Surfer Magazine has Cal Poly on the list of the top 10 surf spots in the U.S. in an article published this month. The magazine cited the wine and viticulture major offered here as one of the reasons Cal Poly is a prime place for surfers "wanting to major in booze.”

However, Mike Ion, a mathematics sophomore, said he did not agree with the description the magazine presented of surfers as slackers. "I don't think that it's a logical implication," Ion said. "Cal Poly is a difficult school, and I think it's stereotyping surfers to be a party crowd." Other student surfers, such as Matt Ininnis, an architecture junior and member of the Cal Poly surf team, agree with Ion. "I was kind of pissed because it seemed to me like they were trying to make a joke about Cal Poly being a party school," Ininnis said. "Every year we make it on this list, but a comment seems to be made about our academics being lesser, and that's not true.

However, other surfers such as biomedical engineering senior Stevie Giacomazzi, are not fazed by the association. "I mean, it is kind of funny to me," Giacomazzi said. "I don't find the water to be too cold, and the surf is not as crowded at Cal Poly as at other top surfing spots. "Cal Poly is more of a top spot because there are so many breaks with literally no guys out there," Ion said. "We definitely have cold water here, that's why it's not as crowded (but) I kind of like it because it means less people."

Though the water can be in the low 50s, many surfers do not mind the lower temperatures. "I would sacrifice cold water for no crowds any day," Ion said. Mike Stone, a mechanical engineering senior, said the best thing about surfing at Cal Poly is that it is generally not crowded. "Within a 20-minute drive there are lots and lots of spots to surf that are kind of hidden," Stone said. "Whereas at other places there are a lot more points and breaks that are well known, so that could be why they are more crowded."

Stone contrasted Cal Poly with the University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB), the university chosen as the "see signs everywhere — all around campus there are shirts, different ideas and ways of promoting themselves."

I see signs everywhere — all around campus there are shirts, different ideas and ways of promoting themselves.

— Anthony Leonard Biomedical senior

ASl presidential campaigning underway

Karlee Prazak karleeprazak90@gmail.com

The University Union (UU) Plaza is filled with campaign booths and presidential propaganda while students around campus support their presidential choice by wearing candidates' T-shirts. The countdown to the Thursday announcement of the new Associated Student Inc. (ASI) president has begun.

"I see signs everywhere — all around campus there are shirts, different ideas and ways of promoting themselves."

Karlee Prazak

KARLEEPRA/AK. M O ^ :: MA

The University Union (UU) Plaza is filled with campaign booths and presidential propaganda while students around campus support their presidential choice by wearing candidates' T-shirts. The countdown to the Thursday announcement of the new Associated Student Inc. (ASI) president has begun.

Last year, at this point in the campaign, Cal Poly students saw the two presidential hopefuls dwindle down to one. This year, the two candidates, Kiyana Tabrizi and Daniel Galvan, started actively campaigning April 17, and both are still in the running.

Kinesiology senior Anthony Leonard said both candidates have made their presence well-known around campus and are promoting themselves well.

"I see signs everywhere — all around campus there are shirts, different ideas and ways of promoting themselves."
I represent the regular students, and I feel that I could sit down and have lunch with the majority of the students over (Galanys).

— Kiyana Tabrizi
ASI presidential candidate

"A lot of problems and concerns have been brought to my attention (while serving on both), and that is what has led me to run for ASI president," Galvan said. "It is to represent and address those concerns and develop a platform that reflects those concerns of the students.

Galvan said these connections with Student Life and Leadership and ASI student government, as well as his definitive platform, are what set him apart from Tabrizi.

"With myself, having a platform is so that students can hold me accountable during my term and at the end of my term," Galvan said. "If I didn't have a platform, what would they hold me accountable for? This isn't a check list, this is more of a backbone for what is to come next year, and to open up the doors for many more programs for students and things like that."

Galvan's platform includes focusing on improving sustainability on campus, promoting diversity and creating a more transparent student government with representation on three levels — in the university, community and statewide — or as he calls it, advocacy.

