



February 22, 2012

Contact: Amy Hewes

805-756-6402; ahewes@calpoly.edu

Cal Poly Honored by White House as a Top School to Retain and Graduate Engineering Students

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Cal Poly was honored by President Barack Obama as a leading school in the retention and graduation of engineering students.

Engineering Dean Debra Larson represented Cal Poly at the Feb. 8 event held at the White House. She was one of roughly 40 engineering deans whose colleges do well in student retention, as determined by the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE).

"It was an honor to participate in this special occasion, and it affirms Cal Poly Engineering's strong commitment to retaining and graduating more globally competitive students in the engineering field," said Larson.

Also on hand were Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, Secretary of Energy Steven Chu, and other senior White House and National Science Foundation officials.

In his greeting to the engineering deans, President Obama pledged to "use the bully pulpit to emphasize how important your work is" and assured that "everyone in this administration is four-square behind you," the ASEE reported.

While overall college-graduation levels have grown by nearly 50 percent over the past two decades, the annual number of engineering graduates has virtually stagnated at around 120,000.

This spring, a partnership of academia and the entertainment industry and other private sectors companies will launch a national campaign, "Engineering – Stay With It." The campaign will focus on accelerating engineering experiences, providing encouragement, increasing the prestige of engineering and helping students graduate with engineering degrees.

"America has always been about innovation," as well as scientific inquiry, the president said, and has "an incredible diversity of talent out there waiting to be tapped." He said that "for every Steve Jobs we need 10,000 others."

###

E-newsletter

Giving to Cal Poly

California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

polynews [at] calpoly.edu