

Cal Poly: A Shift from State Dependence to Donor Dependence over the Course of Three  
University Presidents

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## **Abstract**

Cal Poly's period of financial uncertainty under McPhee during the Great Depression led to an expanded effort between the school and the state to find alternative ways of funding the school, and gradually began to lean towards a system less involved with the state due to its budget restrictions and laws preventing it from loaning its credit. The creation of the Cal Poly Foundation in 1940 was an important step in distancing the school from the jungle of state regulations, but McPhee had to consistently struggle with the law for the right for Cal Poly to use the Foundation due to its unique existence in a system of state schools. Over time, the school would begin to use the Foundation for more donation-related goals. This process began during the early years of the Kennedy presidency and increasingly expanded in effectiveness throughout. However, only during Baker's presidency would the true potential of Cal Poly's donor base be revealed with the Cal Poly Centennial Campaign.

## **Introduction**

“Have you ever tried telling them how hard I'm working to convince the governor, the legislature, the state department of education, and the department of finance that we are running this college efficiently and economically?”<sup>1</sup> An angry Cal Poly President Julian McPhee barked at a young faculty member named Robert E. Kennedy. McPhee was upset about a lengthy course catalogue prepared for his approval in the prior months. McPhee had a lot on his plate. He was trying to get the rest of the faculty, Kennedy included, to see the “forest for the trees.”<sup>2</sup> McPhee was annually trying to find his way through the forest of California State agencies responsible

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<sup>1</sup> Robert E Kennedy, *Learn by Doing: Memoirs of a University President*, (San Luis Obispo: California Polytechnic State University, 2001), 126.

<sup>2</sup> Kennedy, *Learn by Doing*, 126.

for providing the funding necessary for Cal Poly to function.<sup>3</sup> The consistently unreliable nature of state funding for Cal Poly, required the university's reliance on unconventional methods of financial support to grow.

In 1932, while McPhee's predecessor Benjamin Crandall was still in office, Cal Poly's original project fund was discussed and approved.<sup>4</sup> The project fund was to be used to operate student projects which required capital.<sup>5</sup> Capital, which the state was unable to provide amidst the Great Depression. The uncertain nature of state funding would continue to be an issue, and consequently, McPhee would go on to help create the Cal Poly Foundation in 1940.<sup>6</sup> This foundation's main purpose would be to "promote and assist the educational services of the California Polytechnic State University... and to apply the funds and properties coming into its hands toward furthering the educational services carried on or approved by the administrative officers of the California Polytechnic State University."<sup>7</sup> Cal Poly was developing a new arm, one which could financially support the school even when the state could not.

This paper will argue that over the course of three Cal Poly presidents, the school would slowly transition from being almost entirely reliant on state funding, to being increasingly reliant on outside sources of funding, and ultimately donations for its advancement as an institution. Under President McPhee, the nature of state funding was consistently uncertain due to the effects of the Great Depression, and later the relatively frequent attacks on Cal Poly's use of its Foundation. Throughout Kennedy's presidency, there was a steady growth of donations due to

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<sup>3</sup> Kennedy, *Learn by Doing*, 126.

<sup>4</sup> "Information on History and Progress", Box 1, Folder 1, 191.01, Cal Poly Corporate History, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

<sup>5</sup> Robert E. Kennedy, letter to Al Amaral, 11 January 1977, Box 1, Folder 1, 191.01, Cal Poly Corporate History, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

<sup>6</sup> Kennedy, letter to Amaral, 11 January 1977.

<sup>7</sup> Al W. Amaral, "California Polytechnic State University Foundation – The Silent Partner," 10 February 1975, Box 1, Folder 1, 191.01, Cal Poly Corporate History, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

the increased importance placed on annual giving during his time in office. This growth in donations continued into the Baker presidency, and culminated in the Cal Poly Centennial Campaign with an active and effective mechanism to solicit donations from Cal Poly's support base.