"I'm not going to say I have all the answers to all the questions, but I am going to try my best and do my work in representing all Cal Poly students," Galvan said.

I'm not going to say I have all the answers, but I am going to try my best and do my work in representing all Cal Poly students.

— Daniel Galvan
ASI presidential candidate

This tangible, hands-on approach is what sociology senior and Galvan's campaign manager, Michelle Fox, said Fox said students can see Galvan at his campaign booth daily answering questions and handing out stickers, which follows suit with his promoting sustainability (by not having trash from candy or other handouts) and healthy lifestyles.

"I think the biggest thing is that I know what he says, and his platform is something he strongly believes in," Fox said.

Fox said it is important for students to be informed about the voting process and encourages students to learn more about both candidates before they vote.

"It is important just to know who you are voting for because it will affect who you are at Cal Poly, and your future here," she said. "Making an informed decision, whether it be for (Galvan) or (Tabrizi), is important."
Surfing

continued from page 1

best overall school for surfing, when he said UCSB is a lot more crowded and always packed.

"The wave quality is really good there though," Stone said. "It is definitely not always as easy to find the high quality waves here."

As for "sharky" waters, Giacomazzi said there is a bit of truth to the rumors. He has seen sharks a few times while out in the water on the Central Coast.

"I've never been circled or anything like that, but it definitely adds character to the surf," he said. "Compared to the SoCal beaches that are a lot more popular, these beaches are more untouched and natural, so the habitats of many of the animals including sharks are untouched."

Though many Cal Poly surfers said they agreed that when there is a swell UCSB is the best place to surf in California, surfing at Cal Poly is a different experience.

"It's just you and nature," Giacomazzi said. "Surfing at Cal Poly it's like natural surfing — it's just you and nature," Giacomazzi said.

Some of the other perks of attending Cal Poly listed in the article include surfboard-shaping classes and a "hip" downtown scene, as well as being good for parrying and "hanging out with tons of girls."

However, for most of the surfers here, it was not the wine, girls or parties that convinced them to attend Cal Poly.

"The surf is what definitely influenced me in choosing (Cal Poly) as a school," Ininns said. "It's more of a challenge here ... It's more work (to find good waves), but once you find them, there's more (of a) reward."
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**TUESDAY TUNES**

What are you listening to?

- “In The Morning” by J. Cole
  — David Singh, biological sciences freshman
- “Obviously” by McFly
  — Melinda Wiles, mathematics junior
- “Spy Hunter” by Project 86
  — David Guernier, business administration junior
- “Jammmin’” by Bob Marley
  — Katie Richardson, psychology sophomore
- “Sun” by Daphne Loves Derby
  — Kristina Pfeiffer, biochemistry junior

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The Supreme Court refused on Monday to bypass the lower courts and take up an immediate legal challenge to the constitutionality of the national health care reform law and its requirement that all those who can afford it have medical insurance by 2014.

The announcement concerned only the timing of a decision on the health care law and said nothing about how the court may finally rule. The justices rarely skip over the lower courts before taking up a constitutional question and have said they will do so only if a case is of such "imperative public importance" as to "require immediate determination" by the high court.

The justices without giving any comment turned down an appeal from Virginia's attorney general, who insisted the Affordable Care Act has "roiled America" and left employers and citizens "mired in uncertainty." As to "require immediate determination" by the high court.

The justices without giving any comment turned down an appeal from Virginia's attorney general, who insisted the Affordable Care Act has "roiled America" and left employers and citizens "mired in uncertainty." The court's brief order apparently spoke for all the Supreme Court justices, since there was no indication that Justice Elena Kagan had recused herself. Some conservative activists have suggested that Kagan should not take part in the health care case since she served as solicitor general before joining the court.

The attorneys general from more than half the states, nearly all of them Republican, filed lawsuits contending the mandate for individuals to have health insurance exceeded Congress's power to regulate commerce. The main lawsuit was filed in Pensacola, Fla.

But on the day President Obama signed the health-care bill into law, Kenneth Cuccinelli, Virginia's attorney general, filed a separate suit in Richmond.

