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2009 Grads Are Ready to Do the Work

Learn By Doing Means Cal Poly Seniors Walk Off Campus and Into Jobs On Day One

By Stacia Momburg

Each spring, as graduation approaches, Cal Poly seniors are abuzz with anticipation.

Final projects are submitted, commencement paperwork is finalized, and tickets for the ceremony are thoughtfully distributed.

Graduating seniors also face the prospect of what’s next. Some pursue advanced degrees, some travel, and many enter the workforce for the first time.

For Cal Poly seniors, there’s good news: Companies in California and around the world are welcoming the university’s talented graduates.

"What distinguishes our graduates is their ability to dive into work with little training,” said Cornel Morton, Cal Poly’s vice president for Student Affairs. "Executives from a wide range of industries tell us they seek out our graduates because they are well-trained, work-ready professionals in scientific and technical fields. The common quote we hear is, 'Cal Poly graduates are ready to contribute on day one.'"

Data from an informal campus survey of graduating seniors showed that many attribute their success in finding careers to internships or co-op programs through their college departments. The survey was conducted to help the university understand how graduates were faring in their job searches in the current economic climate.

Even in a sluggish job market, the value of a Cal Poly degree translates into good job news for many grads. Many report landing highly sought-after positions in diverse fields – such as construction project managers, software developers, ice cream makers and agricultural professionals.

Meet five Cal Poly students who will tackle demanding jobs now that they’ve graduated:

**KIRSTEN PETERSON**

As you might expect for a graduate of one of the nation’s top business colleges, Kirsten Peterson of Cal Poly’s Orfalea College of Business has landed a job with a premier entertainment company – Pixar Animation Studios.

She will work at Pixar near San Francisco as a production management intern. The East Bay native hopes her three-month internship will result in the job of her dreams.

Multimedia: See the Commencement Slideshow

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“I’ve wanted to work at Pixar since I was 15,” said Peterson, now 22. “My first Pixar toy was a Woody doll from ‘Toy Story.’ ”

Though a business administration major, Peterson points to classes she took in Cal Poly’s parks, recreation and tourism program in helping her land the job. “I took an independent course of study and wound up taking a lot of event planning and management classes,” she said. “I was able to demonstrate exactly what I was capable of doing because of the hands-on projects I completed at Cal Poly.”

MACI DEPAOLI
After obtaining a dairy science degree from the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences, the country’s fourth largest agriculture school, Maci DePaoli will move on to a nine-month training program with Dreyer’s Ice Cream in Bakersfield – the nation’s largest ice cream producer.

The Strathmore, Calif., native will complete different training sessions in various divisions of the Dryer’s processing plant, which will expose her to all areas of the business. She’ll then be assigned a role in the plant.

“I grew up with dairy cows, and I love them,” DePaoli said. “When I got to Cal Poly, I was able to do internships at processing plants in the Central Valley processing milk, butter and cheese. I began to love dairy processing because of those experiences.”

She’s been getting ideas from family and friends about ice cream flavors she should develop. “The best I’ve heard so far have been apple crisp and root beer float. Both are my brother’s.”

ALEX LEHMAN
Alex Lehman, an environmental horticulture major in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences, joined Vaccarino & Associates, Inc. in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, two days after graduating.

The 23-year-old grew up in Ojai, Calif., gardening with his parents and grandparents. He will take over native plant collections for one of the Caribbean’s largest landscape architecture companies, which specializes in sustainable landscapes for homes, businesses and government, and restoration of native plants in the region.

Lehman, who minored in plant biology, will travel throughout Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands collecting native plants for the company’s various restoration projects. “I’ll oversee ground installation and restoration work. The company works to restore sites degraded by sugar cane and other cash crops. We also rehabilitate waterfront property that has experienced over-development, erosion and years of compounded abuse.”

Manager of Cal Poly’s Plant Conservatory for the past two years, Lehman is looking forward to his new job. “It requires me to travel all over the Virgin Islands collecting plants, to get my scuba certification and focus on what I love to do. Not bad.”

KLAY ADAIR
With construction management degree in hand from the College of Architecture and Environmental Design, Klay Adair will now work at the university that landed him his new job. He is joining San Diego-based Sundt Construction in San Diego as project engineer on the Cal Poly Rec Center renovation project.

“I’m going to be working on project budget and scheduling, as well as quality control, site safety and processing submittals and transmittals,” said Adair, 22.

The San Luis Obispo native got the job after attending an
Cal Poly Magazine - Summer 2009 - Commencement

"The department does a great job of relating everything we do to what we will encounter after graduation," he said. "The internships gave me first-hand experiences of what I would actually be doing in my career."

MAX BRANDT

Also a construction management major, Max Brandt will complete a six-month, paid internship with Clark Construction and then head to Tanzania for a year to complete a senior project he began two years ago. He’ll finish design work on a self-sustaining, LEED-certified technical university for the Catholic Diocese of Same, Tanzania. He and a friend also plan to start a nonprofit corporation to help develop Same using sustainable practices.