### **Historiography**

Cal Poly was not an anomaly in its lack of state funding, nor is it now. As Zusman explains,

States today have become 'minority partners' in the colleges and universities that typically bear their names. On average, states now supply only a little over one-third of public colleges' revenues. Yet because these funds generally pay most basic instructional costs, such as faculty and staff salaries, state support remains critical to public institutions.<sup>8</sup>

Zusman argues that state support for public schools diminishes in times of economic downturns and grows in periods of economic stability. However, she adds that state revenue restraints, competition for resources, and changing public attitudes towards higher education, will lead to an unpredictable environment of state support for higher education in the future.<sup>9</sup> This same aura of unpredictability required Cal Poly to establish a Foundation in the first place, more than half a century ago. The consistent lack of state funding leaves a financial hole that state universities must attempt to fill themselves, and one which Cal Poly has successfully filled with gifts and donations over the years.

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<sup>8</sup> Ami Zusman, "Challenges Facing Higher Education in the Twenty-First Century," *American Higher Education in the Twenty-First Century: Social, Political, and Economic Challenges 2* (2005): 115-160, accessed February 15, 2017, <http://www.educationanddemocracy.org/Resources/Zusman.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Zusman, "Challenges Facing Higher Education."

In his book *Universities in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education*, Derek Bok argues that universities have been increasingly required to adopt business practices to maintain their academic effectiveness.<sup>10</sup> Cal Poly's adoption of business practices to provide substantial funding is no secret. We can observe these business practices within the student store with its merchandise, within the campus dining locations, and in how the Cal Poly Corporation (formerly the Cal Poly Foundation) solicits and receives donations.

Bok discusses how the effort of universities to obtain funding commercially and through non-state means has grown since the 1970s. Whether it be patent licensing programs, for-profit internet education, or other commercial methods, universities across the nation are looking elsewhere from the state to find adequate financial support for their endeavors.<sup>11</sup> Bok later explains,

In this sense, the recent surge in commercial activity is best understood as only the latest in a series of steps to acquire more resources, beginning with the use of aggressive marketing to attract tuition-paying students in the early twentieth century, and moving on to the determined search for government and foundation funding after World War II, and the increasingly sophisticated and intensive effort over the last fifty years to coax gifts from well-to-do alumni and other potential donors.<sup>12</sup>

Gifts and donations have become integral to a University's success over the past century, but how does a school establish a donor base?

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<sup>10</sup> Derek Bok, *Universities in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), pg. 2.

<sup>11</sup> Bok, vii.

<sup>12</sup> Bok, 10.

It takes active participation with the donors themselves, to successfully solicit donations. In “Developing Donor Relationships: The Role of the Breadth of Giving,” Farnoosh Khodakarami and his co-authors propose a mechanism to establish long-term donor relationships. They found that an increase of the variety of initiatives prospect donors are able to support, led to an increase in donation size, as well as the possibility of a subsequent donation being made.<sup>13</sup> Essentially, institutions need to have an active role with their donors and a variety of donation options to successfully solicit donations in the first place. “Nonprofits that give feedback to donors by expressing appreciation and/or by responding to donor concerns can influence donors’ attitudes toward the organization and their willingness to engage in repeat giving.”<sup>14</sup> Of course, even the wealthiest of donors would not give away their money without reason. The University itself must provide one, or multiple.

The creation of University donation campaigns, helps to give a justification for the prospect donors. The doctoral dissertation “Characteristics and Motivational Factors of Major Donors to Bowling Green State University,” provides an example of said justification. The study highlights the motivational factors behind donors giving \$25,000 or more to the university, as well as characteristics of the donors themselves.<sup>15</sup> The study asked multiple research questions regarding who was more or less likely to give, taking into account their age, geographic location, or possible motivating factors. The research found that “there was a positive relationship between serving on a board and the size of gift, and that those who served on the Board of Trustees or Foundation Board gave significantly more than those who served on other boards at

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<sup>13</sup> Farnoosh Khodakarami, *et al.*, "Developing Donor Relationships: The Role of the Breadth of Giving." *Journal of Marketing* 79, no. 4 (July 2015): 77.

