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Winter 2009 Newsletter



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MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR

By Dr. Bill Hendricks



our visibility on and off campus, enhance opportunities for industry partnerships, increase our advancement efforts, and provide additional stature for our major. Thank you to the 93 individuals who wrote letters of support as we moved the department status proposal through the University system. Your letters were instrumental in our success!

Secondly, at the March 12 College of Agriculture, Food, & Environmental Sciences Awards Banquet, Dr. Marni Goldenberg received the New Faculty Teaching Award for recognition of her excellence in teaching, professional development (research and grant acquisitions), and service. Congratulations Marni!

Winter quarter has literally been a whirlwind of activity and news. You will read about many of these highlights within this newsletter, so I will only touch on a few of these accomplishments. Perhaps most importantly is our announcement that effective fall quarter 2009, following 33 years as a program within two different departments, we will become the Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration DEPARTMENT. This change in administrative structure will increase

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NEWS & EVENTS

Dr. Brian Greenwood was recognized by the North American Colleges & Teachers of Agriculture with a meritorious award for outstanding teaching at the annual CAFES leadership banquet. [Read more](#)

RPTA's annual benefit and auction with the theme "Fly Away with RPTA: Your Passport to the World" was held Saturday, February 26, 2011 at the San Luis Jet Centre and was a smashing success in breaking records for attendance and overall money raised for the department. [Read more](#)

The RPTA team of Amber Black, Amy Lepp, Kristen McClay, and Kelsey Pavao captured the first-ever Academic Quiz Bowl

Thirdly, if you missed this year's auction and dinner, wow, what a success! The event, attended by more than 200 supporters of RPTA, garnered nearly \$20,000 in net donations to the program. This is an incredible achievement, particularly during our current economic climate. We have really amped up our student involvement at professional conferences utilizing the success of the event over the years as a resource for student development.

Finally, speaking of conferences, 56 students and all seven full-time faculty just returned from the California Park and Recreation Society (CPRS) and NRPA Pacific Southwest Conference in Santa Clara. The exhibit hall was overrun with Cal Poly polo shirts on a daily basis and our students shined as ambassadors of Cal Poly and in their attendance at educational sessions. Notably, Tiyanya Nourbakhsh, a recent graduate of our master's degree program, presented her thesis at the research symposium. Her presentation was without a doubt the highlight of the research symposium!

As I embark on a sabbatical leave spring quarter to work on a research project with the CPRS, don't forget, as my dad always said, "keep those cards and letters (emails) comin'."

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CHUMASH CASINO TOUR

By Sarah Beck

The opportunities provided for RPTA students seem to be endless. In October of 2008, one such opportunity commenced with the RPTA faculty and several students receiving a private tour of the Chumash Casino Resort that included a chartered bus trip to and from the resort. After a meet-and-greet breakfast, the group was led from one department to the next by the resort's finest managers. At one point, students and faculty engaged in a heated but friendly game of "high-stakes" poker (winners received a commemorative coin). A large portion of the tour was led by highly respected Executive Director of Hospitality John Martino, who charmed the group with his engaging personality and extensive knowledge of and passion for the hospitality industry.



In addition to the resort and employee resource center, the RPTA group was introduced to Chumash Casino Resort's newest addition: The Royal Scandinavian Inn (RSI). RSI is currently being transformed into Hotel Corque, which is scheduled to open in March and be fully operating by summer. This renovation project in Solvang, CA was particularly interesting to the group in seeing the transformation from 1970s era hotel motif to a modern urban chic design.

From a personal standpoint, as an RPTA student with experience in the hotel and events industry, I was thoroughly impressed with the Chumash Casino Resort. Every employee seemed so pleased to be part of the company that I instantly wanted to join the team. The ongoing relationship between RPTA and Chumash will be invaluable for career and internship opportunities in the future. Our students and faculty should be proud to be associated with such a reputable company as the Chumash Casino Resort.