Born in St. Louis, Brandt now calls Davis, Calif., home. He attributes his love of construction to his family. "I grew up remodeling homes with my mom and dad," he said. "We remodeled every house we lived in."

The 23-year-old was also recognized for work he did while at Cal Poly, receiving an award this year for outstanding service to the off-campus community and one for outstanding leadership from the Construction Management Department.

Like so many Cal Poly students, our featured grads agree the hands-on experience they had as part of Cal Poly’s learn-by-doing education helped them land the jobs they wanted and provided them skills that make them “ready to contribute on day one.”
A Note from the Editors

Dear Friends:

Welcome to our first online-only edition of Cal Poly Magazine.

In this interactive edition of your quarterly magazine, you’ll find exciting coverage of:

- June 2009 Commencement, including how some new graduates are already faring well in the job market.
- A Mustang football player with a stellar set of vocal cords, who is equally at home on the gridiron and the stage.
- How one professor is throwing teaching to the wind, preparing students for careers in wind energy production.

The new online Cal Poly Magazine is much more than just printed pages posted to the Web. The site now sports upgraded navigation, multimedia, links to interesting Cal Poly sites and other interactive features.

The current economic crisis poses a challenge for the entire California State University system and is forcing us to be more creative in how we continue to bring you information to help you stay connected with Cal Poly.

We’ve decided to view this challenge as an opportunity to make Cal Poly’s publications more state-of-the-art and contribute to the campus’ sustainability efforts by reducing our paper consumption.

We’ll continue to produce Cal Poly Magazine in print as well as online, but the frequency of our printing schedule will change.

Look for the next print edition this fall. In the meantime, we hope you enjoy our new online presence.

And we’d like your feedback. Please send comments and questions to Senior Editor Matt Lazier at mlazier@calpoly.edu. And don’t forget to take our Cal Poly Magazine Reader Survey.

Thank you for visiting us online, and thank you for all that you do for Cal Poly.

Sincerely,

Leah Kolt
Editor

Matt Lazier
Senior Editor
Harnessing the Winds of Change

Cal Poly Looks for a Cleaner Tomorrow

Story and photos By Scott Roark

You see them in the desert sometimes while driving down the interstate, clustered on the hills, sunlight glinting off white steel, spinning with an almost hypnotic grace.

Wind turbines represent the future of energy for many, an infeasible concept for others.

For Cal Poly Mechanical Engineering Professor Patrick Lemieux, studying how to harness wind energy effectively may not exactly be a breeze – but the research potential is endless and is preparing Cal Poly students to work on technology that could have far-reaching national and global effects.

Lemieux and colleagues John Ridgely and Joe Mello have spearheaded the developing Cal Poly Wind Power Research Center, a facility that includes an on-campus lab and a test site on Cal Poly’s Escuela Ranch, which is managed by the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences.

The group already has built an 80-foot tower on the ranch to measure wind speed and direction at 20-foot intervals. This is in preparation for a soon-to-be-deployed 70-foot tall wind turbine, completely designed by Cal Poly faculty and students. The lonely structure will overlook a vast swath of Central Coast mountains and valleys while churning on wind speeds up to 75 mph, the equivalent of a category 1 hurricane.

“We have measured pretty amazing wind speeds up on Escuela Ranch,” Lemieux said. “It’s proven to be an ideal test site.”

The recently-completed turbine nacelle – the center component that holds the rotating blades – was developed entirely by Cal Poly undergraduates, based on a commercial wind turbine designed by mechanical engineering alum Dean Davis.

The turbine is versatile, efficient, light and strong. It includes a 3-kilowatt generator and a blade design in step with industry practice, with a high strength-to-weight ratio thanks to a fabrication process developed by graduate students Bryan Edwards and Devin Gosal. A gel coat and polyurethane coating provides UV and weather protection.

Why is this research so vital to alternative energy development? Lemieux, a native of Canada, becomes excited when talking about the possibilities.

“The United States has been called the Saudi Arabia of wind power because of the abundance of wind. It’s our version of oil,” he said.
“Harnessing this resource with a well laid-out plan is an important first step for an energy supply that is domestic, renewable and clean.”

The U.S. already has started to move in this direction, he said. In the short term, the country is moving toward more aggressive renewable electricity standards and production tax credits, which he called “the lifeline of utility-scale wind energy developers.”

In the long run, Lemieux would like to see the country embrace a vision like that of the Pickens Plan – a personal campaign by legendary oilman T. Boone Pickens for curbing dependence on foreign oil.

The plan calls for 40,000 wind turbines, each generating 5 megawatts, in the area from West Texas through North Dakota and the Canadian border.

According to the plan, more than 20 percent of U.S. energy could be generated by wind and solar energy. Combined with a long-awaited upgrade to the nation’s electricity distribution system, the plan would generate and distribute 200 gigawatts of reliable electric power nationwide – the equivalent of 200 nuclear power plants, Lemieux said.

The cost would be about $1 trillion. But before the sticker shock sets in, consider this: The U.S. has spent as much as $700 billion annually on foreign oil imports.