<sup>14</sup> Khodakarami, 79.

<sup>15</sup> Marcia Sloan Latta, "Characteristics and Motivational Factors of Major Donors to Bowling Green State University," (PhD dissertation, Bowling Green State University, 2010), iii.

the institution.”<sup>16</sup> This seems to highlight a relatively obvious truth; that those with a close relationship to the university are likely to donate more. This study was conducted on Bowling Green University’s “Building Dreams Centennial Campaign,” a fundraising campaign not unlike the Cal Poly Centennial Campaign.

Cal Poly’s struggle with a lack of state funding can be seen most evidently within the early years of McPhee’s presidency. This struggle would only augment Cal Poly’s already growing dependence on outside methods of funding, with the foundation playing an integral role. Under McPhee, Cal Poly would come to adopt many more business-like practices for its administrative and financial needs. This process would only continue throughout Kennedy’s presidency, and later culminate in a greatly increased effort to solicit donations during Baker’s presidency. Donors could choose where their money could go, and Cal Poly had developed a mechanism for soliciting donations from its ever-growing alumni base as well as from the voluntary boards of the university. This is illustrated by Cal Poly’s Centennial Campaign, and even more so today with multi-million dollar donations towards specific programs.

### **McPhee**

President McPhee took leadership of Cal Poly at a dismal economic time. His predecessor, Benjamin Crandall, resigned in 1933 with this statement: “I regret that the vision of a great institute on the Pacific Coast must be abandoned.”<sup>17</sup> This came immediately after the state legislature had slashed Cal Poly’s biennium budget from its previous amount of \$380,000 to \$159,000. McPhee had told the state legislature that it would cost around \$159,000 to to run Cal Poly for a year. The legislature however, thought McPhee meant that \$159,000 was enough

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<sup>16</sup> Latta, iv.

<sup>17</sup> Kennedy, *Learn by Doing*, 22.

to run Cal Poly for two years, since they were speaking in terms of biennium budgets.<sup>18</sup> It was no secret to McPhee that Cal Poly was in trouble, and it was now his direct responsibility to save it. McPhee began to creatively look for a way out.

The state legislature was considering legalizing pari-mutuel horse betting at racetracks across the state. McPhee, seeing possible funding potential, became involved with the effort.<sup>19</sup> The money collected from these horse racing bets was under the control of the California Horse Racing Board. The money was then used to “finance fairs, expositions and also to pay for state instruction of vocational agriculture, animal husbandry and related fields.”<sup>20</sup> After the funds for those expenses were deducted, one third of the remainder would go to Cal Poly. This was known as the “Second Balance.”<sup>21</sup> This creative method of funding for Cal Poly was essential during the great depression. From 1935-37, Cal Poly received \$49,000 from the California Horse Racing Board, 8% of its budget. From 1937-39, \$580,000 dollars, 55% of its total budget. Finally, in the years 1939-41, Cal Poly received 94% of its entire budget from the board, or \$1,050,000.<sup>22</sup> Kennedy refers to McPhee’s involvement with the legalization of pari-mutuel betting and its consequent use to fund Cal Poly by saying, “Some say he actually engineered it,” which certainly would have been a wise and effective move on McPhee’s part if that is true.<sup>23</sup>

Due to the dire economic circumstances of the Great Depression, McPhee’s creative strategies to maintain the necessary funding for Cal Poly essentially became one of hide and seek. McPhee’s rationale was, “Don’t stick your head over the top of the trench unless you want it to get shot off.” He wanted to keep Cal Poly in the center of any state sanctioned statistical

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<sup>18</sup> Kennedy, *Learn by Doing*, 22.

<sup>19</sup> Kennedy, *Learn by Doing*, 22-23.