He won before a federal district judge who declared the mandate to be unconstitutional. The Obama administration, as expected, filed an appeal and the case is to be heard by the U.S. 4th Circuit Court of Appeals on May 10.

A judge in Florida also declared the law unconstitutional, and an appeal of that decision will be heard by the U.S. 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta. Usually, the losing side appeals, but Cuccinelli nonetheless petitioned the Supreme Court to take up his case before the 4th Circuit Court could rule.

Obama administration lawyers used the opportunity to set out a lengthy defense of the health care law. They said the market for healthcare services is quite unusual. The need for medical care is "essentially universal... Nearly everyone will require health services at some point in his or her lifetime," but the need for "expensive medical care is unpredictable. Federal law requires hospitals to provide emergency care for those in need, and in 2008, health care providers had to pay $4.5 billion to cover the cost of those who could not pay. The administration argues that the requirement to have health insurance will spread the costs to all those who can afford to pay.

The administration's lawyers also argued that Virginia had no standing to sue because the health care mandate applies to individuals, not the state.
Satisfy the heart with the sustainable sablefish

The ways to prepare and enjoy sablefish are just about as numerous and versatile as the many names of this fish. The sablefish is actually not part of the cod family at all. Instead, the black cod is part of the Anoplopomatidae family. The sablefish is rich in healthy long-chain omega 3 fatty acids, both eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) — approximately as much EPA and DHA as the seafood superstar wild salmon. Numerous studies on many fish, including sablefish, have been linked to many studies that indicate the consumption of these fatty acids can work to lower the risk of heart disease.

Researchers have found that atherosclerosis, the damage in the blood vessels that causes heart disease and stroke, is caused by inflammation in the arterial walls, and omega 3 fatty acids are known to combat this damage directly as they work as natural anti-inflammatory agents.

The sablefish's naturally high oil content gives it an exceptional flavorful, succulent texture and makes it undeniably tasty. It even gives it rights to another nickname: butterfish. However, be careful with this nickname as another fish, escolar or Hawaiian walu, is often marketed under this name as well. Mislabeling these two fish can lead to some unwanted and embarrassing consequences. Although escolar is sometimes advertised by the same alluring name as black cod "butterfish," it is not the same fish or quality of fish at all.

Escolar butterfish typically causes frequent trips to the restroom, an uncontrollable orange leakage and well... need I say more? Don't be alarmed about these undesirable characteristics. Escolar butterfish typically causes frequent trips to the restroom, an uncontrollable orange leakage and well... need I say more? Don't be alarmed though; these undesirable characteristics are not caused by black cod but by the same alluring name as black cod "butterfish," it is not the same fish or quality of fish at all.

Escolar butterfish can be purchased in many different forms, including whole, dressed fish, fillets, steaks, frozen or fresh. The many varieties are accompanied by the many cooking methods, including baking, broiling, microwaving, poaching, sautéing, smoking and grilling. So no matter what your cooking experience or flavor preference, this fish makes prep- and eating easier than you ever thought possible.

Easy to cook, good for you and flavorful — what more could this fish offer in order to make it onto your plate? Well, add on good for the environment as well. The Alaskan sablefish was rated the ECO-Best fish by the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF). The fishing methods, bottom longlines, produce very little bycatch and longline habitat. Individual fishing quota systems in place in Alaska allow fishermen to work under safe conditions and obtain fair prices for their catches while maintaining a sustainable and healthy fish population.

Alaska is home to the largest portion of sablefish catches. However, Oregon, Washington and California ocean waters combined typically account for just under one-third of the United States harvest. This third of the catch is marketed as ECO-OK by the EDF.

This week, as you fish your mind for quick and delicious dinner ideas, don't forget the sablefish. It's a hook, line and sinker that is sure to please the crowds.

**HINT:** Next week we celebrate the ______ movement that seeks to offer better prices, decent working conditions and local sustainability to benefit the farmers and workers of developing countries.