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SENCE FOUNDATION

championship at the 2010 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Annual Congress in Minneapolis, MN. [Read more](#)

Katherine Soule, a recent RPTA Masters degree recipient, received the prestigious "Future Scholars" award at the 2010 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Annual Congress in Minneapolis, MN. [Read more](#)

A team of RPTA faculty and students partnered with the California Travel and Tourism Commission to develop the Sustainable Tourism Marketing Handbook. The handbook as presented at the 2010 California Sustainable Tourism Summit in Lake Tahoe. [Read more](#)

Dr. Jeff Jacobs was honored with the 2010 CAFES New Faculty Teaching award; this same honor was bestowed upon Dr. Marni Goldenberg in 2009. Congratulations to both of these well deserving RPTA faculty! [Read more](#)

By Mo Oviatt

I am the most recent member to join the Board of Directors of the Sence Foundation and was appointed to the board in 2005. One of six directors, I am also among two other Cal Poly alums. My role on the board is like the other five members, which is simply to learn of the foundations and non-profit organizations in our community, state, and in some cases the rest of the nation and distribute charitable gifts to those we deem the most deserving and in need of our assistance.

Since 1994, the Sence Foundation has collectively donated over \$185,000 to Cal Poly under the direction of several various programs and departments. Over the past couple of years I have enjoyed corresponding with Dr. Hendricks regarding the goings-on in the RPTA world and, of course, the work our faculty is doing to help the Natural Resources Management department thrive.

The board also approved a gift to the department to aid the "Endowment for Excellence in Tourism and Event Management" campaign, which is doing very well in reaching its fundraising goals. Having been through the RPTA program and as part of its extended family, I was delighted to learn about such a progressive project for faculty and students, and the opportunity to help the program prosper was a pleasure.

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WINTER CAMPING WITH REC 325

By Kellie Sinnot



As part of REC 325 (outdoor leadership), a winter snow camping trip was part of the curriculum. The class was broken up into two different groups that went on two different winter camping trips.

I was on the first field trip, and this was a camping experience that I will never forget. We arrived at Sequoia National

Park on Friday evening, set up camp, and began our adventure in the snow. On Saturday we went on a two-mile snowshoeing hike to a frozen waterfall. It was so beautiful, yet so cold, with fresh powder everywhere; everything was covered in snow. When night rolled around, we each had a lesson to teach the class, such as waste disposal, foot care, compass reading, and astronomy. The night ended with some fabulous bedtime story telling.

The next day we packed up and hiked to the largest tree in the world (the General Sherman tree), while more students taught lessons. Going through the giant redwoods was such an amazing experience because the trees were the most massive trees I have ever seen! After the last snowshoeing hike through the Sequoias, it was time to say goodbye to the snow and head back to SLO.

Snow camping was the perfect outdoor leadership trip, and we all learned a lot from Dr. Goldenberg, each other, and the natural environment. Snow camping is a lot harder than regular camping and what made this trip so memorable was all of the positive attitudes that we brought with us. Each and every one of us contributed to this trip in some way. The main thing that I took away from the weekend was realizing how influential positive attitudes can be in affecting your overall experience. I believe everyone should try snow

camping at least once in their lives... but be sure to take along an experienced guide like Dr. Goldenberg!

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"BUILDING A FIELD OF DREAMS" 2009 RPTA AUCTION

By Andrea McDonald

Yet another homerun dinner and auction for RPTA! This year's "Building A Field of Dreams" raised over \$17,000! Avila Beach Golf resort was the setting for our 200 guests, consisting of alumni, family and friends of the recreation program. Co-chairs Andrea McDonald and Mallory Woods, faculty advisors Kendi Root and Cynthia Moyer, and committee members Davia Montoya, Brittany Jordan, Dana Matteson, Brittany Reading, Chelsea Buttress, Sydney Hollingsworth, Kelly



Stein, Kaityln Mullinax, Ali Dockery, Ashely Antonino, Teresa Karcher, Taylor Voorhis, Lara Choma, Vanessa Thomas, Ryan Baker and Justin Schmillin worked for six months to plan this successful event! Our sponsors made this event possible. A special thank you to our sponsors: The Cliffs Resort, Avila Beach Golf Resort, Sig-O-Rama, Taylor Rentals, Karcher Digital & Printing, The Apple Farm, Adelaida Vineyards, Gainey Vineyards, Amanda Milholland, Jay C. Photography, Scott Vernon, and the Montoya Family. Just as the saying goes, "other sports are just sports, baseball is a love," recreation is not just a major, it's a love.

