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...and more
The College of Liberal Arts Magazine is published for alumni, students and their parents, and friends of the College of Liberal Arts, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

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College of Liberal Arts

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Front Cover:

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The CLA is proud to print this magazine on FSC certified paper and display the FSC logo.
To Our Readers,

This academic year finds the College of Liberal Arts advancing in important and exciting directions. Cal Poly's new mission statement (January 2007) calls for "a balanced education in the arts, sciences and technology" and the university's accompanying values statement underscores our college's role in this process:

As a polytechnic university with a strong emphasis on the liberal arts and interdisciplinary studies, Cal Poly exemplifies the new liberal education and embraces the pursuit of learning outcomes that prepare students for careers and citizenship (December 2007).

I would like to reflect briefly on just what is meant by "the new liberal education" and how, within this context, the role of our college can be seen as central to Cal Poly's polytechnic mission.

As I see it, our role at a premier polytechnic institution like Cal Poly in the 21st century is two-fold.

At their core, our programs function as such programs function at any other first-rate university: They supply the essential elements educated men and women require to enter fully into the worlds of life, work and civic responsibility that await them. For example, the humanities at Cal Poly provide for the same continuities of knowledge and the habits of mind and critical inquiry that inform all well-educated people who have a secure grounding in literature, philosophy, language and culture.

At the same time, however, the College of Liberal Arts at Cal Poly has the wider and somewhat uncommon opportunity to collaborate with multiple polytechnic disciplines. This could result, to a greater degree than has traditionally been the case, in our graduates receiving the kind of rich interdisciplinary education that will prepare them for the many challenges lying ahead as they emerge as conscientious citizens of our nation and insightful members of the global community.

This issue of the CLA Magazine explores one way in which our college community is embracing this model through the interdisciplinary efforts that have begun to blossom in China, a new and exciting prospect for us. The potential for genuinely meaningful collaboration of this kind is particularly strong at this most impressive "moment" in our history. Students and faculty in all of our college's disciplines are at the top of their game, and we are energized and eager to move forward on the amazing journey that awaits us.

Linda H. Halisky
Dean
New Interdisciplinary Program Brings the World to Cal Poly

Among Cal Poly's most inventive new interdisciplinary initiatives is the Liberal Arts and Engineering Studies (LAES) joint degree program, first offered this past spring by the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Engineering. One of its first student projects involved presenting a new-media interactive art installation in Beijing that merged dazzling cutting-edge technology with global collaboration.

Combining studies in engineering and technology with studies in culture, the arts and the humanities, the LAES program is a project-based educational effort that encourages students to see engineering, the sciences and the liberal arts as interconnected and equally valid methods of asking the same essential questions about the world around us.
Students who enroll in classical engineering studies—but who also have academic and professional interests in the arts and culture—can pursue a focused interdisciplinary technical program that includes specializations in the study of sound and music, theater, public policy, interactive design, and intercultural communication required for a variety of innovative careers in education, community development, commerce and the arts.

“The LAES program prepares students for key positions in education, government and industry that require a deep knowledge of the histories and day-to-day practicalities of working with technology and the impact that technology can have when solving a wide range of cultural problems,” says David Gillette, Cal Poly professor of English and one of two co-chairs coordinating the program.

The interactive media installation that LAES students worked on this spring—Intimate Transactions—was part of an Olympics-sponsored new-media arts show that ran from mid-June until the start of the Summer Olympics in August. It was a 10-day shared effort with the National Art Museum of China, the Beijing Art Museum of the Imperial Palace and the Transmute Collective, an artists’ collaborative based in Brisbane, Australia.

The Cal Poly installation was directly connected to partner installations in Beijing. Together the installations enabled two anonymous persons in separate locations to interact with each other in an immersive electronic environment. Each individual climbed aboard a “Body Shelf” that tracked their movements as they “traveled” together through a beautiful virtual environment of light, inside a complex surround-sound system comprising eight large speakers and small wearable speakers that sent sound vibrations directly into their bodies.