**Casan sablefish**

**Ingredients**

1. Fish fillets

2. Salt, pepper

3. Grated onion

**Instructions**

1. Fresh squeezed lemon juice

2. Fresh basil leaves

3. Fresh lemon zest

**Special sablefish with salt and pepper**

Garnish lemon juice and butter and brush on all sides of sablefish. Place fish in baking dish and arrange onion slice over fish, brushes with remaining lemon oil mixture. Bake at 400°F for 10 minutes. Arrange orange slices, oregano, springs of parsley, and lemon on top. Bake five to eight minutes longer, or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork at thickest part.
Zion I and the Grouch to perform during UU Hour

Katelyn Sweigart
KATELYN SWEIGART.K @ GM A.COM

Zion I and the Grouch, a hip-hop group from the Bay Area, will perform in the University Union (UU) Plaza during UU Hour Thursday.

Miss Bullock, Associated Students Inc. (ASI) programs coordinator, said the performers are actually two separate acts in collaboration.

The Grouch, the alias for Corey Scoffern, is a rapper from Oakland, Calif. and a member of the indie rap group Living Legends, which started in the '90s. Zion I is a hip-hop duo, comprised of MC Baba Zumbi and DJ AmpLive. The Grouch collaborated with the duo in 2006 on their album "Heroes of the City of Dope," and both acts came out with a new album in 2011 titled "Heroes in the Healing of the Nation."

"They don't want to be huge; they don't want to have a million views on their YouTube videos. They kind of like having the underground vibe."
— Jacki Iwanski
ASI musical entertainment supervisor

"It's rare for us to be able to bring hip-hop (to Concerts in the Plaza)," Bullock said. "So this is a really great opportunity for students to be involved in a hip-hop scene, if that's what they are into."

Jacki Iwanski, ASI musical entertainment supervisor and business administration senior, said she booked the group because it has "good name recognition" on Cal Poly's campus and a lot of students have already heard of them. Iwanski said she recommends the group to people who like hip-hop or dance music, and said the performance will be fun and upbeat.

According to the event's Facebook page, more than 700 people are planning to attend.

"It's nice because a lot of hip-hop now is huge people, like Jay-Z and Kanye West, and these guys are just as talented, but they're underground," Iwanski said. "They are not quite as well-known, but they're definitely well-known in the area and in California."

Iwanski said she tries to book musicians who come through the area. In this case, Zion I and The Grouch will also perform at SLO Brewing Co. the same day from 8 to 11 p.m.

"They like keeping to a smaller scale," Iwanski said. "They don't want to be huge; they don't want to have a million views on their YouTube videos. They kind of like having the un-

COURTESY PHOTO

Hip-hop group Zion I and the Grouch is a combination of rapper Corey Scoffern and hip-hop duo Zion I. The group will perform during UU Hour Thursday.

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The 2011 Academy of American Poets contest for Cal Poly, sponsored by the English department, is now accepting original poetry submissions in honor of National Poetry Month.

The winning student poet will be awarded $100 and be published in Mockus, an annual publication of the College of Liberal Arts.

The Academy of American Poets is a national organization that promotes poetry. This contest has taken place at Cal Poly since about 1990. Last year, approximately 50 students from a broad range of majors submitted envelopes of work, each containing two to five poems.

English professor Kevin Clark said the winners are often later accepted into significant creative writing programs at the graduate level.

An off-campus, nationally published poet or critic is the judge of the submitted works and remains anonymous until he or she chooses the winning poet.

Clark, who is an award-winning and widely published poet, said this year’s judge is not only off-campus but also resides out of state.

“We do this to guarantee objectivity,” Clark said.

Ensuring the contest is as fair as possible is important for poetry because of the intuitively creative and abstract nature of the process.

English professor James Cushing said, although he cannot speak for other poetry critics, he has never met anyone who violently disagrees with his thoughts on judging poetry.

Cushing was Poet Laureate of San Luis Obispo from 2008 to 2010. He also judged The Tribune’s poetry contest, Byron’s contest, and many others.

“I look for something surprising, so it’s something you can’t define before it surprises you,” Cushing said.

