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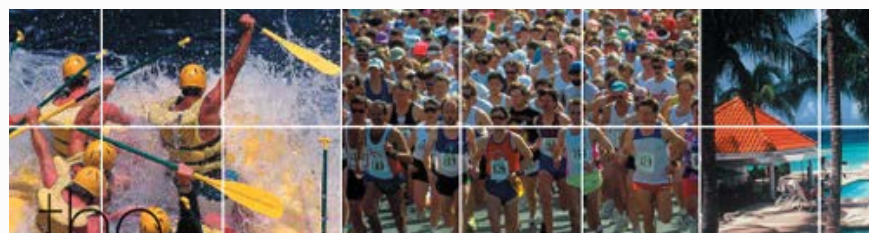
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## Spring 2009 Newsletter



# the RePort

A newsletter for Recreation, Parks, Alumni, Students &

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## FROM MY CUSTOM SURFBOARD...

By Bill Hendricks, Ph.D.



Following nearly 15 years as a faculty member at Cal Poly, this spring I have the privilege of taking my first sabbatical leave. While working on a research project with the California Park and Recreation Society, I have also had the opportunity to pursue other research projects and to stay engaged in various aspects of our profession. Most notably was my recent attendance at the inaugural CSU Hospitality Education Leadership Committee meeting in Long Beach. Chancellor Reed convened the group to assist and guide education and service to the industry. Fourteen diverse academic

programs were represented at the meeting. Among the initiatives of the group are to streamline articulation processes with community colleges and the creation of a CSU website that highlights related academic programs, degrees offered, internships and direct links to each campus. The Chancellor also formed a Hospitality Industry Advisory Board that includes Cal Poly RPTA Advisory Council member Caroline Beteta, President and CEO of the California Travel and Tourism Commission. I look forward to collaborating with these groups as we continue to provide a dynamic learning environment for our students.

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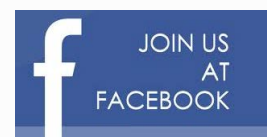
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## NEWS & EVENTS

Dr. Brian Greenwood was recognized by the North American Colleges & Teachers of Agriculture with a meritorious award for outstanding teaching at the annual CAFES leadership banquet. [Read more](#)

RPTA's annual benefit and auction with the theme "Fly Away with RPTA: Your Passport to the World" was held Saturday, February 26, 2011 at the San Luis Jet Centre and was a smashing success in breaking records for attendance and overall money raised for the department. [Read more](#)

The RPTA team of Amber Black, Amy Lepp, Kristen McClay, and Kelsey Pavao captured the first-ever Academic Quiz Bowl

In closing, congratulations to our 2009 graduates! Remember, as my dad always said, "keep those cards and letters (emails) comin'."

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## CHANGES AROUND THE BEND

By Brian Greenwood, Ph.D.

As most of you are well aware and Dr. Hendricks announced in his "From My Little Wooden Desk..." column in the winter 2009 newsletter, RPTA will become a department in the fall. Some of you may be asking yourself, "What does that mean exactly?"

In addition to the added exposure on and off campus, it means that Dr. Hendricks will become a department head rather than a program coordinator and gain a seat at department head meetings. And, we recently learned that in the fall we will have our very own office in an excellent location in Building 11 adjacent to three existing RPTA faculty offices. When you crest the second floor stairwell in Building 11, hang a right, and you can't miss our very own RPTA office in 11-262.

Finally, current RPTA students who have registered for fall 2009 know that our course prefix has officially changed from REC to RPTA. We'll continue to document changes related to the new department status in the new RPTA website that will also debut in the fall. We're excited for what the future holds for RPTA!

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## SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

By Sydney Hollingsworth

It was the "Learn By Doing" motto that initially attracted me to Cal Poly. I had known I wanted to be an RPTA student, and the only effective way to study event management is to utilize a motto like this and get involved.

My involvement on the Open House planning committee has been a huge part of my life. It has been a learning experience for my future career path and a way to showcase the campus that has given so much to me.