<sup>20</sup> Edward Stepanek, “McPhee Sees Poly through Hard Times,” *El Mustang*, 29 April 1966, 2.

<sup>21</sup> Stepanek, 2.

<sup>22</sup> Stepanek, 2.

<sup>23</sup> Kennedy, *Learn by Doing*, 23.



summary of the universities. If Cal Poly used too much money, the state would chop funding. If it was too cheap, they would start to look for something that was wrong.<sup>24</sup> McPhee's difficult early relationship with the state for funding solidified his understanding that there was a battle to be fought with the state to maintain any degree of Cal Poly excellence.

Figuring out how to efficiently run a state school with inadequate state financial support was likely incredibly stressful for McPhee. He was a man with many connections to the state legislature. He held the position of Chief of the Bureau of Agricultural education for much of his early presidency, and would later be promoted to State Director of Vocational Education until he resigned in 1949.<sup>25</sup> This close relationship with the state gave him a large voice when it came to lawmaking. In 1940 McPhee convinced the State Board of Education to “grant Cal Poly the authority to raise its level of instruction from that of a three-year technical-vocational school to a four-year, degree granting college.”<sup>26</sup>

However, with this gained ground came more regulations on the school itself. As an official member of the state college system, Cal Poly was now faced with the same laws that governed all of the other state schools, which were operationally different from Cal Poly. “McPhee had the foresight and political acumen to have the phrase ‘except Cal Poly’ added to almost every Education Code law and Title Five administrative code regulation applicable to the state college campuses.”<sup>27</sup> In these codes, there was no allowance for the acceptance of gifts by the school. This was an issue for McPhee, with an uncertain nature of state funding as well as an inability to accept gifts. When offered a gift of breeding swine, he had to get a law passed to

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<sup>24</sup> Kennedy, *Learn by Doing*, 126.

<sup>25</sup> Kennedy, *Learn by Doing*, 21.

<sup>26</sup> Robert E. Kennedy, “Early History of the Cal Poly Foundation on the Occasion of its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary,” 14 July 1990, Box 1, Folder 6, 191.01, Cal Poly Corporate History, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, 1.

<sup>27</sup> Kennedy, “Early History of the Cal Poly Foundation,” 14 July 1990, 2.

make his acceptance of the swine legal. Then, he used the authority of that law to create the first “auxiliary enterprise” in the entire state college system. Founded in 1940, the Cal Poly Foundation established the framework on which all California state campuses would eventually follow with foundation operations of their own.<sup>28</sup> McPhee had realized that “membership in the state college system was limiting the school’s ability to operate the college farm because of regulations designed for strictly academic operations.”<sup>29</sup> This realization, would widen the gap between state and school, showing that efficient means of funding and support could also be found elsewhere.

The relevance and utility of the Cal Poly Foundation only increased in the decade following. With the onset of World War II, the federal government needed training facilities, and Cal Poly’s location on California’s Central Coast made plenty of sense. The Cal Poly Foundation was directly contracted by the US Navy instead of the state. One of these contracts, from 1944 states that “it has been administratively determined that the use of the Contractor’s property and the services by the Department will be in the interest of the Government and necessary for the prosecution of the war.”<sup>30</sup> The Foundation was contracted instead of the state because “it was feared that there would be too many insurmountable barriers if the State were to contract with the Navy directly, so the Foundation was asked to carry the program which it did very successfully with the complete cooperation of the Department of Education, the College, and the Department of Finance.”<sup>31</sup> The foundation was contracted by the Navy for the same reason McPhee created it; to avoid the forest of California state regulations and make university operations easier.

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<sup>28</sup> Kennedy, “Early History of the Cal Poly Foundation,” 14 July 1990, 2.

<sup>29</sup> Kennedy, “Early History of the Cal Poly Foundation,” 14 July 1990, 2.