For the first four hours of every show opening in June, the Intimate Transactions installation at Cal Poly allowed visitors at the university to connect with museum visitors in Beijing for a series of live interactions mediated through the sights and sounds of the system. In China, crowds of people lined up to take part in this rare opportunity to interact live and through the Internet with average Americans. The entire new-media arts show in Beijing included participant art works from nearly every country worldwide, but the LAES program’s Intimate Transactions provided the show’s only open, direct and free-form link between Beijing and the United States.

As soon as word spread through Beijing audiences of this unusual chance to freely connect to U.S. participants, the lines for the Beijing side of the show swelled, Gillette recalls. “Literally thousands of people stood in line each morning in hopes of having a chance to interact with the Cal Poly participants,” he says. “In the few hours that the LAES program was connected to Beijing each day, 40 to 50 lucky participants tried out this connection to the United States while hundreds of others looked on. The experience was groundbreaking and gave our students a sense of what it means to be part of a truly global collaborative experience.”
During summer 2008, students and faculty from the Graphic Communication Department spent an amazing four weeks in China for an international field trip. Students earned seven units of GRC credit toward their degree requirements while exploring the printing industry and the culture of China.

During their stay, the group had an opportunity to interact with employers, students and faculty members in the graphic communication industry, visiting two universities and 16 companies and learning about China's extensive printing history, from carving on tortoise shells, to the invention of paper in 104 C.E., to the invention of woodblocks and, later, the first moveable type. Large institutions such as Beijing Founder Electronics, the Beijing Institute of Graphic Communications, and Shanghai Zidan Printing Co. and smaller print companies such as Artron and the Rong Boo Zhai Printing shop opened their doors to these curious visitors.

"The graphics arts industry in China has changed so much," observes Xiaoying Rong, GRC assistant professor. "The technology and equipment used in China are close to what we see here in the States, but China is still a labor-intensive country. Many processes in daily manufacturing are still done manually."

The Cal Poly group also climbed the Great Wall, watched acrobats and a kung fu demonstration, received blessings from the lead monk at a Buddhist temple, and much more. They took notes and pictures and, as a final project for the field trip, created a magazine documenting all they had experienced and learned about China's history and their firsthand look at China's future.

GRC professors Penny Bennett and Rong led the international experience. Rong is originally from China and Bennett has experience hosting and mentoring Chinese professors who have come to Cal Poly to teach in the GRC Department. The field trip was a valuable learning experience for both professors and students, particularly because the graphic communication industry continues to have a strong global influence.

"China has a long printing history and has evolved into a 21st-century international presence with its innovative printing technologies and practices," says Bennett. "The lessons learned in China will never be found in a textbook. Our trip was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for our students that exemplifies Cal Poly's learn-by-doing philosophy."
Cal Poly Joins the U.S. Strategic Alliance for Sustainability Innovation in China

"Among the greatest challenges facing humanity at the dawn of the 21st century is learning how to better meet human needs while restoring and nurturing the planet’s life support systems."

William C. Clark
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University

Political Science Professor Shanrou "Ning" Zhang, who teaches modern Chinese politics, is taking William Clark's challenge to heart. Zhang, along with a core team of Cal Poly professors—Linda Vanasupa (ENGR), Adrienne Greve (ARCH), Lars Tomanek (COSAM) and Neal McDougall (AGR)—are collaborating with research professors from Stanford University and Yale University and practitioners from China’s Tongji University to design a prototype model of a fully functioning, sustainable rural community on Chongming Island near Shanghai, China.

Chongming Island has been designated by the Chinese government as an “eco” island. The government is hoping to use the new research program as an example of sustainability for the entire nation. "The project also serves as a rich platform to research a number of emergent social science questions within the context of Chinese culture," says Zhang.

Earlier this year, the team submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation for funding for the project. Team members plan to participate at multiple levels— as participants in the design, as advisers to the practitioners who are designing the community and as researchers. The work will follow the sustainable development protocol from the United Nation’s Agenda 21 report, which calls for collaboration of local residents and government throughout any such program conducted on foreign soil.

