-generationally.**

**38% increased the overall diversity of their professional network.**

The relationships formed within the Learning Group were rated highly, with 75% finding them "Very Valuable" and 25% finding them "Extremely Valuable." Participants appreciated the opportunity to connect with peers across the nonprofit sector, gaining new perspectives and practical solutions to shared challenges.

*“I joined the Fieldstone Coaching Program the first month of my new role as an Executive Director. I had no idea what my first year would entail or what tools I would need to be successful. My coach provided me a safe space to ask questions, to vent, to process, to bounce ideas off of and cared about me as a whole person. She taught me valuable tools that I applied right away and helped me move forward successfully with my organization. I highly recommend this program!”*

2024 Participant

## Coaching

Thirteen nonprofit leaders were coached through Fieldstone in 2024. Survey results indicate the Coaching Program has significantly contributed to the development of nonprofit leaders, the capacity of their organizations, and the strength of their professional networks. As a result of their coaching experience, **80% of participants gained clarity and confidence in their mission as nonprofit leaders**, while **60% developed a deeper understanding of their leadership style and set personal and professional development goals**. Additionally, **40% identified their strengths and weaknesses and learned how to address them, and 100% strengthened their problem-solving abilities**. Many also developed systemic thinking in leadership (40%) and adopted techniques to reduce stress and improve work-life balance (40%).

Beyond individual growth, the program has enhanced organizational capacity, with **80% of participants bringing new resources, ideas, and wisdom to their organizations and strengthening their individual leadership impact**. Sixty percent developed a clearer vision for their leadership and increased collaboration with other leaders and organizations, while 40% improved board governance and strengthened relationships with staff.

The program has also fostered a vibrant professional network. **Every participant (100%) developed relationships with trusted leaders in the sector and gained insights from leaders outside their nonprofit subsector**. Additionally, **80% expanded their professional networks, and 60% increased their appreciation for sharing resources within a trusted network**. These results highlight the program’s role in empowering nonprofit leaders, strengthening organizations, and cultivating meaningful professional connections in alignment with our organizational strategy.

*“The Fieldstone Network’s Executive Leadership Coaching Program has been transformative for me as a nonprofit leader. Through my coaching, I’ve gained invaluable self-awareness and clarity, enabling me to navigate complex challenges with confidence and focus. The program provided a safe space for growth, equipping me with the tools to lead with resilience and inspire meaningful change. Fieldstone’s coaching program is truly a catalyst for leaders committed to making an impact.”*

2024 Participant



"This program allowed me to explore books that I never would have read on my own. I feel incredibly lucky to have participated in this experience that enriched my leadership journey by meeting new people, challenging my thinking, and taking a leadership lens into reading a variety of books."

2023-24 Program Participant

## Leadership Reading Groups

In 2024, Fieldstone Leadership Reading Group convened groups 8 and 9 and successfully advanced its mission to strengthen nonprofit leaders, increase the capacity of nonprofit organizations, and sustain a vibrant network of peers. The program's impact was evident in the unanimous agreement among participants (100%) that it met their expectations and delivered meaningful results.

### **Strengthening Nonprofit Leaders:**

91% of participants developed the ability to use reading and discussion as tools for leadership.  
55% enhanced their facilitation skills, enabling more effective leadership in team settings.  
36% appreciated opportunities to give and receive feedback, cultivating stronger interpersonal and reflective leadership abilities.

### **Increasing Nonprofit Capacity:**

Over half (55%) of participants applied insights from the group to address challenges in their organizations, directly contributing to increased organizational capacity.  
Monthly reading enhanced leadership effectiveness for all participants translating into stronger leadership practices within their nonprofits.

### **Sustaining a Vibrant Peer Network:**

82% expressed an increased appreciation for interdisciplinary and peer learning, reinforcing the value of shared experiences and collaboration.  
100% felt confident facilitating discussions with their teams or organizations, a testament to the group's role in fostering a supportive and capable network of nonprofit leaders.

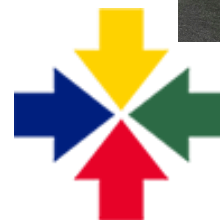
The Fieldstone Leadership Reading Group continues to be a vital resource for nonprofit leaders, equipping them with tools and insights to enhance personal leadership, strengthen their organizations, and build a vibrant community of peers. By fostering reflection, skill-building, and collaborative learning, the program aligns with Fieldstone's mission to support a thriving nonprofit sector.

