



News & Events

University News & Information

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California

Dec. 1, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Stacia Momburg
805-756-6260

Cal Poly Mid-Year Commencement Set for Dec. 12

SAN LUIS OBISPO – On Saturday, Dec. 12, nearly 600 Cal Poly students are expected to graduate in three ceremonies at the university's annual Fall Commencement.

Students from the Orfalea College of Business and the College of Engineering will graduate in a 9 a.m. ceremony. Students from the College of Liberal Arts and College of Architecture and Environmental Design will graduate in a 1 p.m. ceremony. And students from the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences and the College of Science and Mathematics will graduate in the last ceremony of the afternoon, at 4 p.m. All ceremonies will be held in Mott Gym.

William Harris is keynote speaker at the 9 a.m. ceremony. Harris, the president and CEO of the Science Foundation of Arizona (SFAz), is responsible for the initiation of a new public-private partnership to help the state of Arizona transform its focus on research and education.

Prior to joining SFAz, Harris served as director general of Science Foundation Ireland. During his tenure, SFI facilitated tremendous growth in Ireland's R&D sector. Before going to Ireland, Harris was vice president for research and taught chemistry at the University of South Carolina.

He was the founding president and executive director of Biosphere 2 Center and the associate director of the Earth Institute, both at Columbia University. He served at the National Science Foundation from 1978 to 1996 and has taught chemistry at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina. He currently serves on the Dean's Advisory Council for Cal Poly's College of Engineering.

Harris graduated from the College of William and Mary with a bachelor's in chemistry and he received his doctorate in chemistry from the University of South Carolina.

The keynote speaker at the 1 p.m. ceremony is Peter B. Wiley. Wiley is chairman of the board of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. He has served on the board for 25 years.

Wiley has worked as a magazine and news service editor, journalist and newspaper columnist. His writings have appeared in dozens of newspapers and magazine. Wiley is the author of five books, which variously focus on the American West and the Pacific Basin.

He is the founding member of the university's Kennedy Library Leadership Council, assisting the Kennedy Library in its mission to provide unparalleled library and information services to the students and faculty of Cal Poly. Wiley also serves on the boards of directors of the University of California Press, the Bay Area Chapter of the National Association of Corporate Directors and the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library.

He received his bachelor's degree in English literature from Williams College and his master's in United States history at the University of Wisconsin.

The keynote speaker at the 4 p.m. ceremony is Anne Marie Bergen, district science teacher and coordinator for Oakdale Joint Unified School District.

Currently the leader of the Oakdale Joint Unified School District science program, Bergen discovered the natural connection students have to experiential learning when she was leading hiking classes for sixth-grade students and their teachers as an intern at Sonora's Foothill Horizons Outdoor School.

She went on to become head naturalist at Foothill Horizons and later performed a variety of roles in Oakdale school, including GATE (gifted and talented education) teacher/coordinator, district science specialist and district science fair coordinator.

Bergen has been the recipient of numerous awards including California Teacher of the Year in 2003 and Cal Poly Honored Alumna for the college of Science and Mathematics in 2008. She provides important leadership in science education and currently serves as chair for the California Teacher Advisory Council (CaTAC) a branch of the California Council on Science and Technology (CCST).

Bergen received her bachelor's degree in biological science in 1985 from Cal Poly.

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