<sup>30</sup> “Contract No. 368,” 1 July 1944, Box 2, Folder 9, 191.02, Cal Poly Corporate History, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

<sup>31</sup> “History of the California State Polytechnic College Foundation 1924-1959,” Box 1, Folder 5, 191.01, Cal Poly Corporate History, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

Although McPhee had successfully created the Foundation, his battle with the state for the school was long from over. Even as he approached the end of his career as president of Cal Poly, he could not rest. His last six years in office would bring continued struggles with the state legislature. In 1960, McPhee needed to remind the State Department of Education why the Foundation should be the administrator over Cal Poly's agricultural and instructional projects instead of the state. In a letter to Dr. Burton Vasche, McPhee argued that the state could not make student projects possible as a result of the rule that the state could not lend its credit, and a line of credit was essential to Cal Poly's ability to implement student projects in the first place. Along with this, he argued that the commercial aspects which the projects teach would be made less effective under state fiscal controls.<sup>32</sup> Cal Poly had grown in the 33 years under McPhee's leadership, and its influence on the state had as well.

In 1961 McPhee sent a Presidents Letter to the faculty and staff of both the San Luis Obispo and Kellogg-Voorhis (later Pomona) campuses. In this letter McPhee explained that a committee of staff members were to be traveling to Sacramento to meet with a chief administrative officer of the State Colleges. Their mission was to oppose the repeal of two education codes, one which set Cal Poly aside from the laws that governed all other state campuses, and another which allowed Cal Poly to contract with the Foundation "for the management of student housing facilities."<sup>33</sup> McPhee's war machine against the California government regulations which had tied his dreams for the college down in subsequent years was in full swing. At almost every turn, it seemed as if Cal Poly's success and use of the Foundation

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<sup>32</sup> Julian McPhee letter to Dr. Burton Vasche, 29 February 1960, Box 1, Folder 9, 191.01, Cal Poly Corporate History, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

<sup>33</sup> Julian McPhee, "The President's Letter," 7 March 1961, Box 1, Folder 38, 144.02, McPhee Presidential Papers, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

for the funding of its projects was being threatened. McPhee however, had become a force to be reckoned with, with a strong influence across California from his years of educational service.

McPhee went out of his way to gain support where it was needed. When in 1960 the Donahoe Higher Education Act was still a proposed legislative bill, McPhee traveled throughout California, warning alumni that “their alma mater was in jeopardy.”<sup>34</sup> Without amendments which were ultimately made as a result of fervent effort on the part of Cal Poly executive dean Harold Wilson, the Donahoe Act would have given the University of California system the exclusive right to teach professional architecture, as well as revoke Cal Poly’s ability to offer non-degree-granting programs in vocational agriculture.<sup>35</sup> McPhee’s ability to gain support where and when it was needed was integral to the survival of Cal Poly in general, especially during its darkest hours amidst the Great Depression. This legacy of leadership would not crumble in his absence after 1966, but instead grow under Kennedy. His creation of the Foundation and his seemingly constant struggle to save it from the heavy hand of the state would lead to a new chapter of possibility for Cal Poly, one financed by donations. As a testament to his service to the State of California and his influence over the governance of said state, he received nearly two full pages of recognition in the California Legislature *Senate Daily Journal* upon his retirement in 1966.<sup>36</sup>

McPhee’s constant struggle with the state to maintain Cal Poly as an institution began as soon as he took office in the early days of the Great Depression. He originally needed to focus on keeping the school running with the inconsistent nature of state support. McPhee gradually began to develop the financial resources of Cal Poly by creating the Foundation and actively working

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<sup>34</sup> Kennedy, *Learn by Doing*, 192.

<sup>35</sup> Kennedy, *Learn by Doing*, 192-193.

<sup>36</sup> “California Legislature Senate Daily Journal,” 9 February 1966, Box 6, Folder 26, 144.02, McPhee Presidential Papers, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

with the state to maintain the legality of his actions. As Cal Poly grew in strength under McPhee, so did its power in influencing the state legislature. McPhee also began to develop the alumni as a support base of the school, making it possible for Kennedy and Baker to build on this in the coming years.