A plan such as this is expensive, Lemieux said, but would eventually pay for itself. Best of all, he said, this solution is immediately feasible. “There is no need to invent any silver bullet technology or figure out how to deal with long term waste problems, carbon footprint issues or other environmental impact problems.”

With all of that in mind, the proposed Cal Poly Wind Power Research Center aims to specifically train graduate and undergraduate engineering students for utility-scale wind energy jobs, preparing a new generation of engineers with direct, hands-on challenges related to wind turbine designs and subsystem technologies. The center is on target to achieve these goals, thanks to grant funding from the California Central Coast Research Partnership and the Chrones Chair of Mechanical Engineering.

“Along with our research projects, our students are already collaborating with industry leaders, using proven results to benchmark their own work,” Lemieux said. “It’s all in the best tradition of learn by doing with an eye on the long-term benefits for all of us.”
Decoding The King of Poisons in the Wild

Professor Corinne Lehr Unveils Mysteries of One-Celled Algae

By Scott Roark
Photos courtesy of Corinne Lehr

Fill a tub with battery acid laced with arsenic. Heat it to 140 degrees Fahrenheit. Now imagine soaking in it – thriving in it.

Unappealing as that sounds, it's comparable to a bubble bath and champagne for Cyanidioschyzon, a particular one-celled alga that grows where almost everything else dies. The red algae can be found on the bottom of shallow hot springs, where it neutralizes many of arsenic's most toxic elements by adding carbon to it.

This process could have future commercial applications, such as cleaning water supplies contaminated with arsenic, though such applications are further down the road according to Cal Poly Chemistry Professor Corinne Lehr.

The Calgary native has studied extreme-friendly organisms for some time, completing her post-doctoral work at Montana State University by studying arsenic biogeochemistry with a team of colleagues in the hot springs of Yellowstone National Park.
For now, Lehr said, the team is focused on how this red alga affects arsenic in different environments. It lives in both high and very low temperatures, in water at pH1 (which is acidic), and in liquids with very high pH levels.

“It’s truly amazing what this organism can live in,” Lehr said.

Lehr is conducting research at Mono Lake in California, looking at algae that thrives in non-acidic environments but still has the same detoxifying affect on arsenic. She wants to know how the arsenic is treated in different environments.

“We are still trying to fully grasp the process,” Lehr said. “Why exactly does the alga do it? Is it one factor or a combination of factors?”

Lehr makes the journey to Mono Lake about every six weeks. The lake’s surreal tufa sculptures framed by the harsh, open landscape are a fitting backdrop for another potential application of this research – providing an understanding of how life forms could survive in harsh environments on other planets.

Another remarkable trait of the algae is that it can withstand high levels of ultraviolet radiation, Lehr said. Coupled with an ability to interact with one of the most universal poisons on the planet and survive where no other living organism can, the algae is an ideal candidate for research.

Arsenic comes mostly from rocks, with large amounts found in volcanic areas and in the ocean. The tasteless substance at one time was used frequently for homicidal poisoning, giving it the name “king of poisons” or “poison of poisons.” In Imperial Rome, official tasters were employed because of arsenic’s popularity for dispatching political opponents.

Modern forensic science has nearly ended arsenic’s use in homicide. Now one of the main issues is drinking water. Arsenic pollution in water can be natural or can result from such things as mining or farming. In Bangladesh, for example, it’s estimated that millions of people are suffering from arsenic poisoning because of poor water quality control standards and government negligence.

“Water treatment methods are one goal of this type of research,” Lehr said. “This type of algae can be found in hot springs throughout the world. The potential is there.”
Protectors of the Land

Led by Cal Poly Alumni, The Land Conservancy of SLO County Marks 25 Years

By Matt Lazier

Wind stirring the tree leaves above their heads, Cal Poly alums Brian Stark and Bob Hill occasionally paused from talking to greet the hikers and cyclists headed to the Lemon Grove Loop trailhead at Cerro San Luis.

Little did most of those people know how big a role the two men and their nonprofit group played in conserving these 120 acres in San Luis Obispo and thousands more around the county.

Another well kept secret is how closely the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County is tied to Cal Poly. In addition to the co-directors, seven of the conservancy’s 14 staff members are Cal Poly grads, and four of its 10 board members are alumni.

Stark and Hill describe the conservancy as a bridge-building group working with landowners and government to protect land in agreements that are beneficial for everyone. “We try to transcend politics; that’s what makes sense,” Hill said.

Stark said the group does not get involved in activism. “Our work is best done in a non-political way that is respectful of the needs of all landowners. Activism has a part to play in conservation, but it is best done by other organizations. I think we all want to see a well-planned community that balances the needs of the rural and urban communities with the needs of wildlife.”

The conservancy is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. So far, it has helped set aside more than 10,500 acres in San Luis Obispo County for recreation, wildlife, ranching and farming. The conservancy’s first major project is the ongoing Lodge Hill Restoration Program in Cambria, in which the group is buying and protecting antiquated subdivision lots that contain parts of the town’s famous Monterey pine forest.