I also had the opportunity to work as the RPTA faculty administrative assistant. Getting involved with the program allowed me to get to know the professors outside the classroom. I can honestly say that each professor brings a dynamic element to the program and a great deal of passion that I appreciate as a student.

My years as a Cal Poly student are soon ending, but I can say confidently that I am ready for the "real world" thanks to my hands-on learning experiences and encouragement from the RPTA faculty.

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championship at the 2010 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Annual Congress in Minneapolis, MN. [Read more](#)

Katherine Soule, a recent RPTA Masters degree recipient, received the prestigious "Future Scholars" award at the 2010 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Annual Congress in Minneapolis, MN. [Read more](#)

A team of RPTA faculty and students partnered with the California Travel and Tourism Commission to develop the Sustainable Tourism Marketing Handbook. The handbook was presented at the 2010 California Sustainable Tourism Summit in Lake Tahoe. [Read more](#)

Dr. Jeff Jacobs was honored with the 2010 CAFES New Faculty Teaching award; this same honor was bestowed upon Dr. Marni Goldenberg in 2009. Congratulations to both of these well deserving RPTA faculty! [Read more](#)



## INTERN SPOTLIGHT

By Chelsea Buttress



After completing my coursework in winter of 2009, I started my internship with the San Luis Obispo Downtown Association. The SLO Downtown Association is responsible for the weekly downtown Farmers' Market, the summer concert series in Mission Plaza, Santa's House, the Holiday Parade, and many other special events held in downtown San Luis Obispo.

As the promotions intern, my main task is planning and promoting Downtown Brown's Birthday party with the RPTA 210 class. Every year the Downtown Association throws a birthday party for the Farmers' Market mascot, Downtown Brown. The party is held at Farmers' Market and includes games, crafts, and other activities for children and their families. My other intern duties include interviewing new downtown businesses, writing articles for the bi-monthly newsletter, helping prepare for concerts in the plaza, assisting with the Rib Cook-off and Rock Band Tournament, and working at the information booth at Farmers' Market. Interning at the Downtown Association has been a great learning experience, and I hope to start a career in special event planning after graduating in June.

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## CRUISING WITH RPTA

By Robert Cooper

Cruise Travel & Tourism introduced students to the industry and trends of cruising. This 10-week course concluded with an extraordinary learn-by-doing opportunity: seven days aboard the Sapphire Princess to learn about cruise operations. Students and faculty had the opportunity to meet with the captain, executive officers, and crew.



This course provided opportunities for behind-the-scenes tours, job shadowing, and exciting shore excursions. The head chef gave a tour of the main dining room's kitchen, and the cruise director gave a tour of the theatre's backstage area. At two of the three ports, the whole class took shore excursions. One was a catamaran cruise to a beach where participants had the choice of snorkeling or hiking, and the other was "salsa y salsa," which taught the invaluable college skill of how to make salsa.

Students were also able to shadow different departments, including hotel operations and shore excursions. The combination of building academic knowledge in the classroom for ten weeks and then seeing that knowledge manifested through firsthand experience is invaluable and epitomizes the experiential approach that makes Cal Poly and RPTA special.

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## NEW STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

By Alicia Carney



I grew up in Petaluma, California, in the midst of a booming tourism industry in the Sonoma wine country. Fine wines were an important part of our local culture, so I'm considering a career combining tourism and viticulture.

I also had a fun internship assisting the events coordinator in a golf course community on the coast. I loved planning and working at numerous golf tournaments, weddings, and winemaker dinners.

Whatever it is I find myself doing, I want to take a green approach and put an "eco" spin on it.

No matter what, I want to help people. As a freshman, I am the president of Trinity Residence Hall. As a sophomore, I will be the president of Inter-Hall Council and am applying to be on the ASI Executive Cabinet. By my junior or senior year I plan on running for ASI President.

I love Cal Poly!