"China is a proud country, rich in cultural and historical values. We want to preserve their traditional way of life, yet pass along proven sustainable methods and technologies to help them thrive in the 21st century," says Zhang.
Chinese is the language of nearly one-quarter of the world’s population. Speakers of Chinese not only live in China, Taiwan and Singapore, but are also found throughout Southeast Asia, the Americas and Europe. Because the Chinese today have been playing increasingly important roles worldwide--China is one of the major world powers and an engine behind the world economy--literacy in Chinese is a highly advantageous skill. Statistics show that of all foreign languages at American universities and colleges, Chinese has had the highest proportional increase in enrollment. If the present is any indication, Chinese will continue to be a very important language in the future.

In recognition of Cal Poly’s increasing ties with programs in China, the provost and the CLA dean’s office supported the creation of a full-time lecturer position in Chinese. Starting this fall, the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures has invited HueiYu "Sophia" Chen to develop a Chinese program that teaches Chinese language and culture courses at both the elementary and intermediate levels.

“My aim is to help students develop communicative competence in the four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing the Chinese language," says Chen. "While linguistic aspects of the Chinese language are the primary focus, an introduction to the social and cultural background of the language also forms an important part of my courses."

By using technology and focusing on communication, Chen’s students will learn Chinese language and culture in a variety of new ways. "Learning a language is not just learning grammar and vocabulary but also learning new ways of seeing, acting in another culture and knowing a new community from the inside. Students from all majors can benefit," says Chen. "A technician, engineer or CEO who knows Chinese language and culture can work successfully with many more people and in many more places than someone who knows only English."

Chen adds, "I have been at Cal Poly for only a short time, but I have seen strong interest in learning Chinese language and culture from my students, whether or not their heritage language is Chinese. I look forward to an exciting new academic year at Cal Poly, and hope to see many students, faculty and staff at the Chinese New Year event scheduled for the end of January 2009."
Exploring the Lives of Chinese Women

Professor Barbara Mori (SOCS) has long been teaching Cal Poly students about the cultures of China and other Asian countries. Her teaching is enriched by her two long-term research projects on the college experiences of Chinese and Japanese women and on Chinese women's interest in calligraphy.

For the first project (begun in 1994), women were surveyed and interviewed on the factors that enabled them to enroll in college, their experience of college life and their future expectations in the areas of work and family. To date 660 surveys and interviews with freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors at universities in China and Japan have been collected. Women were surveyed or interviewed at a variety of colleges and universities, including students from a two-year all-women's college in Xian, a technical college in Wuhan, and a university specializing in science and technology in Kunming. Respondents also included students from teachers' colleges in Hanzhong, Xian, Harbin and Zhanjiang and four-year colleges with graduate programs in Xian, Changchun, Ningbo and Lhasa.

Preliminary findings have been presented at various conferences for discussion on the lives of women in Asia. Mori is particularly interested in the continuing influence of Confucian ideas about education and the role of women in society.

A meeting with Chinese women who are professional painters and calligraphers led Mori to establish a contest for women in calligraphy in 1995 at Xi Bei Da Xue in Xi'an (Northwestern University). The women identified early recognition and encouragement as critical to their becoming artists. After listening to them, Mori says, "I thought, 'Encouragement—I can do that.'" She worked with Professor Ni Wendong to establish a contest that ran for five years.

After Professor Ni left to teach in Beijing, Mori created the contest at Shaanxi Li Gong Xue Yuan (Shaanxi University of Technology) in Hanzhong, Shaanxi Province, which ran from 2003 until 2008 and has been extended for another five years.

"There are no contests specifically for women in calligraphy anywhere else. This is an important recognition of these women as artists in a tradition honored by their culture," says Mori. She presented a paper on the women who took part in the contests and their interest in calligraphy at the 6th International Conference of East Asian Calligraphy Education in Tai Chung, Taiwan, this past June.
Roberts Rule as CLA Honored Alumni

Every year at Homecoming the university recognizes an individual from each of the seven academic colleges. The Honored Alumni Award was established almost 40 years ago as the highest honor bestowed by the Alumni Association upon alumni who have achieved a high level of career success and influence stemming from their education at Cal Poly.

