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Cal Poly Honors Color-Print Pioneer Jean Bourges With Endowment

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly and several industry partners are honoring Jean Bourges by creating an endowment in her name to recognize her significant contributions to the growth of the graphic communication field, in particular the use of color in copy preparation for printing.

Her “Bourges sheets,” later named the Bourges Color System, became a mainstay in the advertising, design, printing, and publishing industries in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s. Since then her book “Color Bytes” has provided a means for understanding and using color effectively in all media.

Cal Poly and supporters from the graphic arts industry have created the Jean Bourges Endowment for the Advancement of Color in Communication to help perpetuate color education in the coming decades, said Harvey Levenson, head of the university’s Graphic Communication Department.

Part of the funds raised will be used for current projects such as curriculum and laboratory development; however, the majority of the funds will remain in the endowment to support scholarships in the Graphic Communication program’s concentration in design reproduction technology. The endowment will also help fund an annual Jean Bourges Distinguished Lecture by a prominent industry leader, as well as faculty development, and academic consultants.

“The Jean Bourges endowment will benefit the entire graphic communication industry – from advertising agencies and design studios to printers, publishers and packaging companies,” Levenson said. “It will help keep us focused on the importance of educating the future leaders on matters related to color in communication.”

John Werner, a longtime graphic arts publisher and industry leader, helped design the endowment. “Every student studying advertising, graphic design, graphic arts, printing, publishing and Internet-page design should recognize the importance color plays in communication, as well as how to create and use color effectively from a technical and design standpoint. It is critical to provide the education to achieve these goals,” he said.

Bourges, now 86 years old, lives in her lifelong home in New York City.

Contributions to the endowment can be made payable to the Jean Bourges Endowment and mailed to the Graphic Communication Department, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407.

For more information, go online to www.grc.calpoly.edu/images/bourges_brochure.pdf; contact Levenson at (805) 756-6151 or hlevenso@calpoly.edu or contact Werner at (914) 725-1643 or jwerner@earthlink.net.

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