The conservancy also continues to help the city of San Luis Obispo create a “greenbelt” of undeveloped land around its borders. The city and conservancy have partnered to preserve more than 1,300 acres in the greenbelt, including the Lemon Grove Loop (one of the first areas preserved). Stark has been with this effort since the start, writing the city’s first greenbelt plan in the mid-1990s. Hill helped revise the plan in 2002.

On the trail - Executive Director Brian Stark (left) and Conservation Director Bob Hill of the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County at the entrance of the Lemon Grove Loop Trail at Cerro San Luis.

Photo by Matt Lazier
The group also works to restore damaged land and resources, including streams, wetlands and coastal dunes. And it is restoring the century-old Octagon Barn in southern San Luis Obispo, a local cultural icon.

Stark, the group’s executive director, graduated from Cal Poly in 1989 with a bachelor’s degree in social sciences. Hill, the conservation director, obtained his master’s in city and regional planning in 2002. Stark and Hill became the organization’s co-directors in 2004. Both started as volunteer interns – Stark in 1994 and Hill in 2001, while earning his Cal Poly degree.

Both men said studying at Cal Poly and experiencing its hands-on focus prepared them well for their work with the conservancy.

"Both of our careers, you can link directly to the learn-by-doing culture of Cal Poly," Hill said. "We started at the Land Conservancy as volunteers. I just came here and got an internship and started doing the work."

With so many Cal Poly grads involved, he added, that "get it done" attitude defines the conservancy today.

"That's still how we do things," he said. "For any project that we work on, we come up with a hypothesis, then test it in the field, and then determine whether it's successful."

Stark and Hill continue to be involved with Cal Poly – teaching guest lectures and occasional classes and leading student field trips to some of the parcels the conservancy has protected.

Stark said keeping the communication channels open between the nonprofit and the university is important, as the Land Conservancy hopes to continue to be a landing spot for some of Cal Poly’s brightest graduates.

“We want to get the best of the best,” Stark said. “And Cal Poly cranks out some really talented people.”

LAND CONSERVANCY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

The Cal Poly connections

Cal Poly alumni on staff:

- Brian Stark – Executive Director – B.S. Social Sciences, 1989
- Bob Hill – Conservation Director – Master of City and Regional Planning, 2002
- Michael LeBrun – Project Manager – B.S. Environmental Engineering, 1993
- Mark Skinner – Project Manager – B.S. Landscape Architecture, 1984
- Margo Clark – Conservation Planning Associate – B.S. Animal Science, 1975

Alumni on the Board of Directors:

- Gary Felsman – President – Electrical Engineering, 1978
- Lisa Wise – Treasurer – Master of City and Regional Planning, 2001
- Beverly Gingg – member at large – M.S. Biological Sciences, 1989
- Alex Rothenberg – member at large – B.S. Business Admin., 1998; MBA, 2003
Hotshots: This Choirboy Packs a Punch

Mustang Fullback Jon Hall Can Carry a Football – and a Tune

By Mary McNally

You wouldn’t expect to find a football player and an opera singer in the same place, never mind the same person.

Jon Hall is that person – the hardest-charging tenor on the gridiron.

An uncommon combination of interests and abilities, Hall is equally likely to be lifting weights and hanging with best friends and fellow football players Alex Lee and RyanShotwell as he is to be on stage in a toga, singing opera, or composing songs about love and longing for his longtime, long-distance girlfriend, Danielle.

Recently at an Academic Game Plan meeting – daily counseling sessions to help players stay on top of academic responsibilities – Hall said his coaches don’t always know how to help him with his classes, because his studies are out of the ordinary. “They don’t know what they’re looking at with my stuff, ‘cause I’m the first music major they’ve ever seen in their lives,” he said, laughing. Where other students take notes during a lecture, he said, “I’m actually writing real notes – musical notes.”

The whole Hall family sings, including Jon’s parents and three siblings. At church they were called the Von Hall family, a nod to the famous Von Trapps from "The Sound of Music."

Jon was discovered by family friends. His first professional gig was in fifth grade as part of a children’s choir backing Michael Jackson. Hall’s credits include Mowgli on the album “Jungle Book 2,” the movie “High School Musical,” and “Shamu Rocks” at Sea World.

With a 6-foot-2, 240-pound frame, Hall seems a natural for the football field. But he got started on the sport much later than he did music.

He played one year in eighth grade, but didn’t suit up again until he was a junior in high school. That season, he said, was unexceptional. But he applied himself and returned for a stand-out senior year that brought several scholarship offers.

He picked Cal Poly because it provided the opportunity to play football and study music,
a tough combination because both are so time-intensive.

"Music is like a different language. It's not like you can just understand it; you have to practice it," he said. "And you have to practice football. So that's a tough thing to put together – to organize my time."

But he studies hard. The music theory he's learned at Cal Poly has prepared him to intern this summer for Golden Globe-nominated composer Christopher Young, known for scoring movies such as "Spider-Man 3" and "Hellraiser."

And he plays hard. His favorite game so far was last season's nail-biter against Wisconsin, decided on the final play. "It was a really fun game to play in. I think I broke two ribs."