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CPRS SANTA CLARA CONFERENCE

By Anna Dickson



The California Park and Recreation Society (CPRS) and NRPA Pacific Southwest Conference in Santa Clara, CA had a distinctive Mustang flair this year. Cal Poly had 56 students and all seven faculty members attend at least one day of the three-day conference.

This number far exceeded the representation from other colleges and universities throughout the Pacific region and made an indelible impact on the organizations and companies represented at the conference.

As has become the custom, Cal Poly students and faculty wore black RPTA polo shirts and essentially turned the conference's Expo Hall into UU-North, with Cal Poly "black" at every turn. The Cal Poly booth and display became a focal point, as students and faculty networked with alumni and practitioners from across the region. Many organizations stopped by and dropped off information about internships. The new RPTA display was also unveiled, with new pictures better highlighting the breadth of experiences in the major.

In addition to attending educational sessions and networking with a myriad of companies and organizations, students and faculty hosted a one-of-a-kind alumni social at HP Pavilion in San Jose, CA. Senior Genna Wood helped organize the social that featured a behind-the-scenes guided tour of "The Shark Tank," pre-game dinner in a private room, and the finale of a National Hockey League matchup between the Western Conference-leading San Jose Sharks and the Minnesota Wild.

Seniors Sydney Hollingsworth and Chelsea Buttress were instrumental in assisting Drs. Hendricks and Jacobs to organize this year's fabulous conference turnout. Everyone is now looking forward to next year's conference in Palm Springs, CA. Don't miss out on this excellent professional development opportunity!

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EXECUTIVE-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM: RODRIGO ESPINOSA

By Heidi Diestel

Rodrigo Espinosa, Vice President of Business Development for Maritz, Inc., is a Cal Poly alumni and member of the RPTA Advisory Council. During the winter quarter, Rodrigo followed Tim Ryan of Pebble Beach Resorts and became the second advisory council member to be featured in the newly developed RPTA Executive-In-Residence program. This program was designed to enhance RPTA's connection with advisory council and industry partners, provide added opportunities for student engagement with influential professionals in our field, and give advisory council members a unique opportunity to further connect with the students, faculty, and overall university.

In addition to serving as a guest lecturer in several classes and meeting and consulting with faculty, the RPTA Club hosted a luncheon meet-and-greet with Rodrigo. All RPTA students were invited. During this luncheon with students, Rodrigo answered individual questions and offered great advice to better aid RPTA students in career endeavors. The passion and knowledge that Rodrigo portrayed during the session was very encouraging and energizing for all RPTA students.

There were a number of things that Rodrigo spoke about during his time with the RPTA Club. One main topic was interviewing and resume building. Many students are about to graduate and move on towards their career goals, and Rodrigo gave students a number of tips and bits of advice from his own experience with hiring.

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BASEBALL HALL OF FAME

By Joe Carlucci

The President of the Baseball Hall of Fame, Jeff Idelson, came to Cal Poly this quarter to speak to a group of students and faculty. Idelson was promoting their summer internship for college students.

The internship is a 10-week program that allows college students to work alongside museum staff to gain hands-on professional training. Interns get the opportunity to craft leadership and communication skills by attending career seminars hosted by Hall of Fame staff and community leaders and also by participating in thematic public speaking, research, and writing assignments that directly relate to the mission of the organization.

Idelson explained the numerous departments that interns can work with during the summer. The most popular departments are public relations, museum programs, photo archives, and membership.

After the presentation there was time to ask questions, followed by a trivia session where Idelson tested the student's knowledge of the Baseball Hall of Fame. Various prizes were handed out such as museum programs, DVDs, key chains, and even polo shirts. Students who applied for the internship will hear from the Hall of Fame by mid April.

The Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum are located in Cooperstown, New York and first opened in June of 1939. The museum boasts countless artifacts and interactive exhibits honoring baseball's past, and it also features the 289 players, managers, executives, and writers who have been elected into the Hall of Fame.