The College of Liberal Arts is proud to announce Robert A. Mayhew (POLS '82) as our 2007 Honored Alumnus and Robert Tapella (GRC '91) as our 2008 Honored Alumnus.

Robert A. Mayhew

Mayhew is a champion of the college and has been a member and co-chair of the Dean's Council for more than 10 years. With co-chair Mary Crebassa (SCOM '79), he helped lead the board through a restructuring phase that created the current council, which focuses on collegewide incentives, and served as a member of the CLA Capital Campaign Committee.

Most recently, the Mayhew family answered the call of the College of Liberal Arts' 1st Generation Scholarship Campaign with a four-year scholarship to help support students who are the first in their families to attend college. This significant gift demonstrates the passion and commitment of the Mayhews' dedication to the college and to Cal Poly.

Mayhew and his wife, Sherri, have three children and live in Scottsdale, Ariz., where he is vice president for DMB Associates Inc., a diversified real estate investment and development firm with holdings throughout the western United States. He oversees the planning, development, marketing and management of the company's commercial properties. Previously he was a vice president at Newhall Land in Valencia.

Mayhew holds master's degrees in business administration and real estate development from the University of Southern California, is an advisory board member for the USC Lusk Center for Real Estate, an advisory board member of the Arizona State University College of Design and Master of Real Estate Development program, and a member of the Urban Land Institute.

Mayhew credits Cal Poly with providing him the opportunity to grow academically and personally. He says his most "educational" moments as a student came from his personal experiences with professors and fellow students in non-classroom settings. He was selected as a student delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1980, spent four months completing an internship in a congressional office in Washington, D.C., and participated in local campaigns on the Central Coast.

"The entire college town environment and the approachable teaching staff made my tenure at Cal Poly a treasured experience," Mayhew recalls. "I am honored to receive the CLA Honored Alumnus Award and to give back to the college."
Robert Tapella
Since 2007 Tapella has served as the chief executive officer of the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) in Washington, D.C. The position, also referred to as "public printer," is nominated by the president and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. The first public printer was Benjamin Franklin.

Graphic Communication Professor Brian Lawler (GRC '76), the CLA 1996 Honored Alumnus and a friend of Tapella's, says, "Perhaps one day Robert's image will be on the $100 laser note!"

Tapella oversees production and distribution of information products and services for all three branches of the federal government. Many of the country's most important information products, such as the Congressional Record and the Federal Register, are produced at the GPO's main plant, located five blocks from the U.S. Capitol. The 1.5 million-square-foot complex is one of the largest information processing, printing and distribution facilities in the world.

Tapella brings to the GPO a unique combination of skills that includes extensive legislative experience, as well as educational and practical business backgrounds in graphic communication and printing management.

Prior to his current position, Tapella served as the GPO's chief of staff and deputy chief of staff. From 1996 to 2000 he was also a professional staff member in the U.S. House of Representatives, where he supervised the Office of Member Services for the Committee on House Oversight, advising members of Congress in interpreting and applying the rules and regulations of their offices.

Tapella also served as chief of staff to a House member and developed a strategic plan for the clerk of the House to re-engineer the information technology infrastructures within the legislative process. From 1986 to 1993 he was the district representative for California Congressman Bill Thomas, who later chaired the House Ways and Means Committee, managing the congressman's interaction with local and state political and public groups.

A California native, Tapella is an alumnus of the American Council of Young Political Leaders and the Sunnyvale Leadership Class of 1995.