Hall likes football and music because they satisfy different aspects of his personality.

"I love to be with people, so that's one thing I like about football," he said. But he needs his "solo time," when he can contemplate the vast, varied opportunities ahead.

He'll be back at Cal Poly for the 2009 season, though. So you can catch him on stage and on the field.

Hear Jon Hall sing on YouTube

Photos courtesy Cal Poly Athletics and Cal Poly Music Department
On the Playground For Children – and for Josie

By Matt Lazier

Fran Durekas (HD 1990) remembers several excellent professors from her time at Cal Poly – but none who had as profound an impact on her studies and her career as Josephine Stearns.

Stearns taught at Cal Poly’s Preschool Learning Lab before she died in 1992, and Durekas studied there with her.

So when the playground at the lab reopens this fall after a $190,000 renovation Durekas initiated and largely funded, the Sunnyvale alumna wants it dedicated in her beloved professor’s name.

“She was a mentor who made me passionate about what I do. She really pushed me to think about how I could have the biggest impact on children,” said Durekas, a College of Liberal Studies Honored Alum who founded a firm called Children’s Creative Learning Centers, which designs employee childcare facilities.

Faculty in the Psychology and Child Development Department say Durekas’ vision and donation will impact Cal Poly students learning to work in childcare as well as the youngsters they care for at the Preschool Learning Lab.

Durekas approached the university in spring 2007 about developing a new playground. “Cal Poly has given so much to me,” she said. “It absolutely set the foundation for my success. This was a chance to give back.”

She felt the playground was an area of the program that could use a lift. “The space that existed was not very exciting for the children,” she said.
Child development faculty agreed, saying the playground was static, had too much concrete and didn’t provide many ways for preschoolers to learn while they played.

Durekas brought ideas for how to improve things. She met with child development and landscape architecture faculty, who in turn engaged students in the process.

Durekas’ enthusiasm proved contagious. Just as the plan was being presented for approval, a second, anonymous donor stepped forward, allowing for the inclusion of several additional components in the design. Work on the project began in the spring 2009 quarter.

Preschoolers returning in the fall will find a playground that connects their playtime more directly to their natural surroundings. A slide follows the slope of a hill. A dry creek bed winds through miniature sand dunes. Tags identify all of the native plants. And Cal Poly students will help preschoolers grow and eat fruits and vegetables from an organic garden.

Wherever possible, the playground contains sustainable and natural components, including pea gravel and an engineered wood surface called Fibar.

“We’re trying to put the children back in contact with nature, by removing artificial surfaces,” said David Watts, a landscape architecture professor who led the design of this project and has worked for many years on study and design of playgrounds.

This goal complements other exciting new directions in which the preschool lab is headed. The child development program is revamping its curriculum for the lab to focus more on supporting children’s natural curiosity about science and math by providing rich opportunities for exploration and discovery, said professor Jennifer Jipson. This move reflects Cal Poly’s overall effort to focus on science, technology, engineering and math – or STEM – disciplines, she said.

It was important to the donors, she added, that Cal Poly students be involved in the development of the playground.

Child development student Hillary Sinnott is designing the organic garden for her senior project. She hopes it will be used to introduce the youngsters to biology through growth of the fruits and vegetables, physics through collecting and weighing what they’ve grown, and even engineering when Cal Poly students help the children build netting and poles for their plants.

Watts, meanwhile, involved some of his students in the design of the project and in learning to do site inspections during construction.

The project is a change of pace for Durekas. Her company usually determines clients’ goals and then creates a child development facility to meet those aims.

“This is very special,” she said, “because it’s a chance to create a teaching tool for students. It’s different from anything I’ve ever done.”
Before social networks like Facebook, PolyLink and MySpace, the best-read section of every alumni newsletter and magazine was the “Class Notes.”

That was where alumni scanned for the names and photos of college friends and news briefs about their career promotions, marriages, engagements, babies, graduations, retirements and even obituaries.

If you’re a Class Notes fan, we want you to know you can find them anytime on PolyLink at www.calpolylink.com. PolyLink is Cal Poly’s free, private social network for alumni, faculty, staff and – starting in September – current seniors.

Even if you’re a native social networker used to lightning-fast thumb-typing and photo sharing, we’d like you to check out the new Class Notes. Posting a class note is a way to reach out to nearly 13,000 Cal Poly Alumni who may not yet be in your social network connections. Consider uploading a class note to PolyLink to highlight your latest career move, mention in the news media, wedding or new baby.

Just published a book? Launched your own furniture or apparel design line? Started your own company – or Web site? Your own PolyLink Personal Page and PolyLink Class Notes are the places to promote it all.

Here are just a few of the Class Notes you can find in PolyLink right now:

**Robert L. Bertini** (B.S. Civil Engineering, 1988) is a full professor in the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering and School of Urban Studies & Planning at Portland State University. He is also the director of the Oregon Transportation Research and Education Consortium (OTREC), a National University Transportation Center that is a partnership between PSU, the University of Oregon, Oregon State University and the Oregon Institute of Technology. Bertini has brought nearly $20 million in external funding to PSU since his arrival in 2000.