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RPTA WINTER SOCIALS

MARISOL RESTAURANT

By Justin Schmillen

This January, Recreation, Parks, & Tourism Administration kicked off 2009 with an alumni social at the Marisol Restaurant at the Cliffs Resort in San Luis Obispo. RPTA alumni were presented with a fantastic spread of wine and appetizers and a great social atmosphere to reconnect with former friends and professors.



Everyone in attendance was also entered into a raffle. Prizes included a stay at the Cliffs Resort, a hot tub excursion at Sycamore Mineral Springs, and some lovely gift baskets. This was one of many recent steps by RPTA to enhance industry recognition and establish a stronger synergy among students, alumni, faculty, and professionals in our field. These opportunities for RPTA alumni to meet, mingle, and network are to become more frequent and take place beyond San Luis Obispo. Be sure to make it for the next one!

GORDON BIRSCH

By Amy Golladay



The Bay Area RPTA Alumni Social was held in early February at Gordon Biersch in San Francisco. Over 40 RPTA alumni attended the event. The event was held as part of an effort to reconnect with alumni and foster stronger networking opportunities for both students and

alumni. The evening was a wonderful opportunity to catch up and also connect on possible business opportunities. In the current economy, this is a great way to bring people together and promote business among our fellow alumni. In addition, RPTA is in the beginning phases of a fundraising campaign, and these social gatherings provide a way to reconnect alumni with faculty and the department as a whole.

HP PAVILION

By Toren Bentson

The "Shark Tank" was the venue for the most recent RPTA social on March 5. Students and

faculty members were in the Bay Area for the CPRS Conference and concluded their visit with a social at HP Pavilion in San Jose. HP Pavilion is home to the San Jose Sharks ice hockey team and is known around the Bay as the "Shark Tank." Alumni and friends also joined the group for the social which included a tour of the facility, dinner, and attendance at the San Jose Sharks vs. Minnesota Wild NHL game.



The event featured a tour of the Comerica Bank Club level and Penthouse level of the arena. Attendees also had the opportunity to ask questions about the Sharks organization and internship or job possibilities. After the tour, they enjoyed dinner and then headed up to their seats to watch the game. San Jose took an early lead of 3-0, but the Minnesota Wild came back to tie it up in the third period. This eventually led to a Minnesota victory of 4-3 in overtime. Along with the announcement of department status for RPTA, Dr. Hendricks mentioned that he would like to see more events like this in the future.

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FEMALE ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: ALEXIS PARSONS BRAUN

By Alexis Parsons Braun



Working at a pool, assisting with tennis programs, and participating in adventure travel at a young age, I knew I wanted to major in Recreation. After graduating from Cal Poly with my Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration degree in 2003, I moved to the Bay Area and worked for Connections running corporate events, meetings, travel, and housing programs for large Silicon Valley companies. My favorite memory at Connections was starting a large event from scratch and then seeing the final result.

After I married my husband, Shawn, who is also a Cal Poly graduate, I moved to the Los Angeles area where I made a career switch within our broad field and spent almost three years with the City of Sierra Madre as a recreation coordinator managing the Youth Activity Center, special events, and the summer aquatics program. The fast-paced office presented me with new challenges and opportunities each day and prepared me for my current job with the City of South Pasadena. For the last year and a half I have managed the daily operations of the Recreation Division as the Community Services Supervisor. This includes the city's day care program, leisure classes, field coordination, adult sports, and special events.

Being in the recreation field, I have learned that no day is ever the same, and there are always different challenges and opportunities that come your way. I look forward to staying in recreation, seeing future trends, and continuing to travel as much as my job allows.

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MALE ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: RYAN BAKER

By Justin Schmillen. (Based on narrative accounts from Ryan Baker)

Track and field star, soccer enthusiast, football quarterback, softball manager, and leisure bowler have all been titles that encompass Ryan Baker's involvement in sports in his life. However, the passion did not stop there.