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## IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE

By Mallory Woods and Kyle Shnurr

"Reccies" went wild at this year's end-of-the-year banquet, held at the Morro Bay Golf Course. The theme was "It's a Jungle Out There" and boy, was it ever! The night started out with pictures and a costume contest and ended with karaoke and awards.

Throughout the night guests enjoyed an amazing dinner and dessert while watching a slide show and winning prizes. The seniors were honored with a gift from the program and serenaded by the loving faculty.

Much of the event success was due to the hard work and dedication of the planning committee led by co-chairs Mindy Calmenson and Laura Hobson. Overall it was a great night and one that will go down in the books as an exciting sendoff for our 2009 graduates!



Award winners were as follows:

- Thom Group Award - Ben Turley
- Outstanding Senior - Teresa Karcher and Kyle Schnurr
- Outstanding Contributions - Sydney Hollingsworth (senior) and Mike Casola (advisory council)
- Honored Alumna - Danielle Fabela
- Excellence in Senior Project - Shannon Dere, David Jahns, Carli O'Leary, and

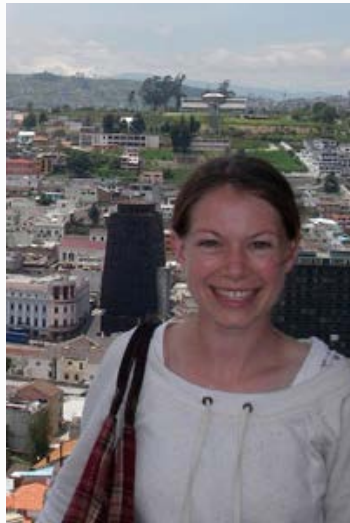
Sarah Stinson

- Pismo RV Recreation, Parks, & Tourism Scholarship - Heidi Diestel and Dana Matteson
- Ashley D. Richardson Scholarship - Megan Phibbs
- Special Recognition - Chelsea Buttress, Sydney Hollingsworth, and Genna Wood (CPRS)
- Special Recognition - Davia Montoya (Newsletter)
- Special Recognition - Sharon Fujitani (Library and research assistance - retiring after 35 years)

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## INTERN SPOTLIGHT

By Christe Withem



I am completing my RPTA bachelor's degree in Quito, Ecuador! My internship is with Youth World, a non-profit mission organization that exists to develop Christian youth leaders. In March I began working with the Short-Term Teams department of Youth World. We led twenty volunteers to build a house in a jungle village.

My time at Cal Poly prepared me to assist in coordinating the trip, balancing the budget, and evaluating the results. The language skills I obtained from a Spanish minor have also become very beneficial. I am teaching English to Spanish-speakers of all ages at a school called Remanso de Amor (Haven of Love). My time

abroad has confirmed my desire to coordinate short-term mission trips in the future. Upon graduating from Cal Poly this spring, I plan to work and live in San Luis Obispo County.

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## CHILD'S DEATH MOVES INTERN TO ACTION IN ADDRESSING BEACH SAFETY

Reprinted in abbreviated format and with permission from Cal Poly News

The beauty and adventure  
that comes with living on the  
Central Coast is never far from  
many of our minds. Yet, for  
those who are sworn to  
protect and serve, the  
realization of the dangers



associated with that beauty  
are all too clear. After the  
tragic presumed drowning of  
Arroyo Grande 9-year old



Kailanii Brannum this past April, Cal Poly senior Megan Grose set out to help address the issue of beach and water safety.

Grose, a Cal Poly senior majoring in Recreation, Parks, & Tourism Administration (RPTA), is currently completing her final requirement for graduation, a 400-hour internship with the Pismo Beach Lifeguard Division. Pismo Beach Lifeguards operate out of CalFIRE - Station 64 in Pismo Beach under the direction of Captain Rick Howard.

Two of the duties that Grose was assigned by Captain Howard were to coordinate water safety education at local elementary schools and develop beach safety brochures for area hotels. After Kailanii's death, these duties took on new meaning for Grose. She was tasked with designing and acquiring funding for the brochures, no small task in today's economy.