He compared this idea to that of Pulitzer Prize-winning poet James Tate, who once said poetry is the search for the unknown.

“Emily Dickinson famously claimed that she knew she was reading real poetry when she felt as if the ‘top of her head were coming off,’” Cushing wrote in a piece for The Tribune. “I read poetry for a similar reason — the pure pleasure of discovering that the world I live in is richer in beauty and wonder than I thought it was.”

For Cushing, poetry is more meaningful than just words alone.

“I want to read words from a human being who is being human, so that I may become more fully human,” he said.

“My advice is to read as much poetry as you can,” he said.

Wooton said the students who are often successful poets are the ones who are willing to make mistakes and take risks.

“You’ll never write really well until you are willing to write bad first,” Wooton said. “For some it may be a short period of time, but for others it may take a lifetime. But that doesn’t matter, as long as you try it.”

I want to read words from a human being who is being human, so that I may become more fully human.

— James Cushing

English professor
Reasons behind charity, choices to empower

Eric Baldwin is an electrical engineering senior and Mustang Daily libertarian columnist.

Chariot, according to Merriam-Webster's, has two main definitions. No. 1: "benevolent good will toward or love of humanity," and No. 2: "generosity and helpfulness especially toward the needy or suffering." These two definitions are not necessarily complementary.

Good will toward humanity is a virtue, but how can it be upheld without requiring action? What principles determine the proper action? In the abstract, true charity aids the recipient toward becoming a more complete person.

The full definition of a complete person is outside the scope of this article, but a few essential characteristics merit the focus. The most complete person possesses a choice to choose that does not infringe on any other person's choice to choose (to hash out the details, please see both of my articles on politics and economics).

Charity, explicit or implicit, reduces the slave's choice to choose. Starvation reduces the capacity to choose. Debt reduces the capacity to choose. A maximized, non-infringing capacity of choice necessarily results in equality between persons, in which no one can command action from another.

It sounds good, but the world's not there yet. And so we come to charity.

People seek out and receive charity because they need something (actually or not), and charity appears as the best (or only) method of acquiring it. People around the world are trapped in situations where no good choices are accessible. People refuse (for whatever reason) to make good choices. People give charity because they derive value from addressing (or perceiving themselves as addressing) the needs of others. Some do so for good will, some for tax deductions and some for the joy of playing pupper in the name of charity.

To receive charity is to admit dependence on the donor; it is to make your own secular condition on the generosity of another. While this is often a change for the better, it can never be a change for the best; the fact of dependence forebids equality. To donate charity is to willingly accept the role of a superior, if not morally, at least physically. Howev- er kind-hearted and humanitarian the donor may be, the act of donation makes recipients beholden to the donor.

Acts of charity can be broken down into two categories: charity that increases dependence on the donor and charity that reduces that capacity. Many microloan programs increase choice by breaking dependence on loan sharks or providing capital that couldn't be accessed. But many more charities increase dependency.

It's a kind thing to build a hospital somewhere in the sticks, but who pays for its continued existence? Who pays for the staff? Who provides the electricity and bow? Each of these things requires a continued influx of charity in order to sustain what the recipients cannot possibly pay for. By meeting needs without providing a method for the recipients to meet their needs themselves, such charity perpetuates an attitude of dependence and inability to turn away from the gift.

The act of charity, even at its best, creates inequalities of social power. To praise acts of charity indiscriminately is to risk presenting such inequalities as unimportant or even acceptable. It breeds the perception that wealth is not an earned, created thing, but large-scale — that the physical needs of the individual are met from without, not from within. It creates an attitude not of level pride but of low gratitude (or worse, ingratitude) on the part of the receiver.