After a brief stint selling luggage at Macy's to the likes of Jose Canseco and other Bay Area "A Listers," Ryan became the Manager and League Administrator at Hotshots Indoor Sports Facility in Livermore for three years. In the wake of the facility being sold, Ryan decided to take his educational pursuits to San Luis Obispo. The beautiful environment and friendly people sold him, and he's been here ever since.



Ryan made an immediate impression in San Luis Obispo as President of the REC Club in 2005-2006, Co-Chair of the 2006 Senior Banquet, Laguna Middle School track and field coach, and one-on-one baseball instructor. His efforts and dedication won him the 2006 Outstanding Service Award. Following his graduation, Ryan pursued and received his real estate license. Despite his success, Ryan felt the tug of his rich background and experience in sports calling him back into the industry.

In 2008, Ryan was hired as the Adult Sports Coordinator for the City of San Luis Obispo Parks and Recreation. His efforts provide fun and competitive softball and basketball leagues, as well as an up and coming website complete with blogs and preseason rankings. As manager of the Red Nectar Rebels, Ryan knows what it takes to effectively communicate and connect with team managers. Thankfully, Ryan has followed his passion for sports and enriched our field in the process.

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FEMALE SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: GENNA WOOD

By Genna Wood



I entered Cal Poly in 2005 as a Nutrition major and never felt very enthusiastic about my professional future until I made the switch to the Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration major. Once I started taking my RPTA classes, I immediately became very excited about my school work and a future career in the hospitality industry. From the beginning, the entire RPTA faculty highly encouraged the importance of getting involved and gaining experience in any form possible. At the time, I didn't realize how important this actually was but now, as I prepare to start applying for jobs, I couldn't be more grateful that I listened to their advice.

In the summer of 2007, I worked as a server at the Four Seasons in Aviara, CA. It was not my

dream position, but I got my foot in the door and met some great contacts. The following school year, I worked at the front desk at the Cliff's Resort. In the summer of 2008, I was fortunate enough to obtain an internship with the Four Seasons World Wide Sales Office in Beverly Hills, CA. Being able to work at a "behind-the-scenes" international level position provided great insight to the functioning of a large hotel. I spent fall quarter of 2008 studying international business in Barcelona, Spain. My time spent in Europe inspired my desire to travel more in the future. Now as I prepare to graduate, my past jobs and traveling experiences have left me confident about my desire to further my career in the hospitality field!

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MALE SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: DAVID JAHNS

By David Jahns

I came to Cal Poly in 2006 as a kinesiology major, hoping to pursue a career as a physical therapist. Sports and recreation have always been an important aspect of my life and after recognizing that I could combine my love for leisure activities and my education, I transferred into Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration and haven't looked back since. My interest in working with and gaining a better understanding of recreation has led me to also pursue a minor in psychology.



Over the last three years, I have become a member of the RPTA Club, as well as Rho Phi Lambda. I also served as the Safety Officer on the Board of Directors for Los Osos Little League, as part of a class to get Cal Poly students involved with the development of a grass roots youth sports league. I have also spent some time as the "MC" (master of ceremonies) for local skateboarding competitions and currently work for SLO Parks and Recreation as an after-school recreation counselor.

I will be graduating in June and am hoping to gain an internship over the summer working for a professional sports organization or outdoor education agency. I am not sure what is in store for me as a recreational professional, but I know I will promote and protect the importance of recreation and leisure in our society as I feel it is essential for personal happiness and community development. In the meantime, I am simply enjoying life one day at a time!

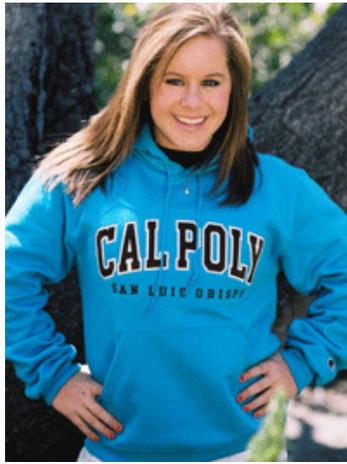
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FEMALE NEW STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: KAITLYN MULLINAX

By Kaitlyn Mullinax

I'm pretty sure that the day I opened my acceptance email from Cal Poly was one of the happiest days of my life. With two brothers who had both graduated from Cal Poly, SLO, the pressure was on. Hi, I'm Kaitlyn Mullinax, a first year RPTA student and I'd like to share my story.

