Cal Poly Floral Team Repeats as National Judging Champs

SAN LUIS OBISPO – For the third year in a row the Cal Poly flower judging team has returned as the winner from the national competition, besting 10 teams at the 63rd National Intercollegiate Floral Crop Quality Evaluation and Design Contest.

The contest was held at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colo., March 31-April 2.

Out of a possible 8100 points, Cal Poly scored 7101 -- 50 points ahead of the second place team, University of Wisconsin-River Falls, said team coach and Horticulture Professor Virginia Walter.

“Placing first for three years in a row means Cal Poly is tied with two other universities for the national record for consecutive victories,” said Walter. “Next year’s contest will be at the University of Illinois, and a fresh group of Cal Poly students will be trying to break that record.”

Cal Poly, Ohio State University, and University of Wisconsin-River Falls have each had three victories in a row. “This is a remarkable accomplishment as students are only allowed to be on a judging team once. Unlike athletic teams, we cannot build up veterans to judge year after year,” Walter explained.

At the nationals in Colorado, Cal Poly team members also took top individual awards. Jon-Paul Williams, a senior from San Diego, was named the top overall judge with a 91.04 percent score. Brian Henriott, a junior from Danville, was second overall with an 89.67 percent score. The third team member was Jennifer Hart, a junior from Port Huenene, and the alternate was Cecilia Carreno from Lompoc. Henriott also placed second overall in cut-flower judging.

Students on the team also competed in floral design categories, and Hart placed second in the Designer’s Choice class. Williams placed fourth and Henriott third in their respective amateur floral design categories.

In addition to coach Walter, Christina Brim, a senior from Fortuna,
traveled with the team as the student assistant coach.

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