Alex Spanos drumming up major support for stadium upgrade
As I write this, we are embarking upon a new academic year, and students are returning to the Cal Poly campus, bringing with them a tremendous spirit of enthusiasm and high expectations for the year to come.

Despite several years of state budget reductions, through the dedicated work of our faculty and staff, Cal Poly’s learn-by-doing education continues to provide students across the disciplines with uniquely valuable teaching and learning experiences – and an undergraduate education that is second to none.

Our ability to sustain Cal Poly’s proud educational traditions, and to make sure they remain relevant to the demands of the new century, is due in no small part to the generous support of our loyal alumni, our industry partners and other friends and supporters.

This Honor Roll of Donors edition of the *Cal Poly Magazine* is dedicated to you. This year we are combining the Honor Roll of Donors with the fall edition of the magazine. Inside you’ll read about alumnus Alex Spanos and his wife, Faye. Their generosity spans decades and includes numerous causes, including Cal Poly arts and athletics.

Also included in this issue are stories about some of the teachers, researchers, students, alumni and programs that distinguish Cal Poly as a superior institution of higher education. We’re sure you’ll enjoy reading about such accomplished alumni as novelist Nevada Barr and Olympic triathlete Victor Plata, as well as Nick Franco, “castle keeper” at San Simeon.

We also take a look at the work of Social Sciences Professor and archaeologist Terry Jones and Adjunct Biology Professor Paul Nakane, who was recently honored for his work in the study of cells.

You can read all about the role Cal Poly is playing in the growing wine and cheese industries.

And we remember President Ronald Reagan, a republican, through the eyes of Cal Poly President Emeritus Robert E. Kennedy, a democrat.

We hope you enjoy this edition of *Cal Poly Magazine*. It was prepared with you in mind, so please let us know your thoughts and comments.

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Alex G. Spanos' life might be summed up in one word: dedication.

Throughout his life, on whatever path he embarked, he has demonstrated remarkable dedication. Dedication to his profession and principles. Dedication to charitable and humanitarian causes. Fierce dedication to his family. And dedication to his alma mater.

Alex Spanos, aerospace engineering alum, entrepreneur and San Diego Chargers owner, and his wife, Faye, have given generously to support the arts and athletics at Cal Poly.

One of their first major gifts - a $100,000 contribution in 2003 - created the Harold P. and Rosalie Davidson scholarship endowment in memory of the beloved former music professor and his wife, both now deceased. (See story, page 6.) Then came a $1.5-million donation to help fund the renovation of the Davidson Music Center and the Cal Poly Theatre, now named the Alex and Faye Spanos Theatre.

Most recently, the Spanoses pledged $4 million toward the first phase of the Mustang Stadium renovation. The same stadium that Alex and his brother Danny played in as drum majors in the 1941 marching band led by Davidson.

Just a year later, though, Alex Spanos enrolled in the U.S. Army Air Corps, serving until the war ended in 1945. But that year at Cal Poly left a lasting impression and plenty of fond memories, especially of Harold and Rosalie Davidson.

"I'm sure that most everyone has had a teacher who made a lasting impression," Spanos says. "Someone who not only gave you the best of his or her knowledge and experience, but also someone who nurtured you and supported you. For me, that was Harold Davidson, my music teacher.

"Hal Davidson was not only a great teacher and a skilled musician, but he was also a rare human being. He was the kind of man who cared about his students and embraced every member of his band as his family. He gave us a feeling of pride, of belonging, of acceptance and of courage. He and his wife would invite us all for dinner, and Rosalie would treat us as if we were her children. She was as much a part of the band as he was.

"When I think of Cal Poly, I think of Hal and Rosalie Davidson and their dedication to their students and the way they nurtured them," Spanos recalls.

Throughout his life, in every endeavor, Alex Spanos has emerged a winner: as a student, an entrepreneur and businessman, a philanthropist, a golfer — even as a tap dancer. Throughout his life, in every endeavor, Alex Spanos has emerged a winner: as a student, an entrepreneur and businessman, a philanthropist, a golfer — even as a tap dancer.

In 1941, at the age of 17, he moved from his hometown of Stockton and enrolled in Cal Poly's aeronautical engineering program. He and his brother Danny, also an engineering student, successfully auditioned for drum major positions in the marching band.

During a recent trip to campus, Spanos paid a nostalgic visit to the stadium. "I was more than a little surprised to see it hadn't changed at all in all that time. I thought after 63 years, it could use a little sprucing up." (See story, page 44.)

Cal Poly President Warren J. Baker expressed his gratitude for the generosity and dedication shown by Alex and Faye Spanos. "They have again demonstrated their selfless commitment, a commitment rooted in their hearts. They follow their hearts, and in so doing, demonstrate the good that comes from such action. Their gifts will help transform the arts, student scholarships and athletics at Cal Poly," Baker said.

During his career Spanos distinguished himself in the business world, transforming a small company into a corporate giant comprising 10 companies with more than 500 employees. The companies have built more than 100,000 apartment units in 18 states, ranking at the top of the national housing industry. A.G. Spanos
Cos. is one of the few family-owned Fortune 500 companies.

Family owned. That’s fairly typical for Alex Spanos. Born to Greek immigrants whom he describes as affectionate, stern and devoted, he credits his parents with instilling in him the passionate belief that “family is everything.”

He drove that point home during the morning Spring Commencement ceremony last June, when he was honored with a Doctor of Humane Letters degree and delivered the keynote address.

“Your family is your rock, your base and your rudder,” Spanos said in his remarks. “Family will give you peace of mind and the courage to explore.”

He also stressed the importance of keeping a positive attitude, setting reasonable goals, accepting and taking risks, and believing in oneself.

“Don’t be defeated by failure,” Spanos said. “Did you know that Babe Ruth held not only the world’s record for home runs, he also held the record for strikeouts? I’ve always tried to be the best at what I do. For example, when I was 32, I took up golf. Six years later, I was one of 10 U.S. golfers chosen to compete in the British Amateur.”

In 1984, Spanos assumed ownership of the San Diego Chargers, realizing a lifelong dream to own a National Football League team. Another dream came true in 1995, when the Chargers made it to the Super Bowl, eventually losing to the San...
...continued from previous page

Francisco 49ers, the first team to win five Super Bowls. Not a bad a team to lose to.

With all that he has accomplished, Alex Spanos has never lost sight of his humble beginnings. Along with his belief in the importance of family is his belief in philanthropy.

"Since my childhood, I've believed that giving is not just a one-time act of random largesse; it's a daily way of life," Spanos says. Both he and Faye Spanos are passionate about giving. They have donated millions of dollars to educational institutions, hospitals, churches, civic, art and athletic organizations.

"I've always helped any way that I can," Spanos says. "I feel fortunate I'm able to do the things I do. Giving just does my heart good."

He has received many awards for his humanitarian and charitable work. Among them are the Horatio Alger Award from the Horatio Alger Foundation, Ellis Island Medal of Honor from the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Gloria Swanson Humanitarian Award from the American Cinema Awards Foundation, and Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith National Distinguished Community Service Award.

He was also awarded honorary Doctor of Laws degrees from the University of the Pacific and Eureka College, and in 1974 he was named a Cal Poly Distinguished Alumnus.

Alex and Faye Spanos have been married since 1948. They have four children and 15 grandchildren.

THE MUSIC MAN

The late Harold P. Davidson, who served as Music Department head, leader of the Mustang Marching Band, and conductor of the university's choral groups and dance band, touched many lives during his years at Cal Poly. His wife, Rosalie, also a familiar face around campus, was an accompanist who arranged music for some of the university's choral groups.

Below, a former student, who knew "Hal" early in his career, and a former faculty member, who was acquainted with him at the end of it, reminisce about the Davidsons.

