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New Spin on Cheese and Crackers Helps Cal Poly Students Win Third Place In National New-Food Product Contest

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- A team of Cal Poly food science students won third place in the national Danisco Knowledge Award competition calling for new and unique food or beverage products. The product, Let’s Dip, includes a gourmet artichoke cheese dip and unique honey flavored crackers.

Let’s Dip was created by team leader Paula Durongwong, Scott Gualco and Pamela Quok. Durongwong and Quok completed their bachelor’s degree in food science and nutrition in June and are now working in the food industry. Gualco is enrolled in Cal Poly’s Master of Science degree program and will specialize in dairy products technology.

The annual contest is sponsored by Dansico USA and draws entries from universities and students across the nation. This year Kansas State took first place and the University of Idaho won second. This is the second time in four years that Cal Poly has placed in the top three.

The students are charged with developing a new food or beverage using two or more Danisco ingredients. The new product entries are judged on originality of concept, flavor/aroma, technical feasibility, texture, physical stability and appearance. In addition, a written report is submitted and must include information on market potential/demand, commercial feasibility, shelf life, nutrition profile and regulatory compliance.

The Cal Poly team was advised by Cal Poly Dairy Products Technology Center staff researcher Jessica Morton and center Director Phil Tong.

For their third-place finish the students will receive $2,000 and Danisco will pay all trip expenses for Durongwong and Tong to attend the New Products Conference in Naples, Fla., in the fall. The other team members, Gualco and Quok, will also be attending.

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