### **Kennedy**

Understanding President Kennedy's philosophy is impossible to do without first understanding who he worked under for over two decades. McPhee was integral in forming Kennedy's educational philosophy. Teaching him lessons along the way, Kennedy learned by doing. "Since 1953 I had sat in on every budget hearing, at the right hand of the President, providing him with the questions he needed to cross-examine deans and division heads whose answers to the President had not been satisfactory."<sup>37</sup> Kennedy was immersed in the world of financial struggle that defined McPhee's presidency. It would only make sense for him to also understand the volatile nature of State funding for the school and the necessity to look elsewhere. However, during Kennedy's presidency, the importance of donations for Cal Poly would grow even more than they did during McPhee's entire term. McPhee set up the ability for Cal Poly to receive gifts and donations, but Kennedy began to turn Cal Poly into a true donation magnet.

In 1967, when Kennedy had just become the President of Cal Poly, the Foundation Board decided to develop a fund raising program. "The Foundation subsequently set up a position of 'Coordinator of Research and Development' and undertook the search for the person to fill that position. The Alumni giving campaign and the entire University Development program is an outgrowth of this action."<sup>38</sup> The creation of such a mechanism, to actively seek out donors to

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<sup>37</sup> Kennedy, *Learn by Doing*, 172.

<sup>38</sup> Robert E. Kennedy, "Early History of the Cal Poly Foundation on the Occasion of its 50th Anniversary," 14 July 1990, Box 1, Folder 6, 191.01, Cal Poly Corporate History, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, 8.

give to the school, illuminated a brighter financial future for Cal Poly, still bathed by the uncertain financial nature of Cal Poly's recent past which was still fresh in Kennedy's mind.

Just four years after the Foundation Board decided to develop a fund raising program, the numbers were already beginning to look promising. By June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1971, endowments for Cal Poly totaled \$35,682. By June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1975, they would amount to \$97,938.<sup>39</sup> A 174.5% increase in total endowment net worth in just four years showed that Cal Poly's future was looking bright, especially with the new mechanism for acquiring donations through the Foundation that McPhee had started thirty five years prior.

In the years immediately following, the amount acquired yearly from donations would only continue to grow. In 1976, Cal Poly attempted to lower its operational costs by getting rid of the Foundation position previously established in 1967. Instead of having a Coordinator of Research and Development, the job was distributed to other staff members, and an advancement team was formed. This team was formed within "Administrative Affairs to conduct a low-key advancement program."<sup>40</sup> In the fiscal year 1976-77, the Annual Giving program received \$30,000. From 1977-78, \$60,000 was received by the program. The years 1978-79 brought in \$137,000.<sup>41</sup> This increase in yearly donation amounts during Kennedy's presidency shows the increased importance the administration placed on soliciting donations, and highlights what was to come during Baker's presidency.

There is undoubtedly more information regarding Kennedy's involvement with the increase of donations at Cal Poly, as well as his interactions with the state over school funding to

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<sup>39</sup> "California Polytechnic State University Foundation Balance Sheet Comparison June 30, 1971, to June 30, 1975," Box 1, Folder 15, 191.01, Cal Poly Corporate History, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

<sup>40</sup> "Foundation Annual Report FY 1989-90," Box 1, Folder 2, 191.01, Cal Poly Corporate History, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

<sup>41</sup> "Foundation Annual Report FY 1989-90."

be found. These documents are likely scattered throughout the dozens of boxes that make up the Kennedy Presidential Papers collection in Cal Poly's University Archives. Although more information is definitely there, it is certainly difficult to find.