"Hal Davidson and his wonderful wife, Rosalie, made such a difference in my life," recalls Alex Spanos (AERO), who, together with his wife, Faye, donated $100,000 in 2003 to establish the Harold P. and Rosalie Davidson scholarship endowment in memory of the former music professor and his wife.

"My brother Danny and I were drum majors in the marching band in 1941," Spanos says. "Rosalie Davidson was as much a part of the band as Hal was. They were both uncommon people, each exceptional in their own way and yet so much alike.

"When I think of Cal Poly, I think of Hal and Rosalie Davidson and their dedication to their students and the way they nurtured them. That affection, those warm feelings, prompted Faye and I to give a second donation to Cal Poly."

That $1.5-million gift is helping fund the renovation of the H.P. Davidson Music Center and the Cal Poly Theatre, named the Alex and Faye Spanos Theatre at a special dedication ceremony last spring. At the event, Clifton Swanson, longtime Music Department head, now retired, also recalled the Davidsons with affection.

"Alex and I had the good fortune to know Davy and Rosalie Davidson, and if I might reminisce for a moment, I think I can identify why Alex Spanos remembers his time at Cal Poly and his relationship with Harold Davidson so fondly," Swanson said.

"Davy was a unique man: the right man, in the right place, at the right time. He built a program and established a legacy that continues to this day. He was able to bring students together to make music. Cal Poly was for men only when he came, and you can imagine the challenge of getting a bunch of guys together to make music.

"It was remarkable that Davy got large numbers of men up on stage to sing in a choir. He had the admiration of all of his students, and they were proud of what they were able to accomplish in the course of a year.

"I can say with utmost confidence that Davy would be very pleased to see the Cal Poly Music Department and all that it does. Davy's determination to involve as many students as possible from throughout the campus is as true today as it was then. We have honored Davy’s wishes, and while music majors comprise the nucleus of each of our groups, the majority of the members are from throughout the campus."
Terry Jones digs his job. With shovels and hand tools, some students and occasionally another archaeologist or two, Social Sciences Professor Jones explores ancient sites to gather clues to the past.

During the summer, Jones supervised a team of eight students at Fort Hunter Liggett in southern Monterey County, investigating a site inhabited by the Salinan Indians from around A.D. 1200 to 1800.

“I’m trying to establish the way they lived, what they ate, how often they moved,” says the 49-year-old archaeologist, who thinks tree rings in the Southern Sierra suggest that severe droughts and a scarcity of water forced the Indians to move to better-watered areas of California, like the Coast Ranges.

But the project that most excites him is a California-Sea-Grant-funded venture that he’s hoping will validate the relatively new theory that prehistoric people lived on the Central Coast 10,000 years ago — 5,000 years earlier than previously thought.

Artifacts from a 1968 dig, uncovered by archaeologist Roberta Greenwood before construction began on the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, reveal a settlement that was used from that time until about the 18th century.

“Greenwood conducted extensive excavations at a series of sites,” Jones says. “One site was very deep — about 12 feet.” With limited funding, she was able to obtain only a few radiocarbon dates from items taken from the refuse heap, and they suggested human habitation during all those millennia.

“I want to confirm the age at the bottom of the deposit,” Jones says. “Because the results were so much older than any other site, there was some skepticism about their accuracy.” Since that dig, though, a number of more recent cases on the West Coast, in particular in Santa Barbara and the Channel Islands, also indicate human occupation from that time.

“Greenwood provided detailed analyses of the stone and bone tools found, but she didn’t identify the animal bones that were food waste,” Jones says. Several thousands of bones, dug up some 35 years ago, have sat in storage, in their original bags with dirt still clinging to them.

“In a lab class two years ago, we washed, catalogued and divided the bird, mammal and fish bones,” Jones has enlisted the help of two specialists to identify the bones into species by comparing the ancient bones with those from known modern specimens.

“I’m especially interested in how diets have evolved. Were they more focused on deer or fish when they first arrived? I want to see how that has changed over the last 10,000 years.”

In particular, he wonders how heavily they exploited the sea otter. And did that killing have an influence on other resources in the ecosystem? If so, just what effect did it have?

Jones anticipates his findings will show an unusually intense and lengthy exploitation of the sea otter, the key predator in Central California kelp forests. Otters were hunted for their meat and their pelts, he says.

Jones also predicts his findings will substantiate his belief that the kelp forests actually benefited from the hunting of the sea otter, that productivity of the Diablo kelp forests was sustained by — or at least associated with — regular killing of sea otters.

“They had a continuous and rich environment to exploit. That richness might have been sustained by the hunting of sea otters,” he surmises.

“These are all open questions. I want to publish my findings where they will be noticed by biologists and conservators — the people who make the rules about how we manage coastal resources.

“It may not be earth-shattering, but it may force them to think about how we manage habitats and resources today.”
Keith Patterson contemplated the upcoming grape harvest as he stood among the leafy vines growing in the 10-acre vineyard at the north end of campus.

Fat bunches of pinot noir grapes were ripening quickly in the late August heat, and Patterson, a professor in the Horticulture and Crop Science Department, was fairly certain the dark purple fruit was nearly ready for picking. He popped open a few grapes with his fingers to look at the seeds inside.

"When the grapes are ripe, their seeds are dark brown," Patterson says.

The seeds in his hand ranged in color from pale beige to deep brown. "You can see the grapes don’t all ripen at the same time," he says. "Knowing when to harvest is one of our challenges."

The ability to meet such challenges, whether they’re found in the field or in a classroom or laboratory, is one of the many reasons Cal Poly students are in such great demand in the wine industry, Patterson explains. For every student who most of their major courses in three departments: Horticulture and Crop Science, Food Science and Nutrition, and Agribusiness.

By the time they graduate, students know how to grow the grapes, produce the wine and run a wine-related business.

The program is also taking on an international flavor. In the works is creation of an exchange program for students and teachers with the University of Adelaide in Australia, as well as another exchange opportunity in South America.

About 35 students have transferred into the wine and viticulture major since its inception in spring 2004, with nearly one-third coming from families who grow grapes and produce wine commercially, says Mary Pedersen, associate dean of the College of Agriculture.

The university has no intention of bottling its own label for sale, says Pedersen. "We’re interested in teaching how to produce wine; we’re not interested in going into wine production. And we don’t want to compete with local wineries."

Partnerships with the wine industry helped develop six acres of new vineyard, saving the university approximately $180,000. Sunridge Nursery and Vintage Nursery donated the vines, and Harrow Ag Services designed the vineyard layout. Netafim, an Australian company, donated the irrigation supplies, and Quidan donated the trellis supplies. Cal West designed the irrigation system, and Mesa Vineyard Management planted the vines and installed the trellis and irrigation systems.

Students keep the vineyard flourishing, some working through the summer. Tyler Houston, 24, came to Cal Poly because of the emphasis on viticulture and hopes to find a career working in a vineyard. "It’s a great program," he says. During the summer, he came out every day to water the vines. That was in addition to the 14-hour days he put in working for an outside delivery company.

"Our students, like Tyler, are very bright, very motivated," Patterson says. "When Tyler leaves here, he’ll know how to work a full day. This attitude is representative of the culture at Cal Poly."

What do they have in common, aside from the fact that they’re all artisan or “farmstead” cheeses and have all received rave reviews in gourmet food magazines and newspapers like The New York Times, Los Angeles Times and San Francisco Chronicle?

Cal Poly.

Thanks to the annual “Farmstead Cheesemaker” short course run by the Dairy Products Technology Center, the university is helping to shape California’s emerging artisan cheese industry.

“The industry is in about the same place the California wine industry was about 20 years ago,” explains Professor Phillip Tong, lead organizer of Cal Poly’s Farmstead Cheesemaker short course.