**Joshua McGarva** (B.S. Construction Management, 1998) and his Construction Exchange Web made the front page of the Business Section of the Santa Rosa Press Democrat on Nov. 21, 2008. ConstructionExchange.com is a full-featured networking site dedicated to the millions of professionals and companies in construction. When not working on ConstructionExchange.com, McGarva is the vice president of Western Water Construction.

**Brian Hogan** (B.S. English, 1984) has published a book titled “There’s a Sheep in My Bathtub.” It chronicles his family adventures in Outer Mongolia.
Rodney "Rod" Levin (B.S. Architecture, 1958). Rod and Roxanne Levin were married in Paris, France, with their cycling group there to celebrate, and have bicycled many times in Europe and around the U.S. since.

After a full and exciting career in architecture in San Luis Obispo, Rod has pretty much retired, just available now for consultations.

Baby Bonanza: Michelle Shoresman (B.S. Political Science, 2005) and Jonathan Roberts (B.S. Social Science, 2003), Helen Lu (Environmental Engineering, 2002), Kathleen "Kathy" Peters, and Chad and Kristen Roush (Goodwin) have posted class notes announcing new babies (between 2007 and 2009) – complete with baby photos.

Passings: Class Notes contains brief death notices and longer obituaries for 19 alumni from the classes of 1952 through 1997.

In addition to passings noted in PolyLink, there are 94 class notes on careers, 13 on education, four on Engagements & Marriages, four on Births & Adoptions and 27 ‘Other’ kinds of class notes.

Submit one yourself! If you can send an e-mail, you can create your own class note. Click here to go to the Class Notes section on PolyLink (login & password required).

Not a PolyLink alum yet? It’s free! Click here to confirm your identity and get your first time PolyLink User ID code.

Social Networking: Find Us, Fan Us on Facebook & LinkedIn

Alumni: Not ready for PolyLink yet? We'll go where you are -- Find us and fan us on Facebook (4,700+ Mustang alumni fans and growing).

Business-only is your style? Be sure to join Cal Poly alumni on LinkedIn.
Schedule San Luis Obispo, Europe with Alumni

Come back to Campus for Homecoming 2009 October 16-18

Want to spend a fall weekend in San Luis Obispo? Take advantage of Cal Poly’s Homecoming Weekend, Oct. 16-18, when you can tour campus, attend Cal Poly athletics events, meet up with classmates and friends, and enjoy Cal Poly’s annual Culturefest.

No matter how long it’s been since your last campus visit, a tour is a great way to reconnect. Each weekday during the school year, Poly Reps university ambassadors provide a great overview of current campus activities and life at Cal Poly from a student perspective. Tours leave from the University Union Information Desk at 11:10 a.m., Monday through Friday.

Cal Poly alumni, families and friends can enjoy traditional Homecoming activities on Saturday, Oct. 17, at the Mustang Corral Tailgate BBQ and CPAA Wine Tasting on the O’Neill Green, followed by the Homecoming football game in which the Cal Poly Mustangs face South Dakota State. The game begins at 6 p.m. in Spanos Stadium.

Additional Homecoming activities include the Grand Reunion for graduates of 1959 and earlier, the Honored Alumni Banquet and additional athletics events.

Finally, families and alumni can enjoy Culturefest in downtown Mission Plaza on Sunday, Oct. 18. The event is a collaborative public festival organized by the Cal Poly Multicultural Center and student cultural clubs. This community-building festival includes many performances, lots of food and other activities.

For the latest information on Homecoming, visit the Homecoming Web site at www.homecoming.calpoly.edu. Tickets for events will go on sale in late summer.

Enjoy History, Culture, Architecture and More with Cal Poly Travel

Alumni families at the Tailgate BBQ in 2007

Photo by Teresa Hendrix
If you like to learn about local history, architecture and culture when you travel, consider the Cal Poly Alumni Association Travel Program.

The trips offered are not standard sightseeing outings with views from a bus window. They’re up-close and personal educational trips.

Participants learn about local customs and traditions, visit historic landmarks and attend cultural performances. Travel for 2010 includes Ukraine, a country steeped in tradition and cultural richness, and Italy’s Amalfi Coast, nicknamed the “The Divine Coast.”

Ukraine, June 11-23, 2010 - Located at a crossroads between Europe and Asia, Ukraine is the second largest country in Europe. In the 11th century, Kiev in the Ukraine was the biggest city in Europe, with a population of 50,000 that eclipsed London’s 20,000. Travelers will explore Kiev and the fascinating Caves Monastery, see a Cossack horse show, discover seaside Sevastopol, and visit the regal Black Sea resort of Yalta. Travelers embark on an 11-day, 10-night cruise aboard the exclusive charter MS Dnieper Princess that explores Ukraine’s Dnieper River.