# Clare Rose Sabbatical

In 2024, Villa Musica and Living Coast Discovery Center successfully completed their sabbatical experiences, while new sabbaticals were awarded to Karen Organization San Diego and Solana Center. Additionally, our program contributed to academic research on the impact of sabbaticals in building leadership capacity, as program researcher Michelle Q. Schneider completed her Ph.D. dissertation focused on our work.



Our Clare Rose 2024 Selection Committee



Karen Organization  
of San Diego



Dr. Michelle Q. Schneider at her dissertation defense



**Solana Center**  
FOR ENVIRONMENTAL INNOVATION

## Clare Rose Sabbatical 2024 Sabbatical Takers



### **Villa Musica and Fiona Chatwin**

The sabbatical fundamentally strengthened Villa Musica’s leadership, increased its capacity, and reinforced its internal networks. For the Executive Director (ED), it offered an opportunity to shift from a founder-driven mindset to a more collaborative and boundary-conscious leadership approach. This shift not only reduced feelings of isolation but also fostered trust in the team’s capabilities. Hands-on experience for those leading in her absence broadened their understanding of leadership and strengthened their decision-making, facilitation, and collaboration skills, which prepared them for future responsibilities. The CRS experience also enhanced Villa Musica’s operational efficiency and scalability. Interim ED initiatives, including the introduction of structured communication tools and performance improvement plans, streamlined workflows and aligned the organization for growth.

By empowering staff, implementing scalable processes, and redefining leadership culture, the sabbatical has set a foundation for sustainable growth. Villa Musica is now well-positioned to navigate its expansion, support its leadership team, and sustain a collaborative culture that benefits both its staff and the broader community.

### **Living Coast and Ben Vallejos**

By stepping away from professional responsibilities, the sabbatical offered a unique opportunity for leadership growth and reflection for its Executive Director. The experience highlighted the value of strategic delegation and emphasized the need for building a stronger management infrastructure. The organization’s preparedness ensured operational stability during the leader’s absence, though the team’s focus remained on maintaining day-to-day functions rather than pursuing new initiatives. The sabbatical also reinforced the importance of sustaining and expanding community networks. Conversations with peers post-sabbatical offered fresh perspectives and renewed motivation to foster these critical connections.

Overall, the experience aligned with Fieldstone’s mission by fostering personal and professional growth, identifying areas for capacity development, and demonstrating the transformative impact of vibrant peer and community support. The insights gained will contribute to sustainable leadership and organizational resilience.

# A WAVE OF NEW LEADERSHIP ARRIVES

San Diego is undergoing a significant shift in leadership dynamics as a wave of retirements and transitions saw many long-time executive directors stepping down or venturing into new roles and sectors. We recognized an opportunity to provide the critical support needed at the beginning of an Executive Director's career, and created **"LAUNCH"**, a program designed to empower early career Executive Directors with the tools, knowledge, and support network necessary to excel and drive positive change within an organization and a community.

By prioritizing the professional growth of early career Executives during this critical juncture, we cultivated a robust foundation for sustained success not only for the the leaders, but for their organization and the sector. Our investment ensures that those who have embraced executive leadership are equipped to tackle challenges effectively while finding personal fulfillment in the role. We believe these two conditions will prove beneficial on many important fronts.

In alignment with our vision, the program was designed for the following outcomes:

- Provide foundational knowledge in key areas essential for success as an executive director.
- Develop a vision for sustainability of self, staff and organization centered on well-being and emotional resiliency.
- Establish a supportive cohort of peers also navigating the journey of becoming executive directors.
- Forge connections with seasoned executive directors who can offer valuable perspectives and mentorship.

