Change your world, starting today

Beginning today, Jan. 11, the campus will host a series of events throughout the month on the theme "Sustainability: Resolve to Change Your World." For a complete event schedule, go online to: http://calpolynews.calpoly.edu/news_releases/2006/January/sustainable.html. In addition to highlighting sustainability as a campus priority for the year, the event also marks the start of the CSU landmark sustainability policy. All campuses are being encouraged to increase energy conservation, renewable power generation, and sustainable building practices.

Dean leads education review at Kuwait University

Bonnie Konopak, dean of the College of Education, is helping the Kuwait University College of Education's efforts to attain international recognition. Konopak, an expert in accreditation in the United States, recently traveled to Kuwait to review the university's education program and determine whether it is ready for the new International Recognition of Teacher Education.

University Police has new interim chief: Bill Watton

Bill Watton was appointed interim chief of police effective Jan. 1. He succeeds Tony Aeilts, who is the new police chief in Arroyo Grande. Watton served as University Police commander since 2002. Before he joined the University Police Department, Watton was a police lieutenant for the city of Atascadero. He also served for 18 months as Atascadero's interim police chief.

Administrator named for new advancement position

Robert D. Stets has been named to the new position of associate vice president for operations and finance for University Advancement. Stets most recently served as the special assistant to the senior vice president for finance and business at Pennsylvania State University. Prior to that, he was vice president and general counsel for the Milton Hershey School in Hershey, Pa., the world's largest K-12 residential school with a $7-billion endowment and 9,000 acres of land. Stets will lead the Cal Poly Fund and Advancement Services departments and will oversee investment management for the new Cal Poly philanthropic foundation.

This is a 'Best Workplace for Commuters'

The Environmental Protection Agency has designated Cal Poly as a "Best Workplace for Commuters" for the university's transit subsidy and commuter and vanpool programs. The university was recognized for "providing employees with outstanding commuter benefits which meet the National Standard of Excellence and help reduce traffic and air pollution in your community."

Grants offered for community-based learning courses

Mini-grant funding is now available for faculty interested in creating community-based learning components to existing curricular offerings. Five successful applicants will receive a $1,000 honorarium for their work. Additionally, awardees will receive coaching support in curricular design from an experienced faculty member, as well as guidance in community placements and protocol. Several subsidy allocations for class service activity for student assistants are also available. Send inquiries to Janice Carr, College of Business, at ext. 6-1438 or jcarr@calpoly.edu, or contact Stephan Lamb, Community Center director, ext. 6-6509 or slamb@calpoly.edu.
Facilities services adds sustainable products

Facilities services has taken the lead in finding and using sustainable products and processes. The most recent improvement is the adoption of EcoSoft® Green Seal Certified paper towels as the campus standard. These products are made from 100 percent recycled wastepaper and are certified as products that meet environmental standards for paper towels and tissue. They are considered to be one of the most environmentally preferable towel lines available in the away-from-home market. For more information, go to www.greenseal.org.

Organic Farm to be featured on Jan. 25 KCET broadcast

The Organic Farm will be the subject of an upcoming episode of the PBS series, "California's Green," hosted by Huell Howser. The show will air Wednesday, Jan. 25 at 6 p.m. Howser interviewed Organic Farm Manager Terry Hooker and Cal Poly students working on the 11-acre farm, focusing on its Community Supported Agriculture program. The CSA program served 180 members in 2005.

Stipends available for service-learning conference

A $500 travel stipend is available to faculty interested in attending the first CSU conference on community-based teaching and research at Cal Poly Pomona Friday and Saturday, March 3-4. For more information about the conference, visit http://www.calstate.edu/CSU/resources/research_conference.shtml. For more information on the travel stipend, contact Janice Carr at jcarr@calpoly.edu.

Mileage rates change

The CSU and Cal Poly Foundation mileage reimbursement rates have changed to 44.5 cents per mile effective Jan. 1. In September, the IRS raised the rate for business miles to 48.5 cents per mile in response to the sharp increase in gas prices. However, the lower 2006 mileage rate reflects current lower gas prices.

Employees to find some changes in savings plans

Effective Jan. 1, the annual dollar limit has been raised for the 403(b) Tax Sheltered Annuity program, the 401(k) Thrift Plan, and the 457 Deferred Compensation program. For more information on the annual dollar limit, go to http://www.calstate.edu/Benefits/retirement/retirement.page.shtml. To make a change to your 403(b) plan, complete a Salary Reduction Agreement located on the Human Resources Web site, or contact Human Resources at ext. 6-2236.

Two opportunities to shape up

The university encourages employees to develop and maintain good health. Participation at the on-campus Recreation Center costs approximately $15 a month, and monthly dues can be automatically deducted from your paycheck. Contact Val Lorton at ext. 6-5859 or the Recreation Center Service Desk at ext. 6-1366. In addition, Human Resources announces a new program through Kennedy Club Fitness for faculty and staff at about $27 a month (approximately half of the Kennedy regular rate). Contact Anji Roeser at 781-3488 or aroeser@kennedyclubs.com before Feb. 17.

Film series to highlight civil rights movement

A film series to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr. will be held today and Thursday, Jan. 12, in the Multicultural Center. Show times are 11 a.m. to noon and 6-7 p.m. each day. For more information, contact the Multicultural Center at ext. 6-1405 or e-mail leesmith@calpoly.edu.