According to Tong, several factors account for the state’s emerging artisan cheese industry. First, some consumers are demanding more specialty cheese varieties. Secondly, California is the nation’s No. 1 milk-producing state. “By 2005 or 2006, California is expected to be the largest cheese producer in the United States,” Tong says. Take that, Wisconsin.

With all the available high-quality milk, there’s plenty for diversion to cheese production. “California dairies use about 40 percent of their milk production for making cheese. That’s a lot of cheese,” Tong says.

Many dairy farmers have done just that. “Some farmers were not satisfied with the prices they were getting for their milk, so they decided to add value to their product by making cheese,” he says. And plenty of family farms have sons or daughters now interested in starting and running an artisan-cheese operation “back on the ranch.”

Now in its sixth year, Cal Poly’s Farmstead Cheesemaker short course has helped all kinds of budding artisan cheese makers.

“Almost every farmstead cheese maker in the state has been through our class,” Tong says. “We were the first university to offer a farmstead cheese-maker short course.”

About 40 students every fall learn the science behind cheese making, which involves the interaction between milk, other ingredients and bacteria to produce flavor and texture. They also get a hands-on lesson in making cheese at the DPTC.

“Almost every farmstead cheese maker in the state has been through our class. We were the first university to offer a farmstead cheesemaker short course.”

Then they spend time learning about California regulations covering farmstead cheese operations, as well as business and financial planning.

The courses are in demand. “We’ve had about 200 people go through the short course; it’s always full,” Tong says.

That’s not likely to change any time soon. “The American palate is becoming more educated. More Americans are also traveling around the world, tasting artisan cheeses in other countries.”

The Internet is helping too – by bringing together the consumer and the farmstead cheese maker, Tong adds.

And in the past decade, America’s gourmet restaurants have added a cheese course to their menu. Instead of dessert after a meal, they offer a tasting of a variety of artisan cheeses.

Says Tong, “It’s all about educating the consumer that there are other cheeses beyond mozzarella and cheddar.”

The Cal Poly Dairy Products Technology Center offers a full series of continuing education classes for entrepreneurs and industry professionals. For more information, visit http://www.calpoly.edu/~dptc/.

Cal Poly Magazine
The resume of Cal Poly graduate Nick Franco (POLS '95) reads like a travel brochure: redwood forests, mission towns, ocean dunes, islands.

His current assignment with the California State Parks system is the San Luis Obispo Coast District, where he has served as superintendent for the past year and a half. His domain stretches from Lime Kiln in southern Big Sur to Pismo Beach.

The opportunity to work in such scenic playgrounds is a privilege, according to Franco, who says competition is so strong for the relatively few full-time state park ranger positions that jobs practically have to be inherited.

Which is close to how Franco found his way into a coveted ranger position. "My brother was a seasonal park worker in high school. So when he left home, I applied and got the job," he said. "That work helped me get into the ranger academy later." Because he had not completed his degree when he went to the academy, Franco later returned to school, while stationed at Pismo State Beach, to continue his political science studies, with an emphasis on public administration.
His senior project on how public policies affect the balance between work and personal life was highly relevant. In addition to school and work, he shared child-care responsibilities with his wife, a Hearst Castle guide at the time. "Talk about learn by doing," he said, chuckling.

Which of his many choice assignments is his favorite? "They've all been fun in different ways," he said. "I loved being on horse patrol at Will Rogers, and the Big Basin Redwoods in the Santa Cruz Mountains was a special place. Angel Island, in the middle of San Francisco Bay, was unique, since it is accessible only by boat. But I think the best place to live was San Juan Bautista, originally a mission village inland from Monterey, a classic California small town."

In the San Luis Obispo Coast District, he feels as though he has it all. "I have the challenge of a huge park district, so I am never bored, but it's also a great place to live and raise kids. And it's an easy commute to any of the parks or to my office in San Simeon."

Being close to his alma mater also allows Franco to visit campus. When he served on a career panel for a recreation class, he advised students who want to go into park service to be patient. "Also, work for a park in any way you can — seasonal worker, concessions, maintenance. Just get your foot in the door and keep going, toward whatever area interests you."

In response to the request to divulge something most people don't know about Hearst Castle, Franco said, "It's a California State Park and has been since the '50s!" He added that most people don't realize how much work and expertise it takes to make it a smooth outing for some 800,000 visitors a year ... from bus drivers trained to negotiate the hairpin turns leading up to the castle ... to tour guides who can answer almost any question about the Hearsts, the castle, or even architect Julia Morgan.

And speaking of Julia Morgan, the nation's largest collection of original Morgan drawings and other material related to her personal and professional life is located in the Kennedy Library, creating a special bond between the university and Hearst Castle, the state's most popular park.

The Library's Special Collections department and the College of Architecture and Environmental Design recently commemorated the centennial of Julia Morgan's licensing as an architect in California. Talks on Morgan and an exhibit of rarely seen Morgan materials were included as part of the commemoration. The exhibit, titled "Julia Morgan, Pioneering Spirit," will be on display in the Library's Special Collections department until March 25, 2005.

Morgan's heirs donated her personal and professional papers and architectural drawings to Cal Poly in 1980. Containing irreplaceable and comprehensive documentation of Morgan's long, distinguished career, the Julia Morgan Collection also contains the only known family photographs, personal papers and correspon...

...continued on next page
dence, as well as sketchbooks, competition drawings and notes, and medals from her years in Paris at the École des Beaux-Arts.

A few years ago, some of Morgan’s original, signed drawings were discovered at the castle, bringing her career back into the media spotlight. “We are seeking funding to digitize her works,” said Nick Franco of the state parks system. “Not only do they need to be preserved, since they are ‘as-built’ blueprints for us, but we would like to make them more accessible to scholars. We need to protect them for both practical and historical reasons.”

The amazing stability of the Hearst Castle during the 2003 San Simeon 6.5 earthquake is a testament to her skills. Not only an architect but also a civil engineer who was in San Francisco during the 1906 quake, Morgan insisted that the castle be constructed of steel-reinforced concrete.

As a result, the only damage was to a few items that fell off walls and shelves.

For more information on the Julia Morgan collection at Cal Poly, go to www.lib.calpoly.edu/spec_col/morgan/.
Yesterday & Today

Julia Morgan - 1872-1957

Born: San Francisco. Graduated from Oakland High School, 1890.

Early commission: The bell tower at Mills College in Oakland.

Notable accomplishments: Rebuilt San Francisco's Fairmont Hotel after the 1906 earthquake. In all, designed more than 700 buildings during a career that spanned from the turn of the century to 1951.

Greatest claim to fame: In 1919, began design and construction of William Randolph Hearst's estate at San Simeon, known today as Hearst Castle. Called the "most extraordinary residence ever to rise on the Pacific Coast," the estate has three guest houses and a main building, linked by an esplanade and surrounded by spectacular gardens. Casa Grande, the centerpiece of the estate, contained a 50-seat movie theater, billiard room, wine cellar and two libraries. The grounds included indoor and outdoor swimming pools, tennis courts, a private zoo, dog kennels, a thoroughbred horse ranch, miles of bridle paths and a private landing strip and airplane hangar. To facilitate daily operations, the estate also had a reservoir, poultry ranch, dairy, vegetable garden, orchards, greenhouses and a hothouse.

Heast Castle remains the most-visited site in the California State Parks system, with some 800,000 visitors a year.

Lizbeth A. Gonzalez - Arch '04

Profession: Member of a project team at Michael W. Folonis, AIA Architect and Associates in Santa Monica.

Where did you grow up?
Born in Guadalajara, Mexico. My family immigrated to California when I was very young. Since then, we have lived in Turlock.

When did you know you wanted to be an architect?
I knew I wanted to study about architecture when my high school guidance counselor told me that architecture was a combination of art and science. It wasn't until I took an architecture history course that I realized that I wanted to be an architect.