Past CLA Honored Alumni

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Major</th>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Ray Hartman (GRC '79)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Fran (McIntyre) Durekas (HD)</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>Gretchen Bataille (ENGL '66)</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>Mary Crebassa (SCOM '79)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Lee Sapaden (POL '72)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Peggy Peterson (SOC '59)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Mary LaVenture (JOUR '77)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Mark Coudray (GRC '77)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Barbara Raines (JOUR '93)</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>Nevada Barr (ENGL '74)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Brian Lawler (GRC '76)</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>Robert To (GRC '77)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Mary Harris (POL '80)</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>Ralph Hinds (JOUR '63)</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>Dorothy Newell (JOUR '77)</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>Robert Coltrin (ART '66)</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>Paul Simon (JOUR '73)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Mary Harris (POL '80)</td>
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2008 College of Liberal Arts Dean's Philanthropy Leadership Award

M. Robert Leach was honored with the 2008 College of Liberal Arts Dean's Philanthropy Leadership Award in January. Established in 2006, the award pays tribute to donors who provide outstanding philanthropic support to the college and recognizes the ever-increasing significance of philanthropy at Cal Poly and the central role played by private giving.

Dean Linda H. Haliksy says, "Bob embodies the spirit of philanthropy through his generosity, volunteerism and advocacy."

Leach's commitment to the university started in 1999 with his service on the President's Cabinet. During Cal Poly's Centennial Campaign (2000-2005), his dedication as chair of the CLA Centennial Campaign built the strong foundation that has enabled the college to continue to advance its goals today.

In 2003 Leach and his wife, Maggie, took former CLA Dean Harry Hellenbrand's call for support to heart and pledged gifts of $1,000,000 per year for five years to CLA's Cal Poly Scholars program. The program provides four-year scholarships to the nation's most academically talented high school seniors, giving special preference to Merit Scholar Finalists. Leach's personal mission to sponsor current and future Cal Poly Scholars—and to challenge others to do so—has forever changed the lives of top undergraduates. Currently, the CLA hosts two Cal Poly Scholars: Allison Rudd, a sophomore Art and Design major from Bealsburg, and Jennifer Merriam, a senior GRC major from San Jose.

Now retired, Leach worked for Anderson Consulting (now Accenture) for 21 years and was partner-in-charge of the firm's electronics consulting effort. He also served for seven years as senior vice president for market development at Cadence Design Systems and was instrumental in that company's impressive growth.

In college, Leach was an All-American athlete and held national records for swimming two years running. No longer working 8 to 5, he has resumed biking and participates in cycling challenges. He has become a master diver, technical diver, certified scuba instructor and adviser to start-up companies. Most recently, he became an EMT/ firefighter/paramedic for the Huntington Lake Volunteer Fire Department.

Bob and Maggie Leach have been married since 1970 and have two daughters—Meganne (PSY '01) and Eryn.
A Philosophy of Sharing

CLA Marching Gift Donor
Rigoberto J. Peña-Rankin (PHIL ’00)

Rigoberto J. Peña-Rankin (PHIL ’00) understands that a liberal arts education is the essential foundation for a life well lived. Peña-Rankin, who immigrated to the United States from Nicaragua when he was 12, is a proponent of hard work and believes that student achievement should be rewarded. In 2007, he established a scholarship for philosophy students.

“I was motivated to make this gift by my former philosophy professor and now good friend, Paul Mildowicz, who was very instrumental in my development as a student and as a person in my undergraduate years. He nurtured my budding passion for philosophy and music and encouraged me to pursue higher achievements in academics. My experiences under his guidance were some of the best during my years at Cal Poly.”

Peña-Rankin approached his philanthropy generously and thoughtfully. He funded his scholarship incrementally through payroll deductions, and later made a second gift to the Philosophy Department through his company’s matching gift program.

“I thought that the best way to show my appreciation to the college was to give back, with the hope that future students will come to share in the kinds of experiences that have greatly influenced me,” Peña-Rankin says.
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In celebration of her mother’s life, Nina Jackson has donated Mary Mengade’s Steinway piano to the Music Department. Wade, a former art professor at Cal Poly and local San Luis Obispo artist, "wanted her beautiful Steinway to be used to continue to inspire and encourage students to pursue their love of music," says Jackson.

Wade had a deep love for music and art, and enthusiastically shared this love with her family, friends and students. "She had an intuitive understanding of the ways in which different students learn, bringing out the best in each one," remembers Jackson.