The initial project plan developed by Grose and Captain Howard called for 600 brochures on an experimental basis, but after a successful presentation by Grose to the Pismo Beach Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB), executive director Suzen Brasile and the CVB Board agreed to fund the brochures.

The small experimental project turned into a large project with 15,000 brochures being printed for distribution to all seven oceanfront hotels and the visitor's information kiosk at the Pismo Beach pier. Plans are in the works for the brochure to be included with house rentals and distributed through Pismo CVB mailings as well.

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## RPTA 2009 HONORED ALUMNA SPOTLIGHT

By Danielle Fabela

RPTA alumna Danielle Fabela earned a Master's degree in Recreation Administration from San Francisco State University (SFSU) in 2006 with a specialization in Education Administration. During her time at SFSU, she received the Distinguished Achievement Award. Her Masters thesis is entitled: "The Affects of Team Building on Staff Morale Among Part Time, Seasonal Employees of the Summer Programs at the San Bruno Parks and Recreation Department."

She received her Bachelor's degree in



1998 from Cal Poly in Recreation  
Administration, with an emphasis in

Commercial Tourism.

Currently, she works for the City of San Bruno Parks and Recreation Department as a Recreation Services Supervisor. In this role she supervises seasonal day camps, special events, teen programs, and outdoor trips for the community. She is also teaching Leisure and Lifestyle Development at SFSU.

Since 1990, she has worked in the recreation profession in a wide variety of settings: non-profit and private camps, a private school and in municipal recreation in California, New York and Maine. She is certified in Camp Directing from the American Camp Association (ACA).

In 1998 the National Parks and Recreation Magazine (NRPA) featured her article titled, "A Learning Event" based upon her book, "Special Events for Youth Programs," a creative collection of youth activities for large groups each lasting over an hour.

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## A FEW GOOD MEN...

By Brian Greenwood, Ph.D.

I knew that the female-to-male ratio in the RPTA major was unbalanced when I first took the job at Cal Poly. Yet, I was totally unprepared for the feeling of walking into my first RPTA classroom and seeing 76 female eyes and only 10 male eyes staring back at me. Males, albeit small in number, play an important role in RPTA.

Readers of "The Report" may notice this issue being a little "light" in the men's department. No, it's not the economic recession. To address the dearth, I decided to get "on the horn" and summon some of RPTA's best and brightest senior men to provide a few



timely quotes on their experiences.

David Jahns: "My experience as a male RPTA student has given me a true appreciation for the strength and capabilities of female students in our field of study. Moreover, the imbalance of men and women has shown me the importance for us, as males, to take an active role in the recreation community, both academically and professionally."

Danny Johnson: "Being one of the few males in the RPTA major is almost like being a member of a fraternity. We males are a tight knit group and enjoy spending time together in class as well as outside the classroom. I look forward to seeing more men in RPTA who get the chance to be part of something this unique."

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## VANESSA THOMAS PLACES FIFTH IN NATIONAL EQUESTRIAN COMPETITION

Reprinted in abbreviated format and with permission from Cal Poly News



Cal Poly student and Equestrian Team member Vanessa Thomas placed fifth in the competition for the United States Equestrian Federation/Cacchione Cup at the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association National Championships, held April 23-26 in Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Thomas, a senior majoring in Recreation, Parks, & Tourism Administration, was representing the Cal Poly Equestrian Team, a club organized under the Animal Science Department in the College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Sciences and supervised by faculty advisor Pete Agalos.

Thomas' accomplishment was particularly impressive given that this was her first year as an intercollegiate rider. In addition, Cal Poly's program is managed as a club without some of the resources that many other well-funded collegiate teams and riders enjoy.

"The competitors at the nationals really were the best of the best," Thomas said. "I was very impressed. I was able to ride well, and I was happy with my scores."

Thomas' childhood was spent riding horses competitively, but she only recently renewed her passion for the competitive side upon transferring to Cal Poly. Thomas previously competed on the cross-country team at Cuesta College.