Why did you choose to study at Cal Poly?
My guidance counselor told me it was the best architecture school in California.

What has been your greatest challenge?
My senior design thesis on "A Spatiodynamic Complex at San Francisco's Transbay Transit Terminal." To me, a thesis should be a culmination of everything you learned and more.

What are your career goals?
To convert the loft I live in, in downtown Los Angeles, into a design/architecture office, get licensed and practice.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?
New York, Paris or Rotterdam.

What are your hobbies and interests?
I'm an urban observer. I like to explore and experience the downtowns of cities. I may photograph or record the unique characteristics of each downtown. I also write screenplays and I make collages, usually related to my urban experience.
Cal Poly Opens Its Doors
For Open House

By Teresa Hendrix

For more than 100 years, Cal Poly has been inviting visitors every spring to tour the campus and enjoy food and fun.

What began on a day in May 1904 as a “Farmers’ Picnic” for 200 people, has evolved into Open House, a three-day event drawing about 39,000 visitors. Open House now gives the community an opportunity to see the best of what the university has to offer.

Admitted Students Preview Day, held the Friday of Open House weekend, gives prospective students and their parents a day of their own to tour the university; meet with students, faculty members and deans; and get a taste of Cal Poly.

The Saturday of Open House starts with the traditional morning Poly Royal Parade through campus. The rest of the day is filled with hands-on exhibitions, student music and dance performances, children’s activities, refreshments, horticulture and agriculture displays, department tours and more.

The Open House Golf Classic is held on Sunday of Open House weekend.

One unique aspect to Open House is the Design Village competition, sponsored by the College of Architecture and Environmental Design.

The event, which began in 1974 as a competition to design disaster-relief shelters, hosts student teams from colleges and universities from across the United States. The students – usually a mixture of architectural engineering, architecture, construction management and landscape architecture students – build temporary structures in Poly Canyon to suit a theme which changes yearly, and then live in them during Open House weekend before the Design Village winners are announced.

Open House activities are planned and coordinated by a committee of 25 students working all year through the Student Life and Leadership office.

Alumna Nevada Barr
Is ‘Write’ on Target

By Leah Kolt and Wanda Modisette

She writes, she paints, she acts. She is able to leap onto The New York Times Best-Seller list with a single bound.

This creative superwoman is Nevada Barr (SCOM ’74), a self-styled “seeker of truth and amusement” and 1997 recipient of a Cal Poly Honored Alumni Award.

Her 12-book series on Anna Pigeon, a feisty middle-aged park ranger, is based on her own experiences as a National Park Service ranger. In the books, Ranger Pigeon valiantly faces mountain lions, wildfires, dark caves, bears, poachers, hostile co-workers and even urban criminals.

Barr’s works have brought her considerable acclaim, garnering both Agatha and Anthony awards for best first mystery for Track of the Cat, as well as the prestigious French Prix du Roman award for Firestorm.


Her assignments with the NPS eventually landed her in Mississippi 10 years ago, patrolling the state’s famous Natchez Trace, a scenic by-way that follows old Native American trails. Newly divorced and not at all pleased with her assignment, she experienced an improvement in her attitude when exposed to Southern hospitality, while writing her first traffic ticket.

“The gentleman I pulled over was so polite,” she recalls. “When he found out I was single and had just moved to the area, he offered to take me home to dinner with his family and introduce me to his single brother-in-law.”

But it was fellow ranger Richard Jones who eventually became her husband. The couple resides in Clinton, Miss., with a menagerie of dogs, cats, a stone alligator and a giant catfish sculpture. In fact, Barr lists painting portraits of pets as her favorite pastime.

The theater is a close second. A speech communication major at Cal Poly, she once played the title role in “Peter Pan,” where her flying apparatus was guided by the same man who coordinated Mary Martin’s flights on Broadway. “That was a new twist on learn by doing. If the audience had one-tenth as much fun as I did, they had a great time,” she said.

Barr continues to act in local little theater, while managing to churn out a book per year, each written in longhand in spiral binders. So committed is she to kinesthetic creating that she refuses even to be photographed with her computer in the background — lest someone think she composes electronically.

A new Anna Pigeon novel called High Country, set in Yosemite, was released in February 2004, and Barr is busily filling notebooks with ideas for her next book.

For more information on Barr, go to http://www.nevadabarr.com/index.htm.
We did it! And we did it one year ahead of schedule. We met our original $225-million Centennial Campaign goal early, and at press time, had reached $242 million.

“Yes, by all accounts, the Centennial Campaign has been a resounding success, even with several weeks to go,” said Associate Vice President for Advancement Rick Ellison. Strictly speaking, Dec. 31, 2004, marks the conclusion of Cal Poly’s seven-year Centennial Campaign. “But the work will not stop,” Ellison says. “There are a number of major, worthwhile projects that require our sustained effort as Cal Poly continues its legacy of excellence.”

For instance, funds are still needed to go forward with the Center for Science and Mathematics, as well as other capital projects. There is more work to be done in bringing innovative technology into the classroom. Support is still needed to fund endowed chairs and professorships, which enable us to attract and retain outstanding professors. And the university continues to seek financial support for scholarships to help lessen the financial burden on students so that they can concentrate on their education.

“Private support is essential to enhance the university’s polytechnic, learn-by-doing educational mission,” Ellison says. “Cal Poly’s renowned advantage is a direct result of our generous benefactors.”

It will probably come as no surprise, then, to learn that Cal Poly was rated — for the 12th consecutive year — the best public largely undergraduate university in the West by U.S. News & World Report, in its 2005 America’s Best Colleges guidebook. That kind of recognition is due, in large part, to our generous friends and donors. This special edition of the Cal Poly Magazine includes the Honor Roll of Donors (starting on page 17), which lists many of the individuals, corporations, foundations and others who have helped make the Centennial Campaign a success.

**RECENT CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:**

- During fiscal year 2003-2004, the campus advancement productivity was nearly $33 million in gifts and pledges, bringing the campaign total to $236 million.

- The university’s annual fund program, the Cal Poly Fund, has brought in 23,563 gifts totaling $2.48 million, an increase of 14 percent over last year’s total.

- The Wayne and Gladys Valley Foundation has pledged $7 million toward the construction of the Center for Science and Mathematics.

- Donald Bently has fulfilled his pledge by contributing $5.5 million as a permanent endowment to fund a director position for the Donald E. Bently Center for Engineering Innovation and two faculty positions in the Mechanical Engineering Department.

“As we move into the final phase of our Centennial Campaign, please accept our gratitude and appreciation for all you’ve done to make it a success,” Ellison says. “And please remember that our job is not done. With your help, we can keep strengthening our advantage and look forward to another 12 years as the best public largely undergraduate university in the West.”
The Cal Poly Centennial Campaign is a comprehensive $225-million fund-raising effort from Jan. 1, 1998, to Dec. 31, 2004. The university reached its goal almost one year ahead of schedule. Cal Poly gratefully acknowledges the following donors who made gifts and/or pledges of $100,000 or more to the Centennial Campaign between Jan. 1, 1998, and June 30, 2004. 

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** We pride ourselves on the accuracy of names and figures cited based on information as of press time. We apologize for any inadvertent errors. Please contact Advancement Services at alumni-info@calpoly.edu with any corrections.

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Carl "Gus" Beck, Future Farmers of America chapter advisor, organized the first Poly Royal in 1923. These individuals donated $250-$499 between July 1, 2003, and June 30, 2004.

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A year ago, Cal Poly Magazine featured several alumni whose Hollywood success reflects well on their learn-by-doing education. Art and design graduate Lisa Satriano ('89) was in the midst of filming “Spider-Man 2” at that time.

She had previously worked on the original “Spider-Man,” which Newsweek magazine called “the most successful comic-book movie in history.”