On the part of the donor, it nurtures an attitude of patrician generosity rather than eye-to-eye respect. It teaches that the receiver is a toy of external events — both bad and good — not an actor who creates events. While the capacity to fulfill needs is limited by time, knowledge and resources, the capacity of humans to create needs is unbounded. Indiscriminate charity artificially fulfills perceived needs the person cannot fulfill themselves, creating a contrived perception of "the good life" or the way things "ought to be." To broadly use charity in such a way, weakens a culture. It teaches people that solutions are derived normally, not from themselves but from an external entity, forming a casual assumption of dependence upon donors. This then gives power to the donors and provides a morally admirable justification for acquiring that power. Those with many needs are easy to lead; those with no needs cannot be controlled. Throughout all of history, individual and collective power is advanced by inducing the conquered to need the conqueror.

Whether a person's situation is good or bad, it exists for a reason. The situation is the product of past and present economic, social and political facts as well as the individual's own nature and inclinations. To treat the symptoms of problems without addressing the problems themselves has only two results: non-resolution and increased dependence of the receiver upon the donor. To treat the root problems is to assume the role of a rescuer; even if the physical problems are resolved, the receiver still bears a heavy moral obligation.

In some the two definitions of charity are nearly in opposite — to relieve physical need is to impose moral debt. True brotherly-love re­volts at the idea of obtaining power over others either by force or by obliga­tion, but instead, pursues a policy of equality. The most healthy rela­tionships between people are based on friendship and respect, which can only exist between equals. Charity can only be legitimate in terms of charity the attitude. A perfect world is one in which no acts of charity are made because none are needed.

Acts of charity are inherently un­equalizing in character. Does that mean we should refrain from char­ity? No, but it does mean that we should take care in giving charity. True charity is not there yet. And so we come to charity.

The act of charity even at its best creates inequalities of social power.

— Eric Baldwin
Libertarian columnist
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NEW ORLEANS — For the New Orleans Hornets, their playoff fate against the Los Angeles Lakers begins and ends with their tenacious All-Star point guard Chris Paul.

For the Lakers, Paul remains their biggest problem, someone who has continued to gut their defense in the best-of-seven first-round series.

Paul has orchestrated the Hornets' attack, probing the Lakers defense, doing his part to even the series at 2-2.

Game 5 is Tuesday night at Staples Center, but Paul's brilliant play in New Orleans' victory in Game 4 is the primary reason there is going to be a Game 6 back here Thursday night.

"We've still got work to do," Paul said after Game 4 on Sunday night. "We're not satisfied. ...We get to come back here. We're going to go out there and try and get this Game 5."

Paul's triple-double of 27 points, 15 assists and a career-high 13 rebounds in Game 4 was another sign of how effective he has been.

He is leading both teams in scoring (25.5) and assists (11.5) in the series. He is the third-leading rebounder (7.0) in the series, and Paul is barely 6-feet tall.

"Chris is an anomaly," Lakers assistant coach Jim Cleamons said. "He's a one-of-a-kind kind of player. Don't complain about it. This is what we have to do. We've got to figure out a way to stop him effectively for two games in a row. So let's roll up our sleeves and let's have at it."

Cleamons is in charge of putting the Lakers' game plan together against the Hornets, and he has keyled in on a few must-do things for his team — like cut back on second-chance opportunities.

The Lakers allowed the Hornets to get 20 second-chance points in Game 4.

Cleamons said that happened because of the Hornets' hustle and determination. "That's a killer right there," he said. "We can't allow that."

Cleamons also said the Lakers didn't play with the same intensity and passion they displayed in Games 2 and 3, games the Lakers won.

Besides upping their intensity, Cleamons said, the Lakers must be quicker on their defensive rotations so they don't allow too many easy shots.

"But the Hornets will be watching the same thing," Cleamons said. "So this is where the real chess match comes in. Which team is going to take the things that the coaching staff shows them on film and take those nuggets with them out on the floor?"

The Hornets, who didn't practice Monday, still want the ball in Paul's hands, and they want to play with the "fight" New Orleans Coach Monty Williams constantly harps on.

"We ain't changing nothing up," Hornets forward Trevor Ariza said. "We're just playing our game."

-- Broderick Turner

The Lakers have to try harder to stop Chris Paul. He posted a triple-double with 27 points, 15 assists and 13 rebounds in Game 4.
J.J. Thompson aims to cap baseball career with a bang

Baseball represents something different to each player. For Cal Poly first baseman J.J. Thompson, it represents a constant battle.

