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Cal Poly Students Succeed at Statewide Research Competition

SAN LUIS OBISPO – One Cal Poly student won first place and three others won second-place awards in annual California State University research competition.

Each spring more than 200 students representing the 23 campuses in the California State University system gather to present the results of their original research, scholarship and creative work to panels of judges.

A team of 13 students represented Cal Poly at the 26th annual competition held May 4-5 at Cal State Long Beach. Their projects included a study on ice cream as a protective medium for consumption of health-promoting bacteria, research on complex chemical reactions designed to synthesize improved medications, and an investigation on the use of geosynthetic clay liners to prevent environmental contamination arising from landfills.

Cal Poly's four winners were:

- Anna Clauson, an undergraduate student from Altadena, received a second-place award for her project in which she studied native menarche ceremonies to further understand urbanization and social change in Fiji.
- Marcus Foley, a graduate student from Bakersfield, won first place for his work using sandblasting to optimize cell and tissue interactions with implanted medical devices.
- Rachel Gohres, an undergraduate student from Murrieta, took second place for her analysis of how protein coatings affect endothelial cell adhesion in an effort to improve implanted vascular devices.
- Kevin Schilling, an undergraduate student from Los Angeles, received a second-place award for his work using laser printing to produce paper-based devices to diagnose disease in areas without access to clinical laboratories.

Also representing Cal Poly were computer science students Eriq Augustine, Cailin Cushing and Matt Tognetti; chemistry students Sam Mann and Megan Hill; biochemistry students William Grau and Vanessa Hancock; civil and environmental engineering student Gregory Olsen; and dairy science student Jenifer Tharani.

Participants are first nominated by their respective colleges and then selected in a preliminary competition at Cal Poly. Final competitors submitted written papers and made oral presentations to juries of experts.

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