Released to critical acclaim at the end of June 2004, “Spider-Man 2” grossed more than $365 million over the summer, making it the second-most-successful movie of the season.

Movie critics have speculated that the original “Spider-Man,” the first post-9/11 blockbuster, and its sequel have filled a need in the American psyche for heroes. But the movie has played to rave reviews all around the world. Even The Nation in Nairobi, Kenya, reported that “Spider-Man 2” was “the biggest draw ever” in that country.

“I thought ‘Spider-Man 2’ might do well in the box office, too,” says Satriano, who served as one of two first-assistant directors for the movie. “It has such a great love story and even more exciting action than the original.”

Now in Europe filming a new movie called “Aeon Flux” with Charlize Theron and Marton Csokas, Satriano caught the premier of “Spider-Man 2” in Berlin. “It was fun watching it in another country,” she said, “although I still sat in the English theater.”

Satriano reports that Sony is already “lining up ‘Spidey-3’ to start shooting” next fall or in early winter. “I’m looking forward to reading the script, another great adventure!” she said.

For those who missed “Spider-Man 2” in the theater, it is scheduled to be released on DVD soon after Thanksgiving 2004. Fans will be excited to know that the DVD version includes a 12-part documentary on the making of “Spider-Man 2.” Watch for Satriano at work.

To read more about the Spider-Man movies, go to http://spiderman.sonypictures.com.
Extreme Makeover
Makes Extreme Difference

What a difference a day makes. Or in this case, a weekend – a weekend late last spring, to be precise.

That’s all it took for 25 industrial and manufacturing engineering students to renovate and transform an older, ordinary home into a brighter, more functional one for an elderly Nipomo man, who is disabled, and his wife.

The “extreme makeover,” also known as the Polyhouse Project, was part of Professor Roya Javadpour’s graduate-level technological project management course. Javadpour wanted to give students hands-on experience planning and managing a technical project that involved fund raising, scheduling, allocating resources, budgeting, assessing risk and monitoring progress.

“This worthwhile endeavor posed many challenges for the students,” Javadpour says, “including the need to plan and schedule the work and resources to assure that the entire project could be completed in only three days. The lessons learned were invaluable.”

The home belongs to Ed and Joyce Babros. Ed has been wheelchair bound for several years. Joyce is his main caregiver. Working from the Babros’s “wish list,” the students painted the inside of the house; widened doorways; installed new floors, ceiling fans, easy-access shelves and a shower large enough to accommodate Ed’s wheelchair.

“The renovation has changed and enhanced our lives,” Joyce says. “The biggest plus is the work the students did in the bathroom. The shower alone has helped tremendously. The floors and carpeting are smooth and make it easier to push a wheelchair or for Ed to navigate his walker. The paint and ceiling fans add beauty and comfort to our home.”

The project proved valuable to all parties. “Theoretically, planning and managing a project is very easy,” says industrial engineering senior Brian Cameron. “In reality, it is difficult. The only way to really test a plan and gain the full experience is to put it to work. This is exactly what the Polyhouse Project allowed us to do. The project took learning by doing to a new level. It was very intense and time-consuming, but I got a great experience from it and also helped the community.”

More than 40 donors, including local businesses, individuals and fellow industrial and manufacturing engineering students, provided financial support for the project. For more information on the project, go online to www.polyhouse.org.
Celebrating Cells:
International Award Named In Honor of Biology Researcher Paul Nakane

A n international society gave double recognition recently to Paul Nakane, adjunct biology professor and researcher at Cal Poly, for his scientific work in the study of cells.

The International Federation of Societies for Histochemistry and Cytochemistry established the Paul Nakane Prize - and named him as its first recipient - in recognition of Nakane’s “significant scientific accomplishments and leadership in scientific societies in the United States and Japan.”

Histochemistry and cytochemistry are branches of science that focus on the study of the chemical composition and activities of tissues and cells.

The group presented the award to Nakane at its international congress in San Diego in July. The award consists of a plaque and a certificate, both bearing a portrait of Nakane, plus an all-expenses-paid trip to the federation’s international congress.

“The prize recognizes the role you have played as a scientist and leader, and we can think of no person more deserving of the award,” said IFSHC President Ron Van Noorden.

Future awards will go to professionals who demonstrate outstanding scientific contributions and international leadership in advancing the disciplines of histochemistry and cytochemistry.

Nakane, who has been at Cal Poly since 2003, said the award is a great honor. “I’ve received other awards before, but to receive an award named after me is different,” he says. “To know that the Paul Nakane Prize will be given to someone long after I am gone is a strange feeling.”

He is currently working to develop a clinical medical test to identify specific antibiotics effective against infectious bacteria and fungi within two hours after receiving clinical specimens from infected patients.

It would be a real boon to medical science if doctors could more rapidly and accurately prescribe targeted antibiotics to fight illness, Nakane says.

“Now, physicians wait two or three days for the results of antibiotic-susceptibility tests to come back from testing laboratories. The time required to obtain the information is too long, so patients are treated with broad-spectrum antibiotics prior to exact diagnosis. That practice is resulting in the emergence of drug-resistant strains of bacteria and fungi - something faster test results could combat,” explains Nakane, who also holds a doctorate in medical sciences.

He says he became interested in cells and mutation during biology classes when he was a high school student in his native Japan.

Before coming to Cal Poly, Nakane served as professor of pathology at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, director of the Medical Research Institute at Tokai University in Japan, and chair of the Anatomy Department at Nagasaki University School of Medicine.
meeting of the American Society for Horticultural Science. The team placed first overall in the nursery and vegetable divisions, and team members placed in the individual competitions, as well.

For the third straight year the Cal Poly Flower Judging Team won the National Intercollegiate Floral Crop Quality Evaluation and Design Contest. Cal Poly is tied with two other universities—Ohio State and the University of Wisconsin—River Falls—for the national record for consecutive victories. Student Jon-Paul Williams was named top overall judge.

**News**

The Agribusiness Department has a new Master of Science in agribusiness to fill a long-standing, student-expressed need. Students complete extensive coursework involving international agricultural business issues, as well as agricultural technology, policy and international marketing.

- Cal Poly was granted developmental accreditation for a new Dietetic Internship program "to help meet the need for registered dietitians and to prepare graduates to meet the requirements for dietetic registration," says Program Director Susan S. Swadener, an instructor in the Food Science and Nutrition Department.

- The Natural Resources Management Department has a new Bachelor of Science degree program in environmental management and protection. The program is an expansion of an existing concentration within the Forestry and Natural Resources Management program.

**College of Architecture & Environmental Design**

**Students**

City and regional planning students Jason Gavin and Andrew Rubin created VirtualSLO.com, a Web site that gives 360-degree views of locations throughout San Luis Obispo. The site won second place in a five-state student entrepreneurial leadership competition sponsored by Loyola Marymount University.

**Orfalea College of Business**

**Students**

A team of business administration students took the Rookie of the Year and First Runner-Up awards in the national Students in Free Enterprise competition, completing...
David P. Christy, former associate dean for undergraduate programs at Penn State University’s Smeal College of Business and an expert in production planning and manufacturing strategy, is the new dean of the Orfalea College of Business.

“I am very impressed with Dean Christy’s experience, ability to work with diverse constituents, and professional exuberance,” says Cal Poly President Warren J. Baker. “He will be a great asset to the Orfalea College of Business and to the university as a whole.”

With extensive experience in creating programs to benefit students and a strong background in operations and information systems, he brings a wide range of expertise to Cal Poly.

At Penn State, Christy worked with faculty to develop curriculum reforms that enabled timely degree completion. “By streamlining electives and examining required courses, it is far more likely that students can complete degree requirements during any semester,” Christy says.