About 372 colleges and universities are members of IHSA, with approximately 8,300 riders competing for the 31 National spots awarded based on zones and regions. Zone 8 Region 1 consists of Cal Poly, Stanford University, UC Davis, Sonoma State and University of Nevada at Reno.

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## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

By Nora O'Donnell

*Editorial note. RPTA alumna Nora O'Donnell wrote the following speech for the winter RPTA alumni social held at Cliffs Resort in Pismo Beach. Acoustic issues arose at the*



venue, so we agreed to print the edited speech in full in the newsletter so that everyone can "hear" her words clearly.

I am a second generation San Luis Obispoan, third generation native Californian, and a Navy veteran. My father attended Cal Poly prior to it attaining university status. As a single mom who financed my own education, I'm extremely proud to be an alumna of Cal Poly along with two of my five siblings.

My time at Cal Poly was very rewarding, as I've always done best with the "learn-by-doing" or "hands-on" approach. I was a late-bloomer in that I had an almost 20-year break between one semester of college right after high school and my return to the academic world in 1994. After graduating from Cuesta College in the spring of 1995, I transferred to Cal Poly in the fall and graduated in 1999.

I was initially unsure where to focus my studies but found out about the RPTA major from the guidance counselor at Cuesta. It seemed to be a perfect fit for my personality and abilities, and I was never disappointed in choosing this field. The instructors were great to work with - very energetic, excited about their chosen field, and extremely proactive in providing their students with the best opportunities for a total learning experience.

I have been able to bring my education to every job and volunteer experience I've had since graduating from Cal Poly. I've been an event coordinator for Michael's Arts & Craft store Kid's Club, an employee and volunteer for Camp Fire USA, and a child-care site director for the City of San Luis Obispo Parks and Recreation Department, where I planned activities, directed staff, and gained experience with special events like the Mardi Gras parade and the SLO Triathlon.

I was fortunate enough to be hired full time with the City of Grover Beach in 2002, a job that has afforded me the opportunity to implement what I've learned about special events planning - taking an event through the various stages of creation, from a mere idea, to a specific written plan, to completion. I've learned the value of critique and reflection at the end of an event and, because of budget constraints, I've definitely learned the crucial importance of a strong volunteer base!

In 2008 alone, approximately 350 hours of volunteer time was provided by the RPTA program through the assistance of over 65 Cal Poly students, from both the program and the basketball and baseball athletic teams. Student involvement in the local community is an extremely important component of the Cal Poly learning experience and a valuable commodity for the community. I've watched with pride as the RPTA program has provided student volunteers who care about the community and are dedicated to providing quality assistance in each task they are assigned. The RPTA program continues to expand and encompass a burgeoning interest in the field of eco-tourism as well as the already popular tourism concentration. The RPTA faculty is extremely forward thinking, keeping on the cutting edge of developments in their fields, thereby increasing the validity and worth of the educational experience.

Our director, Kathy Petker, and our department staff look forward to continuing the wonderful partnership we've enjoyed with the staff and students at Cal Poly. We couldn't do what we do without their help, and we hope we can continue to provide more opportunities for "learn by doing."

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## SPECIAL THANKS

By Brian Greenwood, Ph.D.

On behalf of the entire RPTA family, we would like to thank outgoing editor Davia Montoya and outgoing newsletter advisor Dr. Marni Goldenberg for all of their hard work and dedication to "The Report." Davia's two-year tenure as editor ended with the winter 2009 newsletter, and she has passed the editorial reins to the new editor, Anna Dickson. Likewise, Dr Goldenberg has been serving as my mentor for the position of faculty advisor to the newsletter.

We all appreciate the service that Davia and Dr. Goldenberg have provided to RPTA, and Anna and I hope to maintain the standard of excellence that has been set.

Thanks Davia and Dr. G!

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Anna Dickson, Student Editor  
Brian Greenwood, Faculty Advisor/Editor

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