Italy, Sept. 29-Oct. 7, 2010 - Italy’s Amalfi Coast is home to cliff-top villages, ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii, and Campania. Travelers will enjoy seven nights in Amalfi at the Grand Hotel Excelsior, with excursions to Pompeii, a boat trip to the Isle of Capri, and a cruise along the coast to Positano. Other highlights include visits to a local farm where mozzarella cheese is produced from the milk of indigenous buffalo and to the World War II landing beach of Salerno.

For more details visit the Cal Poly Alumni Association Travel Web page.

For more on the Cal Poly Alumni Association, log on to www.alumni.calpoly.edu or call the association at 1-888-CAL-POLY.

Complete the survey by July 10 and you will automatically be entered in a drawing for one of four $25 gift cards good for Cal Poly Gear on the El Corral Web site. Take the survey now.
University News – Summer 2009

Prof Helps Restore Factory in Iraq

Hany Khalil, a professor of food science at Cal Poly, will spend his summer in Balad, Iraq, helping rebuild a business. He will work with the Inma Agribusiness Project, helping restore the Balad Canning Factory, 65 kilometers north of Baghdad, to its pre-war operational status and expand the market for the company’s products.

More on Hany Khalil

Cal Poly and UCSB Join Forces on Engineering Center

Cal Poly and UC Santa Barbara engineering programs are joining forces, linking a prominent undergraduate curriculum with a highly-ranked graduate research institution to expand opportunities for students and faculty. The universities have founded the Center for Collaborative Engineering Research and Education, allowing Cal Poly engineering students access to greater research opportunities, according to Cal Poly Engineering Dean Mohammad Noori. "This center extends the partnership between Cal Poly and UCSB to a new level of national eminence, the first research center of its type between a UC and CSU campus," Noori said.

More on the Center for Collaborative Engineering Research and Education

Architecture Student Wins National Livability Award

Architecture student John Vierra won first place in the 2009 Livable Communities Student Design Competition. Participants were asked to design community space that enhanced the lives of senior residents by providing access to services, multiple transportation options and venues for social engagement as well as safe, accessible and affordable housing.

More on Vierra’s winning design

PBS ‘History Detectives’ Features Cal Poly

An episode of the PBS show “History Detectives” that was filmed at Cal Poly in March will air July 27. Check your local listings for times. For the episode, the show’s investigators try to determine if a piece of metal brought to them by a San Jose man is – as the man’s grandfather told him – a part of the landing gear from a plane crashed by aviatrix Amelia Earhart in Hawaii before embarking on the attempted round-the-world flight during which she disappeared. The show sought Cal Poly’s help in testing the metal to determine whether it was the same type known to have been used in Earhart’s plane.

More on the History Detectives episode

Cal Poly Establishes Working Relationship with Food Science Australia

Cal Poly’s Dairy Products Technology Center has signed an agreement to work with Food Science Australia, Australia’s leading food, health and nutrition research organization. Cal Poly and the Australian agency will host student and staff exchanges and work together on research, grant applications, subcontracting and workshops. "This is consistent with our efforts to reach out to the world and to provide Cal Poly students and staff with more global experiences and perspectives," said Phil Tong, director of the Dairy Products Technology Center.

More on Cal Poly’s Food Science Australia agreement

Cal Poly Journalism Student Named a Top Collegiate Journalist

Cal Poly student Lauren Rabaino was named one of the nation’s top journalism students in the 2009 Student National Press Foundation’s Top 10 Collegiate Journalists. Rabaino, a junior at Cal Poly School of Journalism, was named one of 10 “Best of the Best” journalists nationwide.

More on Lauren Rabaino's award
UWIRE, a college student media organization. She was recognized for implementing innovative platforms while excelling in traditional journalism. Rabaino was selected from more than 825 nominations from more than 135 schools. As online editor for Cal Poly’s Mustang Daily, Rabaino led a team that earned Online Pacemaker Finalist for 2009 in the Associated Collegiate Press competition – considered the highest national award for online college journalism.  
More on Rabaino’s honor

**Interdisciplinary Team Wins Low-Income Housing Challenge**

An interdisciplinary team of Cal Poly students took first place in Bank of America’s Low-Income Housing Challenge. The team partnered with People’s Self Help Housing to create a physical and financial proposal for an 80-unit farm-worker housing development near Santa Maria. Team members included nine students working toward bachelor's degrees in architecture, business, city and regional planning, construction management, and landscape architecture, and three graduate students in city and regional planning and industrial technology.

More on the team's winning entry

**Take the Cal Poly Magazine Reader Survey and You May Win a $25 Gift Card**

Help us plan future editions of Cal Poly magazine: Take our Summer '09 Reader Survey. Complete the survey by **July 10** and you will automatically be entered in a drawing for one of four $25 gift cards good for Cal Poly Gear on the El Corral Web site.

Take the survey now

**PASSINGS**

**ART ROSEN** – Physics Professor Art Rosen died Saturday, May 9, at age 89. Rosen began teaching in the Physics Department in 1953. He retired in 1993 but remained active with his research as a volunteer employee until 2007. During his years at Cal Poly, he developed and taught a variety of courses including reactor physics and quantum physics. He was director of the Radio-Analytical Facility and supervised numerous student projects.