He also significantly expanded and refined opportunities for international studies, so that one of four business undergraduates at Penn State now completes a study-abroad experience. Christy is also credited with improving undergraduate advising services at Penn State by providing students with the guidance and support necessary to make sound academic decisions.

With advancement and reinforcement of academic excellence as his No. 1 goal at Cal Poly, Christy sees faculty development and student-centered educational experiences as significant objectives.

“My challenge is to continue to engage the alumni and friends of Cal Poly to assist me in investing in our superb faculty and deserving students. We must support faculty to explore leading ideas in research and business practice, and to enable students to have the very richest learning environment that we can imagine. These are essential goals that can only be realized with the continued support of our friends,” Christy says.

As dean, Christy oversees the college’s six academic areas — accounting, economics, finance, industrial technology, management, and marketing. The Orfalea College of Business has approximately 65 faculty members, more than 2,300 undergraduate majors, and some 90 graduate students.

Christy joined the Penn State faculty in 1983 as an assistant professor of management science. He served as chair of the Management Science and Information Systems Department from July 1999 until October 2000, when he became associate dean for undergraduate programs.

Christy earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from the University of Dayton and a Master of Education and a Doctorate in Business Administration from the University of Georgia.
Music Professor Clifton Swanson Leaves on a High Note

Music Professor and Department Chair Clifton Swanson retired at the end of spring quarter after 37 years of service, leaving an indelible mark on the campus and the community for numerous musical and cultural contributions.

Swanson came here to teach in 1967. He served as department chair almost continuously for 19 years. In addition to his teaching and administrative responsibilities, he founded and directed the Cal Poly Symphony.

Swanson is widely known – and lauded – for co-founding the San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival and serving as its music director and conductor since its inception in 1971. What began as a modest two-day event has evolved into one of the nation’s premier music festivals, lasting some 10 days and attracting world-class musicians.

Those accomplishments might be considered enough for some, but not for Swanson. He played an integral part in turning the Performing Arts Center into a reality, serving as a member of the steering committee for design and construction of the center. He was also a member of the advisory board for the Performing Arts Center and a member of the board of directors of Cal Poly Arts.

Swanson served as conductor of the San Luis Obispo Symphony from 1971 to 1984. Currently he is principal bass for the San Luis Obispo Symphony. He has also performed with several organizations and at numerous festivals.

It’s no wonder that he has garnered numerous awards, including the 1991 Cal Poly President’s Award for Contributions to the Arts of San Luis Obispo County.

“Not only did Clif understand that he needed to nourish the minds and the intellect of our students, but he also knew we needed nourishment,” President Warren J. Baker said in remarks at Swanson’s retirement reception. “Very quietly, very successfully, he has nourished the entire community, well beyond the university.”

In recognition of all he has done, friends have established the Clifton Swanson Music Building Enhancement Fund to help realize one of his biggest dreams – a complete renovation of the Davidson Music Center, including the addition of an electronic music studio and practice rooms, as well as faculty offices, a recital hall and library.

Also in his honor, the Orchestra Rehearsal Room will be renamed the Clifton Swanson Orchestra Room. To make a contribution to the building enhancement fund, call the Music Department at (805) 756-2607 or the College of Liberal Arts Advancement Office, (805) 756-7022.
Graphic Communication Has ‘Reason’ to Brag

Reason magazine’s 40,000 subscribers got a big surprise when their June 2004 issue arrived. Each cover had been personalized with a photograph of the subscriber’s house circled, an aerial map of the subscriber’s neighborhood, and an individualized message.

Sound impossible?

Not at all. With the help of industry partners and technology that invokes vague recollections of Orwell’s classic book 1984, the Graphic Communication Department conducted a week-long experiment in digital printing that could very well have a dramatic impact on the print media’s role in communication, says Department Head Harvey Levenson.

The technique involved satellite aerial photography and other sophisticated technology and equipment, including a digital printing press, valued at about $250,000, donated to Cal Poly by Xeikon America.

Each cover of Reason magazine – a publication that focuses on issues of free enterprise, marketing and entrepreneurship – also carried, in large type, the subscriber’s name, followed by “They Know Where You Live! – The benefits of a database nation.”

The inside front cover included information specific to each subscriber and his or her neighborhood, including a street map of the neighborhood and related demographics. The back cover carried additional personalized text.

“Each magazine was targeted to a ‘market of one,’” Levenson says. “The building of a file and the individualized printing of satellite aerial photography is unique and original in this first-time attempt.”

The experiment was conducted by University Graphic Systems, a student-run and student-managed printing and publishing enterprise of the Graphic Communication Department.

A Southern-California company provided the digital files with the names, addresses and satellite aerial neighborhood maps of the subscribers. The files also included population, median income, median age, people per household, plus numerous additional details – from the number of children living with their grandparents to the percentage of neighbors with college degrees. The information was gathered from free Internet sites such as the U.S. Census Bureau.


Nick Gillespie, editor-in-chief of Reason magazine, said in the Los Angeles Times article, “The customization of the magazine was a nifty experiment and a great promotional opportunity for everyone involved. A team of a dozen people in six states, from Connecticut to Arkansas to California, spent several months collating data and publishing test copies before realizing the final product. It was a very difficult task of orchestration. None of the main people involved were in the same time zone, much less the same office.”

UCTE Renamed College of Education

The University Center for Teacher Education has been renamed the College of Education, the final move in a three-year restructuring effort intended to expand educational and career opportunities.

The name change culminates work spearheaded by Bonnie Konopak when she was hired as the center’s first dean in 2000.

“Professional education has become a focal point on campus because of shortages of K-12 educators in critical areas such as science, math and technology education,” Konopak says. “I am very pleased that Cal Poly has recognized us as the seventh college on campus. This recognition is a tribute to educational faculty and staff from across campus who worked tirelessly to develop this new organization.”

The former UCTE offered credential programs and a master’s degree in education. The expanded college has elementary and secondary education programs in the Division of Teacher Education and all graduate programs in the Department of Graduate Studies in Education. A recent addition is an educational doctorate for aspiring administrators offered in collaboration with UC Santa Barbara. It is Cal Poly’s first doctoral program.

Other changes under way include the expansion of the teaching credential programs in math, biology, chemistry and physics; the addition of a new master’s degree specialization in math and science education in conjunction with the College of Science and Mathematics; the appointment of Shirley Magnusson as the Cotchet Endowed Professor; the recent addition of Cotchet Scholarships; and the construction of the Cotchet Math and Science Education teaching lab.
How ‘Green’ Is Our Campus?

Swanton Pacific Ranch
Touted as ‘Model of Responsible Forestry Practices’

The international Forest Stewardship Council has given the Swanton Pacific Ranch a top designation for its responsible forestry practices, making Cal Poly only the fourth university in the United States – and the first on the West Coast – to earn the honor.

The Forest Stewardship Council, an international nonprofit environmental group headquartered in Bonn, Germany, has designated the ranch in Santa Cruz County a “well-managed forest.” The designation came after a year-long evaluation.

The 3,200-acre Swanton Pacific Ranch and nearby 600-acre Valencia Creek property were donated to Cal Poly by the late Al Smith, an alumnus and founder of Orchard Supply Hardware. The College of Agriculture uses the ranch as a living lab for students in several departments and programs.

“Basically the well-managed forest designation means we have sustainable forestry practices, and all of our timber products are ‘green’ and ‘green harvested,’” explains Interim Dairy Science Department Head Walter Mark, former director of the ranch. “We consider this very significant, given that our main objective at Swanton is to demonstrate sustainable forestry and natural resources management practices, and to give our students hands-on, learn-by-doing experience in those practices,” Mark says.

Cal Poly joins Yale, Duke and Paul Smith’s College in attaining the designation. “Independent certification confirms that the Swanton Pacific Ranch is being managed in the long-term interest of both the environment and the educational mission of the property,” says Robert Hrubes, senior vice president of Scientific Certification Systems, an accreditation agency.

