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Contact: Sandra Ogren
University Advancement
(805) 756-1445


SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Cal Poly is proud to present a public lecture by two dynamic speakers: Sidney Harman, the man credited with building the entire high-fidelity audio industry and for whom Sidney Harman Hall is named, and U.S. Rep. Jane Harman, (D-36th District-Venice, CA), the ranking Democrat on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and a member of the Homeland Security Committee. Their visit to San Luis Obispo comes as the Performing Arts Center’s Christopher Cohan Center nears the 10th anniversary of its September 1996 opening.

The couple will be on campus Monday, Feb. 20, to present “Observations on Governance, Arts, Business and Technology” and to answer questions from the audience. The free public presentation will be at 9 a.m. in Harman Hall with refreshments at 8:30 a.m.

Sidney Harman, who is equally immersed in the competitive world of business and the cultural world of the arts, will talk about the intersection of art, technology and business. His keen interest in and appreciation for this subject led him to support an artist-in-residence program at a business school in New York City. He is also involved in the funding and design of a new performing arts center in Washington, D.C.

Rep. Harman, first elected in 1992, is a leading Congressional expert on terrorism, homeland security, intelligence and foreign affairs. In her Feb. 20 talk, she will focus on these critical issues.

In 1953 Sidney Harman co-founded Harman International and currently serves as its executive chairman. During his half a century in industry, he has earned a reputation for delivering superior products that he staunchly stands behind.

His company was the first to develop the integrated stereo receiver and has been making the finest home-entertainment and professional hi-fi systems in the world for 50 years. His company is the leading supplier to the automakers, worldwide, of branded music systems, digital navigation and information systems. Harman’s brands include Harman Kardon, JBL, Infinity and Mark Levinson.

Sidney Harman is the author of the bestselling book “Mind Your Own Business, A Maverick’s Guide to Business, Leadership and Life.” The book explains his philosophy that “leaders must inspire others … by creating a culture of personal responsibility and a serious emotional connection to their company …”

Sidney Harman received the EIA Medal of Honor in 2002. He sits on the board of the Aspen Institute, a global forum for leveraging the power of leaders to improve the human
condition, and the Carter Center, a nonprofit social-change organization.

Congresswoman Harman left the House in 1998 to run for governor of California, and while out of office, served as a Regent’s Professor at UCLA, teaching public policy and international relations. She won back her seat in 2000 to represent her South Bay district.

Prior to her election to Congress, Harman worked as an attorney, served as special counsel to the Department of Defense and as deputy secretary to the Cabinet in the Carter White House. Harman began her career on Capitol Hill as chief counsel and staff director for the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights.

She has frequently appeared on national news programs, including the “Today Show,” “Meet The Press,” “Face the Nation,” CNN's “American Morning,” “Late Edition,” “Larry King Live,” and “Fox News Sunday.” Her commentaries and opinion pieces have appeared in numerous newspapers throughout the country, including the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times and the San Francisco Chronicle.

Harman Hall, the main concert hall in the Christopher Cohan Center, is named for Sidney Harman in recognition of a 1996 gift from Harman International to equip the new concert hall with professional sound equipment.

For more information on the Harmans’ visit, please contact Sandra Ogren, vice president for university advancement, at 756-1445.

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