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## **USC Grad is New Cal Poly Arts Director**

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly Arts, the Central Coast's foremost performing arts presenter, announces the hiring of Steven T. Lerian as the organization's new director. Lerian was selected to be in charge of programming and donor development for Cal Poly Arts after an extensive nationwide search resulting in a large number of qualified, competitive applicants.

Cal Poly Arts is at a critical time in its history. We were seeking a leader with vision and collaborative expertise to help position the organization for the future," said Dean Linda Halisky of the College of Liberal Arts in announcing Lerian's appointment.

With 20-plus years of successful experience in strategic planning, programming, public relations, operations, human resources, fiscal management, and fund-raising, Lerian proved to be the ideal candidate to lead Cal Poly Arts into a new era of high-quality artistic and popular entertainment at the Performing Arts Center, Dean Halisky stressed.

He steps in to helm the current Cal Poly Arts 2008/09 series, featuring almost 50 performances by professional touring artists from around the globe (www.calpolyarts.org).

A graduate in drama from USC with a Masters in Fine Arts in directing from Michigan's Wayne State University, Lerian spent the past 15 years as Executive Director of Washington's Kirkland Performance Center (KPC), one of the Seattle area's leading arts presenters. In addition to being the founding Executive Director of KPC, Mr. Lerian led that organization through its \$5.8 million capital campaign and facility construction in the mid-1990s and has served as CEO through the 10 years of the operational history of the theatre.

"I am absolutely thrilled to be joining the staff at Cal Poly Arts," said Lerian. "As a native Californian, I have always had an affinity for the Central Coast and San Luis Obispo will be a wonderful community for my family to call 'home.' I love the university environment and the intellectual and cultural stimulation it offers.

"From everything I know and have heard, Cal Poly Arts is a centerpiece of cultural activity in the region and I hope to carry on the great tradition of bringing outstanding artists into the community. As I grow to understand the Central Coast community and its unique character, I also hope to expand the vision of what our audiences can expect to see, hear, and experience on our stages. I can't wait to get started."

Lerian will begin serving as of October 31, 2008. Cal Poly Arts Program Manager Peter Wilt has been acting as Interim Director since February 2006. For more information, contact Cal Poly Arts administration at 805-756-6556.

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2 of 2 9/5/08 9:07 AM