**ROBERT WILLIAM WALTERS** – Robert William Walters, former Student Affairs administrator, died May 2. He was 70. Walters came to San Luis Obispo in 1970 and spent the next 30 years at Cal Poly, primarily as assistant director of Student Affairs. He helped shape the university’s Week of Welcome student orientation program, which has become a model for other universities around the nation.

**DANNY GANS** – Former Cal Poly baseball player Danny Gans, named "Las Vegas Entertainer of the Year" for 11 consecutive years, died May 1. He was 52. Gans billed himself as a "musical impressionist" who delighted audiences with his takes on legendary entertainers. Gans played on the Mustang baseball team from 1976 to 1978 while studying kinesiology at Cal Poly. An injury ended his pursuit of a professional baseball career before he hit the big leagues but led him to success in Vegas.

**RICHARD J. O’NEILL** – Richard J. O’Neill, a prominent landowner and Democratic Party activist who helped transform the landscape of Orange County by developing his family's vast Rancho Mission Viejo, died April 4. He was 85. O’Neill was a longtime supporter of Cal Poly and Cal Poly Athletics. A portion of the rolling lawns on campus overlooking the football stadium are named The O’Neill Green in his honor. After graduating from high school, O’Neill enrolled at Cal Poly where he studied animal husbandry in preparation for taking over the business at the family ranch.
Inside this edition:

- Note from the Editors
- 2009 Grads: Ready to Work
- Winds of Change
- Detoxing Arsenic
- Protectors of the Land
- Hotshots: This Choirboy Packs a Punch
- Playground Rebuilt to Honor Professor
- Class Notes Now on PolyLink
- Alumni Action: Come Home or Go Far
- University News
- Get Involved
- What's Wrong with This Picture?

Reader Survey

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Get Involved at Cal Poly - Here's How

Every great university benefits from the involvement of its alumni and friends. Cal Poly greatly values your support, and we hope the following opportunities allow you to identify ways to become engaged that are personally meaningful to you.

Volunteer

Mentor a student or young alumni

Sign up for PolyLink, the online community for campus and alumni. Log in, check the "willing to mentor" box on your PolyLink Personal Info Page, and list your work e-mail. You'll automatically be placed in the PolyLink mentor database.

If you're already part of PolyLink, click here to add mentoring to your Personal Page (login required). If not, click here for your first-time PolyLink ID code.

Post jobs and internships for students and alumni in PolyLink, MustangJobs

Cal Poly alumni can post job openings and search for job openings for free in the PolyLink and Mustang Jobs networks. PolyLink is a free, private online community for alumni, faculty, staff and - coming in fall 2009 - current seniors. Mustang Jobs is a private network for current Cal Poly students run by the Cal Poly Career Services Office (alumni have free access to Mustang Jobs too!)

If you're already a member of PolyLink, click here to log in and post job openings or search for jobs on the PolyLink Job Boards (login required).

Visit the Career Services Web at www.careerservices.calpoly.edu to find out about posting job, co-op and internship openings for free on Mustang Jobs.

Join a Cal Poly group

Parents Philanthropy Council
Student Philanthropy Council
CENG Connect for engineering alumni
Parent Ambassador Program: Parents helping parents

Participate

PolyLink - Join the free, private social and career networking Web site exclusively for campus and alumni at http://www.calpolylink.com

Attend alumni events - Network at real-time Cal Poly Alumni Association events and other alumni events on campus and in your area. Check the Alumni Events Calendar anytime for dates, places and times.

Travel to fabulous destinations with other Mustangs through the CPAA Alumni Travel program

Join the Cal Poly Parent Program - see www.parent.calpoly.edu
Take a class - Take advantage of personal and professional development programs offered by Cal Poly Continuing Education

Attend a lecture or performance on campus. Check the Events & Entertainment calendar anytime

Attend athletic events - find out more on the Cal Poly Athletics Web, www.gopoly.com

Stay Informed

Read Cal Poly Update, the monthly e-newsletter for alumni and friends. Browse the Update Archives anytime, and be sure to subscribe.

Become a Fan of Cal Poly on Facebook - www.facebook.com/calpolyalumni
Get RSS: Sign up for daily automatic Cal Poly News feeds. The "RSS" feeds are automatically downloaded to your computer or your e-mail and can be viewed in Internet Explorer, Firefox and other programs. Get the daily Cal Poly News feed (RSS).

Become a Cal Poly Advocate. You'll get e-mail information on important legislative issues affecting Cal Poly and/or the CSU, and we'll ask you to let your elected officials know you support Cal Poly.

Donate

Make a Donation on the Cal Poly Giving Web site, and bookmark www.giving.calpoly.edu.

Your support is important, now more than ever.
What's Wrong With This Picture?

There's something terribly wrong with this photo, which we ran in the last issue of Cal Poly Magazine.

\[
\log_a (AB) = \log_a A + \log_a B \\
\log_a (A/B) = \log_a A - \log_a B \\
\log_a (A^n) = n \log_a A
\]

So what's the problem? You tell us!

Then click here for the full story -- and the corrected equation.