WinTercorPoration

By Mary McNally

Finance seniors invest Cal Poly policy

to create a well-balanced, diversified

tolerance. For this client, the goal was

horizon, portfolio objectives and risk

strategy and write a prospectus for the

world relationship between a client

The class is patterned after a real-

Corporation. “Trading on paper is one thing. But when the risks

earnings of $140,000. As of the last quarterly report, the trad-

S&P 500 index. The corporation has withdrawn investment

fund managers and investment professionals.

ration to give advanced finance students hands-on training as

was initially funded with $200,000 from the Cal Poly Corpo-

since its inception in 1992.

College of Business has been managing every investment

be underestimating a particular class of Cal Poly undergrads.

The students design an investment

“This is an example of Cal Poly’s commitment to hands-on

students learn to

dissect the fair value of stocks based on Monte Carlo simulations,

Sharpe ratios, and regression and dividend discount models.

utilize the same techniques professionals use, including analyst

cus solely on maximizing returns. “

strategy for the coming year. Before assuming responsibility

Each year, the new crop of student fund managers assess

smile at the idea of competing for a job

era recession. But John told me, “There’s always going to be someone with more resources, more connections and even
more talent. The ones who succeed are the ones who are will-
ing to learn, who have no ego and who are willing to work
really hard. So I did. And I always left myself open to learn
something new. And I always tried to stay humble.”

College of Science and Mathematics

John T. McDevitt (B.S., Chemistry, 1982)

I became hooked on the learn-by-doing experience through my

first two research projects, and there has been no looking

back. At Cal Poly I not only learned basic science and engineer-
ing skills, but I also secured my keen interest in research activi-
ties and applications that have a societal importance. For the

past two decades I have served as an educator at major univer-
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The last two years have been a once-in-century opportunity

surge in energy and commodity prices.

largest financial firms, the health care debate, high unemploy-

ing the sub-prime credit crisis, failure of some of the nation’s

SMPP supervisor and finance area Chairman Cyrus Ramezani.

economic factors, such as news in the world at large, and how

“The success of the program isn’t just reflected in the returns

through the course of the project, SMPP students learn to

Ramezani said. But failure, he added, is one of the great teachers.

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Ronald S. Smith (B.S. Electronic Engineering, 1983)

I got tremendous hands-on experience in agriculture at Cal Poly. I experienced a very nurturing environment where it was easy to bounce ideas off professors and have immediate feed-
back. It’s why I’ve embraced learn-by-doing my entire life, and
it’s why I’m committed to developing a Center of Excellence for the Wine and Viticulture students at Cal Poly. I want future student to experience learn-by-doing with the latest technol-
ogy, in the same way I did.

College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences

Kenneth Q. Volki, III (B.S., Fruit Science, 1983)

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College of Architecture and Environmental Design

James E. Grant (B.S., Construction Engineering, 1980)

Cal Poly taught me the importance of time management and not being a procrastinator. Being organized is in my DNA, but the challenge of juggling a schedule and the importance of timing was something that I now see Cal Poly prepared me for, in all aspects of my life.

College of Engineering

Ronald S. Smith (B.S. Electronic Engineering, 1983)

Fundamentally, my Cal Poly education was about learning

how to learn. My coursework and my professors pushed me
to go beyond the basics to the underlying principles driving
the results and then apply those principles in a hands-on lab
environment. Doing that helped me gain a deeper, broader
understanding of my field. I find myself apply-
ing these learning principles beyond engineer-
ing, into every aspect of my life.