Wade lived a rich life, making great strides for a woman of her time. During World War II, she served in the U.S. Navy as one of the few female control tower operators. After her honorable discharge, she developed an intense interest in color and graduated with a bachelor’s in art from Pomona College in Claremont. She also studied piano with Lloyd Browning in Santa Barbara and later with Reginald Stewart at the Music Academy of the West in Montecito.

Wade taught art at Cal Poly and in the Lucia Mar, San Luis Obispo and Stockton school districts. Most recently she served as president of the Oil, Acrylic and Pastel Group at the San Luis Obispo Art Center and was former president of the Central Coast Music Teachers Association. She had many individual shows, including ones at the University Art Gallery at Cal Poly, the Bradley Gallery in Santa Barbara and the San Luis Obispo Art Association Gallery. Her works are in many private collections throughout California. For more information or to view Wade's works, please visit www.marymengade.com.
Endowments

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Honoring Barbara McClung Hallman's Legacy

Barbara McClung Hallman, a member of the History Department’s faculty from 1973 to 1991, was an accomplished scholar and dedicated professor. Her students recall her classes as cutting across boundaries to link the study of history with literature, music, and art.

Hallman’s groundbreaking 1977 course, Women in History, was arguably the first “women’s studies” course at Cal Poly, integrating the experience of women into the study of history and examining how a fresh look at the past may have “implications for today’s woman.” Her innovative teaching added a new critical dimension and perspective to the History Department and opened the door for new kinds of courses universitywide.

The Cal Poly community lost Barbara Hallman in 2006. To honor her commitment to research and teaching, a fund was established in her name to support faculty in research and scholarship. The Barbara McClung Hallman Women’s Studies Faculty Award is designed "to benefit Women's and Gender Studies Department faculty by recognizing their accomplishments and supporting their professional development." The 2008 inaugural recipient of the Barbara McClung Hallman Women's Studies Faculty Award is Mary A. Armstrong, chair of the Women’s and Gender Studies Department.

Contributions to the Barbara McClung Hallman Women's Studies Faculty Award can be sent to the College of Liberal Arts, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407-0320. Please make your check payable to Cal Poly (Memo: Hallman Award).
Advancement Director's Message

As the pages of this magazine illustrate, it is an exciting time for our college. We continue to build upon the strengths of our disciplines to provide the kind of exceptional, hands-on educational experience that has made us the most competitive liberal arts college in the California State University system and one of the most competitive nationwide. We are also uniquely positioned to move forward in a collaborative manner to explore a variety of cross-disciplinary opportunities that will enable our students to flourish in an increasingly global workplace.

In the College of Liberal Arts, the strength of our disciplines and our capacity to grow in new directions are made possible by an innovative faculty, an engaged student body and a responsive university community. They are also made possible by you, our alumni and friends.

Your generosity allows us to make significant progress in ways that would otherwise be impossible. Giving to the College of Liberal Arts, its departments and programs provides vital support for new curriculum development, faculty and student research, learn-by-doing student experiences, and laboratory and equipment upgrades. And as total annual costs to attend Cal Poly approach $20,000, private giving is crucial to our ability to offer financial assistance to deserving students through scholarships and other funds.

One of the best things we can do to ensure a strong future economy is to invest in the education of our youth and to prepare them for the challenges and opportunities of the world they will inherit.

On behalf of the College of Liberal Arts, I would like to thank you for your belief in Cal Poly and your continued commitment to our faculty and students.

Eileen Joseph
Director of Advancement

"Your generosity allows us to make significant progress in ways that would otherwise be impossible."

Members of the CLA Dean's Council attending the fall 2008 meeting are (left to right): Robert Mayhew (POLS '82), Mary Crebassa (SCOM '79), Fred S. Edmondson (ED '74), Linda Ashworth (BIO '74), Clif Swanson, Linda H. Halisky (Dean), Carl Meyer and Eileen Joseph. Not pictured are Lee Sapaden (POLS '72) and James Stueck (SOS '69).