Ever since I was a little kid I was planning events, sleepovers and camping trips in my back



yard for all my friends. My parents referred to me as the "social butterfly" even at a young age and I never grew out of the nickname. Growing up I was involved in every sport imaginable, numerous dance recitals, and I even made time

for student council. I continued to take part in all of these activities all throughout high school.

After finishing an internship with an event planning company during my senior year of high school I fell in love with the event world. I feel honored to be part of such an awesome program here at Poly. The chance to be involved behind the scenes as a first year representative for the annual auction is just one of the incredible opportunities that RPTA has given me thus far. I can't wait to see all the amazing aspects this major still has to offer and to ultimately becoming an "Event Designer" with a business of my own!

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MALE NEW STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: NIKOLAS HARTH

By Nikolas Harth

Born in Encinitas, California, I have always had a passion for the ocean. Throughout my high school career, I spent as much time as I could in the water, or in search of new waves. I was fortunate enough to be raised in a family that travels a lot. I have been to Norway over 25 times, New Zealand, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Africa, and many more. I can also speak fluent Norwegian.

I hope that by majoring in RPTA, I will be able to open my own surf resort in an exotic location. Close to completion of my first quarter at Cal Poly, I am positive that I chose the perfect major and the perfect college for me. I am excited to participate in as much as I can on campus. I wish to study abroad in Australia during my junior year.



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FEMALE INTERN SPOTLIGHT: ASHLEY CRAFT

By Ashley Craft

After graduating from Cal Poly in December, I



moved back home to begin my internship with the City of Palmdale as an Administrative Intern. Although my background is in parks and recreation, I wanted to gain experience working with a variety of other city departments.

Some of the many projects I have been working on include updating the city's current strategic plan, coordinating special events, and assisting the communications department with all aspects of public relations. Recently, I researched and drafted youth outreach and engagement programs for the federal appropriations request, with an earmark total of \$325,000. These programs include youth leadership programs, a

youth transportation system, a youth strategic master plan, and a mobile youth outreach unit.

Working with the community services supervisor, I assisted with the coordination of the city's Martin Luther King "One Voice" event, bringing together approximately 200 teens and parents to discuss issues such as stereotyping and discrimination. I also coordinated the dedication ceremonies for the city's new fire stations.

I have also been working with the public works department on various projects including surveying local businesses, conducting research for the re-negotiation of an agreement with a city contractor, and working with the city attorney to assess the current risk management plan for national accreditation.

Overall, I thoroughly enjoy working with professionals in the "real world," and have realized that I definitely want to begin a career in the public sector.

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MALE INTERN SPOTLIGHT: BRENT MOSBACHER

By Brent Mosbacher

I have been interning in San Francisco at AT&T Park in their special events department since January 6, 2009. For the past seven weeks, I have been assisting the special events department, which coordinates non-baseball game events at the ballpark. I have been exposed to the coordination process for both public and private events hosted at the park.

In my short time as an intern, my department has hosted two very successful public events, Supercross and Fan Fest, and approximately 10 private events. Both public events drew large crowds of 34,000 and 18,000 guests respectively and required months of coordination. The department I am working with is a young and creative group that is always striving to find new ways to utilize the ballpark to generate revenue.



Some of the upcoming events I have been working on are the Mavericks Surf Competition viewing party, numerous high school graduations, a high school prom, and a Kenny Chesney concert that will be hosted at the park this summer. The internship has exposed me to multiple aspects of the entertainment industry including the sales process, marketing techniques, and coordination needs. This has been a great learning experience for me, and I look forward to the upcoming months. I feel Cal Poly RPTA prepared me for the position well and I look forward to working in the entertainment field after I graduate in June. GO GIANTS!

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Anna Dickson, Assistant Student Editor
Marni Goldenberg, Faculty Advisor/Editor
Brian Greenwood, Faculty Advisor/Editor

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