“(Baseball) can beat you up, spit on you and then, all of a sudden, make you the best player in the world,” Thompson said. “This game will knock you down quite a bit, but it will teach you to bounce back from anything.”

Thompson has fought his way to the top this season. After what was a constant battle to stay in the starting lineup throughout his Cal Poly career, Thompson is now one of the top hitters. In 31 appearances, Thompson is second on the team with a .342 batting average, tied for first with 10 doubles and tied for fourth with 14 RBIs.

It’s been tough for Thompson, who batted .211 with 11 RBIs in his freshman season. Thompson then surged in his sophomore year, batting .292 and finishing fourth on the team with seven home runs and 41 RBIs.

Last season, however, Thompson’s improvement waned as he fought to maintain a .200 average.

“Every year there is always a point where you feel like ‘How does it get any worse?’” Thompson said. “Then it does, and you want to give up. But then you get some success, and you start rolling with it again.”

That point came for Thompson early in the 2010 Big West Conference schedule. Thompson remembers being on the road sitting in a hot tub with former Cal Poly center fielder Adam Melker. Thompson said the two, feeling helpless about their struggles on the field, reflected on how they could improve.

“We were just talking about what to do,” Thompson said. “We came to the fact that we both worked really hard, and we deserved success. We just realized we had to stop caring about the results and focus more on having fun and playing the game the right way.”

It was there Thompson would rediscover the success he had been searching for all season long.

In the Mustangs’ three-game series against Long Beach State, Thompson went 7-for-12 with two doubles, two triples and a home run. He continued the rest of the season in the same fashion, finishing the remainder of the Big West Conference schedule batting 17-for-40 (.425).

He carried that momentum over to this season, where he is an integral part of the Mustangs’ success. Thompson said he feels like a lot of pressure has been taken off him in his senior year, and he is focusing more on his mental strength.

“(Head coach Larry) Lee talks about mental strength all the time,” Thompson said. “Being mentally stronger than the game, than the opponent, than the pitcher, than the situation and just realizing that you are going to fail a lot in this game, and you’ve got to keep pushing on and success will come.”

Lee said Thompson has become one of their most productive first basemen, especially on the defensive end.

“J.J. Thompson is my best defensive first baseman,” Lee said. “What we ask of our first basemen is just to take care of things and make decisions.”

With all the ups and downs, Thompson said the most memorable part of Cal Poly baseball has always been his teammates.

“I like all the guys and how everyone works hard,” Thompson said. “They all like to have fun outside of baseball and the locker room. There are just so many good memories, it’s hard to even say which one was best.”

For Thompson, the person who shared the most memories with was Melker.

Melker said Thompson was a good person to have as a friend and teammate. Even when the team was in its down cycles, Thompson was the person to always have a smile on his face, he said.

“I just enjoy every day with J.J.; he’s a great kid,” Melker said. “He’s hilarious, smart, witty and just a fun guy to be around. He works hard; he’s a guy you always want to be around all the time, he makes you laugh and makes you smile every day. His humor always rubs off on you.”

Though Thompson is unsure of where his career will take him after Cal Poly, he is sure baseball will always be a part of his life.

“Thompson said he wants to return home and be a mentor to his younger brother Matt Thompson, a high school freshman at Thompson’s alma mater, Tahoma High School, in Maple Valley, Wash.

“He’s at the age where you can give more in-depth instruction on how to play the game,” Thompson said. “I’ve helped train and teach his friends, too, over the years just because I want to. So when I get back, I might try to get in touch and train some kids.”

Thompson said he wants to help his brother succeed because he did not have someone to mentor him.

“Growing up, I didn’t have any older guys, telling me ‘This is what you need to focus on,’” Thompson said. “I learned more from trial and error. It would have been nice to have a guy that had been through it and given that type of feedback.”

But before the Cal Poly senior starts planning for his future, his eyes are set squarely on a return to a NCAA Division I Regional berth.