The program addressed the following core competencies:



## **Board Relations and Governance**

### **•Executive Presence and Leadership**

### **•Finance**

### **•Fundraising and Donor Relations**

### **•Network and Community Building**

### **•Planning – Strategic and Operational**

### **•Workforce Management and Human Resources**

*"As a very new executive director participating in Launch has increased my confidence in both taking actions to improve my leadership and deliver on our mission, as well as knowing that I am connected to a network of support should I need it. In addition to the general information about running a non-profit, I found the discussions around the emotional impact of leadership to be extremely valuable."*

*Launch Participant*



*“When reading the (curriculum) section before coming here, I was brought to tears with relief that there was support available to me.”* LAUNCH Participant

## Program Facilitators =

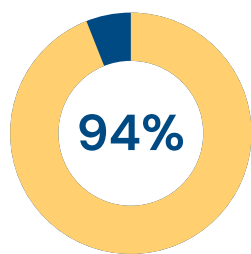


“LAUNCH” was facilitated by a team of nonprofit executives from our Network with extensive experience and proven track records in executive leadership roles. Drawing from their personal experiences, as well as contemporary practices and theories, the facilitators provided valuable insights, diverse perspectives and rich guidance throughout the program. Survey results give our facilitation team five stars for their work.

Our team included:

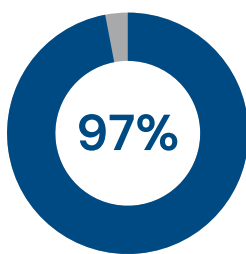
**Torrey Dunlap   James Halliday   Lesslie Keller   Sharon Lawrence   Sue Schaffner**  
**Donald Stump   Karen Terra   Rhea Van Brocklin   Ismena Valdez**

### SUMMARY OF “YES” SURVEY RESPONSES FROM ALL LAUNCH SESSIONS:



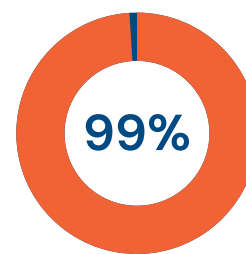
#### Strengthening Nonprofit Leaders

As a result of this session do you feel more confident in your ability to lead?



#### Increasing the Capacity of Nonprofit Organizations

Did you learn something that you can take back to your organization in the near future?



#### Supporting Leaders in Sustaining a Vibrant Network

Did you gain valuable insight from leaders outside my organization's nonprofit subsector/from others in the group?



*“This was a great opportunity for new Executive Directors to learn how to build the plane while flying it- we often don't get the instruction manual up front so this was an amazing way to cover essentials in a quick amount of time.”*

*Launch Participant*

Organizations participating in LAUNCH included:

- Alma Community Care
- A Reason to Survive
- Casa de Amparo
- Catholic Community Foundation of San Diego
- Children's Legal Services of San Diego
- Community Advocates for Just & Moral Governance
- Council of American Islamic Relations
- Culture Shock San Diego
- New Gateway Ministries
- Paddle for Peace
- Plant it Again
- Restoration 225
- Ride Against Disability
- San Diego County Promotores Coalition
- Visions Textile Museum

# A WAVE OF NEW LEADERSHIP ARRIVES

In addition to LAUNCH, Fieldstone Leadership Network offered additional support to a number of emerging leaders who had recently stepped into the executive director role for the first time. This support encompassed tailored coaching and cohort-based learning opportunities in our Learning Group. We are proud to have supported the following organizations as they welcomed an early career executive director:

- Casa de Amparo
- Center for Community Solutions
- Compost Research & Education Foundation
- Habitat for Humanity
- Humble Design
- Pacific Arts Movement
- Resounding Joy
- San Diego Pride
- Visions Textile Museum

**The strength of a community united by shared skills, a common language, and trusted relationships is unparalleled. Such a community possesses the transformative power to turn mere ripples into powerful waves of change.**

**Ultimately, this is the impact of the Fieldstone Leadership Network San Diego.**



## ADDITIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SERVED THROUGH FORMAL PROGRAMMING IN 2024

- Accessity
- Advancing Students Forward
- Agape Helpers
- Alliant Educational Foundation
- Alzheimer's San Diego
- Amor
- Art of Elan
- Arts Education Connection SD
- Blair Search Partners
- Blue Barn Creative
- California CASA Association
- Carlsbad Educational Foundation
- Casa de Amistad
- Casa de Amparo
- Catalyst
- Center for Community Solutions
- Coastal Roots Farm
- Community HousingWorks
- Compost Research & Education Foundation
- Culture Shock San Diego
- Cygnet Theatre
- Cystic Fibrosis Foundation San Diego Chapter
- DAL Consulting
- Diamond Educational Excellence Partnership
- ElderHelp of San Diego
- Floros & Associates
- Foster Innovation Group
- Global Financial Literacy Excellence Center
- Global Financial Literacy Excellence Center George
- Healing Wave Aquatics
- Home Start, Inc
- Hope for San Diego
- Humble Design San Diego
- I Love A Clean San Diego
- International Relief Teams
- Jewish Family Service of San Diego
- Just in Time for Foster Youth
- Kids Included Together
- La Jolla Institute for Immunology



## ADDITIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SERVED THROUGH FORMAL PROGRAMMING IN 2024

- La Jolla Institute for Immunology
- La Jolla Playhouse
- Library Foundation
- Library Foundation San Diego
- Linda Spuck Consulting/Sharp Healthcare
- Literacy Council of San Diego
- Living Coast Discovery Center
- Malashock Dance
- Mama's Kitchen
- Nativity Prep
- New Village Arts
- NTC Foundation
- Olivewood Gardens
- Operation Hope North County
- Outdoor Outreach
- Pacific Arts Movement
- Parent Institute for Quality Education
- Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans
- Planned Parenthood of Southern California
- Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest
- Plant it Again
- Privacy Rights Clearinghouse
- ProActive Leadership Group
- Project Next
- Promises2Kids
- PsychArmor
- Resounding Joy
- Restoration225
- Rewilding Chile
- Ride Above Disability
- San Diego Civic Youth Ballet
- San Diego Council on Literacy
- San Diego Foundation
- San Diego Habitat for Humanity
- San Diego Hunger Coalition
- San Diego Pride
- San Diego Promotores Coalition
- San Diego Railroad Museum
- San Diego Venture Partners
- SAY San Diego





## ADDITIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SERVED THROUGH FORMAL PROGRAMMING IN 2024

- SBCS
- SDG&E
- Serving Seniors
- Special Olympics Southern California
- Sue Carter Kahl Consulting
- Tariq Khamisa Foundation
- The Clarity Foundation
- The Conrad Prebys Foundation
- The Living Coast Discovery Center
- Tracie Barham Coaching and Consulting
- United Way of San Diego County
- University of San Diego Center for Restorative Justice
- Villa Musica
- Visions Museum of Textile Arts
- Voice of San Diego
- Voices for Children
- Walden Family Services
- Wounded Warrior Homes
- YMCA of San Diego County



## RESOURCES FOR THE SECTOR PROVIDED BY FIELDSTONE

### **The Nonprofit Board Exchange**

To assist nonprofit organizations in efforts to identify board members and diversify their governing boards, Fieldstone Leadership Network San Diego hosts the [Nonprofit Board Exchange™](http://www.npboardexchange.org), a community resource to publicize openings on local nonprofit boards and supply information on available trainings for those who serve in this important role. The [Nonprofit Board Exchange™](http://www.npboardexchange.org) aims to expand and equalize the field of those interested in serving in a volunteer governing role with a nonprofit organization. [www.npboardexchange.org](http://www.npboardexchange.org)

### **The Nonprofit Career Exchange**

The Nonprofit Career Exchange is built on the concept of reciprocity, one of the unique hallmarks of our Network, as it serves both the job seeker and organizations in need of additional personnel. Job announcements are shared through a weekly email sent to Network members and others in the broader nonprofit community searching for their next opportunity. The email bulletin is also shared on our social media sites every Friday.

### **The Nonprofit Resource Exchange**

The Nonprofit Resource Exchange San Diego is a place for nonprofit organizations to ask for what they need and to offer what they have to other nonprofit organizations. The Nonprofit Resource Exchange San Diego is built on the value of reciprocity with the goal of sharing resources to help the nonprofit sector as we all work together to lead our teams, serve our clients, re-imagine how we work, and sustain our organizations for the future. The Nonprofit Resource Exchange is hosted on Facebook.



# WE ARE A COMMUNITY OF WAVE MAKERS

When you create a difference in  
someone's life,  
you not only impact their life,  
you impact everyone influenced by them  
throughout their entire lifetime.



Go create waves.

## Contact Us

5060 Shoreham Place Suite 350  
San Diego, CA 92122  
(858) 252-3799

[info@fieldstoneleadershipsd.org](mailto:info@fieldstoneleadershipsd.org)  
[www.fieldstoneleadershipsd.org](http://www.fieldstoneleadershipsd.org)