The agency’s evaluation determined that the ranch-management plans are comprehensive, are based on detailed resource inventories, and have safeguards in place to protect rare, threatened and endangered species.

For more information on the Swanton Pacific Ranch, visit its Web site at www.spranch.org.

Campus Pledges Environmental Responsibility

Cal Poly has officially embraced environmental responsibility. At a special Earth Day convocation on “Education for Sustainability,” Cal Poly President Warren J. Baker announced that the university had signed the Talloires Declaration, a 10-point pledge to make the campus a place where sustainable resource use and environmental protection are practiced, improved and taught.

“Cal Poly has already begun much of the work detailed in the Talloires Declaration,” Baker says. “The Cal Poly Master Plan, the Cal Poly Land project, and the Campus Sustainability Initiative bear witness to our dedication to creating an institutional culture of sustainability, and we pledge to continue that work. As a polytechnic university, Cal Poly is uniquely positioned to focus the attention of our many disciplines on environmental responsibility.”

The international movement began in 1990, when Tufts University convened a conference in Talloires, France, where educational leaders voiced their concerns about the accelerating depletion of the world’s natural resources. In answer, the group developed the Talloires Declaration, spelling out key actions that institutions of higher education can take to ensure a sustainable future.

“Cal Poly is committed to solving problems created by outdated technologies and to promoting innovative solutions and successful traditional alternatives,” says Linda Dalton, Cal Poly’s executive vice provost for planning. “Students, faculty and staff are working together to operate the university more sustainably through energy conservation, recycling and the use of alternative transportation.”

Computer Training is Central to Valley Economy

The California State University Commission on the Extended University has awarded Cal Poly Continuing Education and University Outreach a $50,000 grant to expand applied technology training programs in Tulare County.

The program, known as the Central Valley Technology Initiative, is intended to identify areas where such training is needed, develop and implement computer and technology training programs for the agricultural business and corporate sector, and design new programs if deemed necessary, says Dennis “Skip” Parks, dean of Continuing Education.

“Continued economic development in Tulare County will depend on all industries’ ability to utilize technology in their operations,” Parks explains. “CVTI aims to train the local work force in various technology applications, allowing the Central Valley to expand economic and business development.”

John Houser (MBA, M.S. ENGR '94) was recently named the project’s coordinator.

This initiative is just the beginning of a larger push to start a multi-university center in Tulare. “We are investigating options for how institutions can partner to better serve the lifelong learning needs of the Central Valley,” Parks says.

For details, visit the Web at www.continuing-ed.calpoly.edu.

Arts Programs Take Center Stage at Local Schools

A brighter picture is emerging for budding Central Coast artists, thanks to the establishment of two new programs offered through the Liberal Studies Department.

One program, administered through the recently established Cal Poly Central Coast Center for Arts Education, provides elementary and secondary schoolteachers with supplemental professional-development instruction in dance, theater, music and visual arts.

The center will also give teacher-education students opportunities to attend professional workshops that address California’s visual and performing arts content standards for kindergarten through high school.

The center is a tribute to the work being done by Liberal Studies faculty members, who in the last three years received nearly $500,000 in grants to oversee county arts education programs.

“The need for more professional-development locations on the Central Coast, where teachers, artists and art educators can come together for education and discussion in and of the arts, is critical,” says Liberal Studies Department Chair Susan Duffy. “The new center will position Cal Poly as a leader in this educational area.”

The second program, Cal Poly Agricultural Literacy and the Arts, helps teachers find connections between agriculture and the arts. It was established with a $30,000 grant from the Kellogg Foundation.

Through the project, 4th- through 12th-grade teachers attend professional development workshops and summer institutes that demonstrate ways to raise public awareness about the importance of agriculture in California’s economy.

“The project trains teachers to address agricultural issues in new and creative ways,” Duffy says. “Professional art educators will lead workshops and discuss how artists across the centuries have conveyed the importance of agriculture through literature, visual arts, theater and music.”

Cal Poly Establishes Hank Apfelberg Memorial Endowment

A memorial endowment in honor of Graphic Communication Professor Hank Apfelberg has been established to commemorate his lifelong devotion and professional contributions to the graphic arts industry.

Apfelberg, who died in January, taught at Cal Poly for more than 30 years. “Hank’s dedication was to the students he educated and the industry he served,” says Harvey Levenson, head of the Graphic Communication Department.

The Hank Apfelberg Graphic Communication Memorial Endowment will support an annual scholarship for a student demonstrating need and a commitment to a career in graphic communication, research and development projects, field trips to industry sites and professional conferences, and curriculum and professional development.

Tax-deductible contributions may be sent to The Hank Apfelberg Graphic Communication Memorial Endowment in care of the Graphic Communication Department, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407.
Roseann Parks, associate director of alumni relations, loves to travel – especially with Cal Poly alumni, parents and friends. That’s one reason she started the alumni travel program in partnership with Cal Poly Continuing Education and University Outreach.

An even more important reason, she says, was to provide educationally and culturally enriching experiences to those seeking the kind of adventure and knowledge available only through international travel. The trips offer educational seminars, special excursions and “meet-the-people” exchanges, giving travelers more than a mere glimpse into a region’s history and the locals’ way of life. Participants also have some time to explore on their own.

Three tours to Tuscany, Italy, were completed in 2004. Trips to France and Russia are planned for 2005. Parks recently returned from eight days in Tuscany and offers this personal account:

Day 1: Instant bonding – that’s how it feels to travel with Cal Poly alumni, parents and friends on Cal Poly’s first trip to Tuscany in August. Most of us are departing from San Francisco, and we recognize each other by the bright gold Cal Poly luggage tags attached to our bags. The group includes Cal Poly parents, a Cal Poly alum and her mother, friends of Cal Poly, and graduates of varying ages.

Days 2-3: Nothing could be more magical than strolling through the heart of Cortona, a city put on the map by Frances Mayes’ book, Under the Tuscan Sun. Montalcino, famous for its local red wines, brunello di Montalcino, is our first stop for wine tasting. Each evening, we return to our hotel, have dinner at a local restaurant, then roam the streets, taking in the local scene, bursting with activity any time of day. We are fortunate to be here during two local festivals: the Bistecca Festival, serving the beef from the local chianina cattle, and the Tuscan Sun Festival, featuring musicians from around the world.

Day 4: The hill town of Montepulciano could not be more picturesque. At the foot
of the hill, we drive through the viale della Rimembranze (Avenue of Remembrance) and visit Tempio di S Biagio. We are dropped off at the Piazza Grande – the highest part of town – to wander the curvy streets and explore the 13th century Palazzo Communale and the Duomo with Taddeo di Bartolo’s altarpiece of the Assumption.

Day 5: Perugia – home of Italian chocolate – is our next stop. We visit the medieval caves, Fontana Maggiore and Palazzo die Priori under the direction of a local tour guide. We have lunch in Assisi, one of Italy’s most important religious sites. Our guided tour is interspersed with free time to visit St. Mary’s of the Angels, the Church of San Rufino (the patron saint of Assisi), and the stunning St. Francis Basilica.

Day 6: We are fortunate to visit Siena the morning of Il Palio. The streets are lined with the flags of the 17 ‘contrade,’ or neighborhoods, and we witness the pride of the districts as people march through the streets in preparation for the evening’s horse race. We watch the Piazza del Campo being readied to host the event and over 50,000 spectators. We even buy neighborhood flags so we can root for our chosen neighborhood as we watch the Palio from our hotel.

