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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cal Poly Summer Reading Series to Feature Four Distinguished Poets June 21 and July 22

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Four distinguished poets will headline the annual reading series sponsored by the Cal Poly English Department's creative writing program

Cal Poly alumna, poet and singer Ephraim Sommers and Nebraska poet Jim Reese will read their original poetry Tuesday, June 21.

Cal Poly English professor and poet David Kann and his daughter, poet Rachel Kann, will present their poems Friday, July 22.

Both readings will take place at 7 p.m. in Room 123 in the Ag Engineering Building (No. 8) at the Cal Poly.

Sommers, an Atascadero native, is an accomplished singer and poet who graduated in 2006 with bachelor's degrees in English and political science and went on to earn a master of fine arts in creative writing from San Diego State.

"Local fans of the band Siko will remember Ephraim's alternative/soul singing style," said poetry-writing Professor Kevin Clark. "When he was at Cal Poly, his poems kept us on edge and in suspense. They're brilliant explorations of the human psyche at moments of intense personal crisis."

Reese, author of the well-received volume "ghost on 3rd," teaches at Mount Marty College in Yankton, S.D., where he is director of the Great Plains Writers' Tour and editor-in-chief of the national journal Paddlefish.

"Jim Reese catches the dying fire of the small town wasteland that staggers on with meth, desire and neglect," wrote Charles Bowden, author of "Murder City."

Added Clark: "His work is also surprisingly funny. When I heard him read last year, the audience was highly entertained, and I knew I wanted to bring him to Cal Poly."

With a doctorate from Occidental College, David Kann is an expert in virtually two centuries of American literature. A former chair of Cal Poly's English Department, he is finishing a master of fine arts in poetry writing from Vermont College, one of the nation's leading poetry programs.

Rachel Kann is a performance poet who brings dramatic inflection to her readings. She has appeared in HBO's "Def Poetry Jam,"

BET's "The Way We Do It," and ABC's "Eye On L.A." Backstage Magazine wrote that "veteran poetry slammer Rachel Kann has a knack for punching lines into our guts as our pierced narrator of sorts. She's like a one-woman Greek chorus."

Given David Kann's gutsy, high-velocity lyrics and Rachel Kann's go-for-broke presentation, Clark said, this will be a can't-miss father-and-daughter show.

Each summer WriterSpeak, the visiting authors' arm of the English Department and the College of Liberal Arts, puts on two readings, each featuring two readers. A brief question-and-answer session follows each reading.

For more information, contact Clark at 805-756-2506 or kclark@calpoly.edu.

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