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Cal Poly Professor Emeritus to Receive 2009 Accounting Exemplar Award

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly Professor Emeritus Mary Beth Armstrong will receive the Accounting Exemplar Award for 2009 on Aug. 2 at a luncheon for the annual Public Interest Section Ethics Symposium. The luncheon precedes the annual American Accounting Association meeting, which takes place in New York.

The Public Interest Section Accounting Exemplar Award is given to either an accounting educator or an accounting practitioner who has made notable contributions to professionalism and ethics in accounting education and/or practice, by serving as a role model and/or by making significant contributions to the profession in a manner which serves the public interest.

Armstrong, a certified public accountant, received a bachelor's degree in accounting in 1968 from the University of Nevada, Reno. She completed her master's in business administration at California State Polytechnic University Pomona in 1976, and a doctorate in business administration at University of Southern California in 1984.

Armstrong began her career at Cal Poly in 1984 as an associate professor in the College of Business. She has held the titles of professor, associate dean, department head and professor emeritus.

Prior to coming to Cal Poly, Armstrong held positions in the accounting industry as a bookkeeper, tax preparer, auditor and consultant. She taught fourth grade from 1964-68 at St. Michael's Catholic School in Livermore, Calif., and she taught accounting at University of La Verne and USC.

Previous winners of the Accounting Exemplar Award include Charles Bowsher, former Comptroller General of the U.S., who led the Government Accountability Office in addressing the savings and loan crisis; Arthur Levitt, the 25th and longest-serving chairman of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission; Cynthia Cooper, former vice president of Internal Audit at WorldCom, who, in 2002, led the effort to uncover the largest accounting fraud in U.S. history; and other notable individuals.

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