Day 7: Our visit to Florence is magical. We stop at the Duomo, which towers over the city, and the Church of Santa Croce, housing the tombs of Michelangelo and Galleria, as well as a memorial to Dante. After a tour and lunch at a local restaurant, we have free time to explore the Pitti Palace, Palazzo Vecchio and Baptistery with the brass doors fit to be the ‘Gates of Paradise.’ Many of us also visit the Galleria dell’Accademia to see Michelangelo’s ‘David.’

Day 8: After an educational seminar on present-day Italy, followed by a cooking demonstration, we are able to relax, revisit old sites, or travel to new towns.

Next up: Provence, France, in the spring, and a cruise between Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia, in the fall of 2005. In Provence, travelers will visit Aix-en-Provence, including excursions to three UNESCO- (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) designated World Heritage Sites.

During the cruise between Moscow and St. Petersburg, a private charter will serve as a “floating hotel,” taking participants along the Neva, Svir and Volga rivers, as well as Lake Ladoga and Lake Onega. Ports-of-call include Kizhi Island, Goritsy, Yaroslavl and Uglick, and tours are scheduled to the Kremlin, Red Square, the Hermitage Museum and the Moscow Circus.

For more information and registration details, go to the Alumni Relations Web site at www.alumni.calpoly.edu, or e-mail your name, address and telephone number to Parks at rparks@calpoly.edu for a brochure.
Score One for the Stadium
Major Renovation Planned

Thanks to the generosity of Cal Poly alumnus Alex Spanos and his wife, Faye (see story, page 4), Cal Poly is moving forward with plans to renovate the stadium, the university's facility for football, men's and women's soccer and events such as commencement.

The Spanos's $4-million commitment—the largest single gift in the history of Cal Poly Athletics—will help fund the first phase of the renovation. In recognition of the gift, the stadium has been renamed the Alex G. Spanos Stadium.

The initial project will increase the permanent seating capacity from about 8,500 to 10,000 and includes a press box with special box seating, a press area, television and radio booths, two coaching booths, new stadium lighting and an upgrade of the playing surface.

The renovation also includes plans to honor all of the members of the 1960 football team who perished in a tragic plane crash in Ohio. "Cal Poly plans to create a Memorial Plaza to ensure permanent remembrance of the 1960 team members who lost their lives," said Cal Poly President Warren J. Baker.

The Memorial Plaza will honor each player with a biographical plaque affixed to a copper pillar standing at the height of the player. "As the focal point of the stadium entrance, this plaza will be a constant reminder to students, alumni and visitors," Baker added. "We feel that permanent recognition on the Cal Poly campus of the young men who lost their lives is long overdue."

The Spanos's gift, along with a prior gift from alumnus Richard O'Neill (ASCI '48), has provided important momentum for ongoing efforts to secure the funds required to develop a high-quality venue. Groundbreaking is expected in early summer 2005.
Training: The Triathlete

By Fred Dreier

To understand how Victor Plata (SOC '97) evolved from a mediocre collegiate runner and swimmer to an Olympian and elite professional triathlete, one need not look further than his daily regimen.

Plata rises early and churns out several thousand yards in a two-hour swim practice. After a meal and a rest, he spins along the Central Coast for two to four hours on his bike, then finishes up with another one to two hours running, some stretches, dinner, then bed. It's a schedule that is built on physical and emotional dedication.

Plata says this dedication - it didn't come overnight - became engrained in him during his undergraduate years at Cal Poly, during which he competed for the track, swimming and cycling teams, worked almost full time, won several academic awards, and captured the National Collegiate Triathlon title.

“All of my college years were spent training, studying or working. I think I went on one date, and to one party - the swim team’s New Year’s party,” Plata says. “You know, I was a total geek. Well, I suppose I’m still a total geek.”

Plata competed with the track team his freshman year. After a coaching shake-up, he quit and took some time off, traveling to South America to reunite with his estranged father. When he returned to Cal Poly, a friend persuaded him to join the swim team.

“I was definitely one of the slowest guys on the team,” Plata recalls. “I got better over time, I just had to set some goals.”

It wasn’t long before Plata the runner and swimmer picked up triathlon. At his first competition, the 1995 Wildflower race, Plata came in fifth. Realizing that he needed some serious bike training, he joined the cycling team. When he returned to the Wildflower Collegiate Championships in 1997, Plata walked away with the national championship.

“That moment was special. It proved that I was capable of achieving any goal I wanted to set,” he says. “That was also the first time I seriously thought it was possible to make the Olympics.”

It would take eight long years of sacrifice before Plata realized this goal. Along the way he suffered serious injuries after being hit by a truck, attacked by a Rottweiler and llama, and falling into poison ivy. The last injury shook up his training before the 2000 Olympic trials, at which Plata came in fourth - one spot short of the Olympic team.

After the 2000 games, Plata decided to give it one more shot, putting his plan to enter law school on hold. He finally achieved this goal at the Olympic Trials in Bellingham, Wash., in June, when he captured the last spot.

Randy Warren, who coached Plata on the Cal Poly Wheelman cycling team, said Plata’s dedication to setting and chasing goals is what has gotten him so far. “Victor would write his goals down and put them on objects around the house. It’s something you don’t see too much in sports.”

Cal Poly Magazine 45
Cal Poly’s 1974 graduating class had the distinct honor of hearing California’s Governor Ronald Reagan deliver a poignant commencement address.

In introductory remarks, Robert E. Kennedy, Cal Poly’s president at the time, noted, “Never in the previous 67 years has a governor of the state of California accepted an invitation to be a speaker at a commencement exercise on this campus.”

And to this date, Governor Reagan remains the only governor to do so.

That talk, though, was not the first time Governor Reagan addressed a campus crowd. As head of the State College Board of Trustees, he delivered the principle address during Kennedy’s April 1968 inauguration as Cal Poly president. Kennedy, who served as president until 1979, writes about that day in his own words:

“A loyal democrat, I thought Reagan, a former motion picture actor, would always recite from memory speeches prepared by professional writers. His actions that day changed my mind; I almost became a republican. While we sat next to each other on the platform waiting our turn to speak, we heard from about a dozen other people.

I had written a speech, and I had practiced it for days. Reagan, on the other hand, reached inside his coat, pulled out some 5-by-7 cards and a pen. While we sat, I watched as he scribbled notes on those blank cards.

When he spoke, he only glanced at those cards. That’s when I changed my mind about his speaking ability and intellect. His remarks were well received by the largest audience I had ever seen in the gymnasium. I remember well one piece of advice for educators: ‘A college’s obligation is to teach, not indoctrinate.’ I, too, tried to clarify the role of a poly-technic college. I said, ‘At this polytechnic college, we may emphasize science and technology, but we shall strive for appropriate equilibrium between the knowledge man needs to reform his environment and the understanding he needs to live at peace with other men.

“NEVER IN THE PREVIOUS 67 YEARS HAS A GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA ACCEPTED AN INVITATION TO BE A SPEAKER AT A COMMENCEMENT EXERCISE ON THIS CAMPUS.”

Here we remember the former governor and 40th president of the United States, who passed away in June. We look back at that time 30 years ago, a time that Reagan referred to in his commencement address as “a day of nostalgia, of looking back on a montage of memories …”
ONE OF THE MOST meaningful ways to impact the university beyond your lifetime is through a bequest gift. Planning for the distribution of your estate provides an opportunity to reflect on your life and your dreams for future generations.

Cal Poly's planned giving staff can work with you and your advisors to develop a long-term gift plan that best reflects your financial situation and your personal commitments. Sample bequest language is available upon request from the Planned Giving and Endowments Office to assist you with establishing a bequest gift to benefit a designated program or department at Cal Poly.
Family Fanfare: Joining the Mustang Marching Band in 1941 were the Spanos siblings. (From left) Cal Poly aeronautical engineering student Alex Spanos, his sister, Stella, and brothers George and Danny, also a Cal Poly aeronautical engineering student. (Photo courtesy of University Archives, California Polytechnic State University)