

# LA JOLLA LIGHT

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LaJollaLight.com

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## GUEST COMMENTARY

# Three small steps to a stronger, kinder, more inclusive La Jolla

BY SHAHRZAD NOORAVI

I am writing in regard to the recent Pride Month article and the thoughts of the three local business owners who identify as LGBTQ (“Upcoming Pride Month provides opportunity for ‘visibility to a community within a community’ in La Jolla,” May 18, *La Jolla Light*).

I know many of these kind, talented gentlemen and appreciate how their businesses make a difference in our community.



PROVIDED BY SHAHRZAD NOORAVI

Shahrzad Nooravi

There are a few things I’d like to share that we can all reflect on for the purpose of creating a stronger, kinder and more successful community culture.

### Get to know others

First, we all have some biases, and I encourage you to get to know those who are different from you and their stories.

When we take the time to get to know people who grew up somewhere else, are differently

abled, have different sexual orientations or just have different views than us, it helps us expand our humanity.

### Explore your mindset

The path of least resistance is having a closed mindset and sticking with beliefs that were passed down to us in our family, town, state, country and institutions.

When we choose to be curious and have a more open mind, the things we learn can open our minds and hearts and lead to a stronger business and community culture. It takes courage to be

open and seek to learn more about others.

### Attend events

Taking a small step toward this journey can be empowering and life-shifting. When there is a celebration and acknowledgment of women, LGBTQ, African Americans and others throughout the year, it is an effort aimed to help us be curious, get to know people who are different from us and celebrate their successes through the many challenges, pain, abuse and discrimination they have faced.

In the end, as humans, we all seek love, kindness and acceptance. Perhaps a small step can be to walk into any of these three stores (Mary’s Gourmet Salads, Havaianas flip-flops and Board & Brush) and get to know the owners.

Also, the La Jolla Village Merchants Association hosts great events where we can meet many business owners and learn how businesses support one another to thrive and serve residents and visitors.

As a business psychologist, I have worked with many people to explore their views and biases in a safe, non-judgmental conversation. I facilitate learning about how we can invite diversity, ensure equity and create inclusive environments. It leads to more successful companies and communities.

We make change with one small step at a time, and I encourage all of us (myself included) to continually get to know those who are different from us and learn about their journeys, challenges and successes.

In the words of poet Rumi, “Your task is to not seek for love but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it.”

Getting to know others and getting to know ourselves can make a difference and help all of us live a more complete and fulfilling life.

*Shahrzad Nooravi is an organizational psychologist in La Jolla and the author of “A Powerful Culture Starts With You.” ♦*

## OUR READERS WRITE

### Ellen Browning Scripps’ many accomplishments make a monument well-deserved

To those planning a monument to Ellen Browning Scripps, we all concur that it is overdue and deeply deserved (“Plans are underway for statue of Ellen Browning Scripps in La Jolla,” May 25, *La Jolla Light*).

This amazing woman also founded Scripps College in Claremont, Calif., which is one of the top women’s colleges in the country.

That recognition must not be left off the enumeration of her accomplishments.

**The Rev. Carolyn Owen-Towle**

### What’s on YOUR mind?

■ Letters published in the *La Jolla Light* express views from readers about community matters. Submissions of related photos also are welcome. Letters reflect the writers’ opinions and not necessarily those of the newspaper staff or publisher. Letters are subject to editing.

To share your thoughts in this public forum, email them with your first and last names and city or neighborhood of residence to [robert.vardon@lajollalight.com](mailto:robert.vardon@lajollalight.com).

You also can submit a letter online at [lajollalight.com/submit-a-letter-to-the-editor](http://lajollalight.com/submit-a-letter-to-the-editor). The deadline is 10 a.m. Monday for publication in that week’s paper. Letters without the writer’s name cannot be published. Letters from the same person are limited to one in a 30-day period.

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Ellen Browning Scripps is pictured around 1930.

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