### **Baker**

Kennedy's short time as president at Cal Poly saw an increase in donations to the campus, but Cal Poly's fundraising power was continuously growing. As more students went to and graduated from Cal Poly, the likelihood of there being wealthy alumni only increased. Baker's presidency would truly show the financial power Cal Poly could amass from its growing donor base. As he told the California State University Board of Trustees in 1982,

The Foundation's move to establish a professional fundraising vehicle for the University was initiated in response to a request from my office. It was clear to me when I accepted the Presidency of Cal Poly in 1979 that the needs of the University could not be met entirely through state appropriations or the traditional funding sources through the Foundation.<sup>42</sup>

During Baker's presidency, Cal Poly greatly increased the visibility of its desire to obtain more donations. Most notable was its Cal Poly Centennial Campaign. This campaign had an incredibly active public relations workforce behind it, with years of planning leading up to it. Cal Poly had obviously established an active mechanism to solicit donations from its ever-growing support base, and it would publicize it accordingly. The plan for the Centennial campaign was divided into eight main phases. Preliminary Planning and Organization, Final Planning Phase, Publication and Materials, Prospect Development Phase, Volunteers/Volunteers Organization,

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<sup>42</sup> "Remarks by Cal Poly President Warren J. Baker before CSU Board of Trustees Committee on Gifts and Public Affairs on the Role of the Cal Poly Foundation in Support of the University's Development Program and Related Activities," 23 March 1982, Box 1, Folder 2, 191.01, Cal Poly Corporate History, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

Campaign Kickoff Phase, Campaign in Motion, and the final Conclusion Phase.<sup>43</sup> The elaborate nature of the planning for this campaign shows the results Cal Poly was intending to achieve, and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the school itself was a wonderful excuse to ask for donations.

The Campaign created many publications to get the word out. One, *Strengthening Our Advantage*, highlighted the funding priorities of the campaign. It established a goal of \$1.5 million for library collections, and \$750,000-\$25 million for the Center for Interactive Learning.<sup>44</sup> Along with publications highlighting the Campaign's goals, multiple publications were made to show Cal Poly's progress in achieving those goals. The pamphlet "Centennial Campaign Total" accounted for all donations given to the university as of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2002. With a graph beginning in 1998 with \$23 million, 1999 with \$46.4 million, 2000 with \$92.2 million, 2001 with \$150.9 million, and finally 2002 with \$167.4 million.<sup>45</sup> Cal Poly was attempting to make its success soliciting donations public, with breakdowns of what programs money was given to and how much. The Cal Poly Centennial Campaign demonstrates the culmination of years of work leading up to it, straying from traditional sources of funding because of its scarcity or unreliable nature. Under Baker, Cal Poly realized its potential fundraising capability based on its donor base alone.

As with Kennedy, the Baker Presidential Papers Collection in the Cal Poly University Archives likely has more information on this topic. However, it is scattered throughout the many boxes of papers compiled over his time as president. More information on this is definitely available, but it is difficult to find.

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<sup>43</sup> "Cal Poly Centennial Campaign Preliminary Timetable and Plan," Box 1, Folder 4, 101.01, Cal Poly Centennial, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

<sup>44</sup> *Strengthening Our Advantage*, Box 1, Folder 4, 101.01, Cal Poly Centennial, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

<sup>45</sup> "Centennial Campaign Total as of June 30, 2002," Box 1, Folder 4, 101.01, Cal Poly Centennial, Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.



## **Conclusion**

Cal Poly's period of financial uncertainty under McPhee during the Great Depression led to an expanded effort between the school and the state to find alternative ways of funding the school, and gradually began to lean towards a system less involved with the state due to its budget restrictions and laws preventing it from loaning its credit. The creation of the Cal Poly Foundation in 1940 was an important step in distancing the school from the jungle of state regulations, but McPhee had to consistently struggle with the law for the right for Cal Poly to use the Foundation due to its unique existence in a system of state schools. Over time, the school would begin to use the Foundation for more donation related goals. This process began during the early years of the Kennedy presidency and increasingly expanded in effectiveness throughout. However, only during Baker's presidency would the true potential of Cal Poly's donor base be revealed with the Cal Poly Centennial Campaign.

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