



(Above) Number of PolyLink members broken down by the decade in which they graduated

NEED AN ECONOMIC LIFELINE IN 2009? Experienced executives say Cal Poly connections – especially among alumni – may be the key.

In 2008, Jennifer Rosky, an alum and a Los Angeles-based recruiter and career coach, placed 18 executives in jobs paying \$100,000-plus. She helped place hundreds more on corporate ladders elsewhere.

But so far in 2009, “all those jobs have all dried up,” Rosky said. “Most places aren’t hiring, and the employers who are hiring are getting 400 applications for every opening. They’re overwhelmed.”

Her advice to those looking for jobs or who think they might need to look soon: be a part of multiple online business and social networks, and join industry-specific as well as location-specific groups within those networks.

“Everything is based on networking now. It’s who you know, and who’s in your network. I tell everyone to create your own web, just like a spider,” she said. “You need to let your network know who you are – and what your ‘leveragable’ skills are.”

**John Sweeney (CE ’89)**, an Alamo-based consultant, agrees. You’ll find Rosky and Sweeney’s own business profiles on both LinkedIn and PolyLink. They log in to both Web networks and groups regularly.

Sweeney has also used the PolyLink Job Boards feature to post openings for clients. As the current president of the Cal Poly Alumni Association, Sweeney is urging all alumni to use PolyLink’s job boards for recruiting and hiring.

In February those PolyLink job board leads included 69 engineering jobs, 24 business and finance jobs, and 26 marketing and sales jobs, many in agriculture-related fields. All represented employers are specifically looking for experienced Cal Poly alumni.

Sweeney is passionate about alumni networking for practical and personal reasons. Currently he is an established consultant with clients in healthcare and agriculture. But when

# HIRING OR LOOKING FOR A JOB?

LOSE YOUR MUSTANG MODESTY AND USE YOUR CAL POLY CONNECTIONS

BY TERESA MARIANI HENDRIX

the economy shrugged off jobs in 1991 and 1992, he was a young grad and one of the nation’s layoff casualties.

“I was crushed after being laid off for the first time and came back down to Cal Poly. I talked to (CENG Dean) Peter Lee, who had been a mentor to me while I was a student, and he personally helped me find my next job,” Sweeney said. “I want our young – and not so young – alumni who are experiencing the same thing now to have that same kind of help from Cal Poly friends, alumni and faculty.”

Despite what may be Mustang modesty, “We need to band together and be very vocal about being Cal Poly alumni, and we need to let people know what that means,” Rosky said.

## USING POLYLINK AND ONLINE COMMUNITIES FOR CAREER NETWORKING

With 10,500-plus alumni members, PolyLink, is a prime place for free online career networking, say Rosky and Sweeney.

PolyLink is free and private – it’s limited to alumni, faculty and staff. Partly because of that online security, most PolyLink member alumni have their business and career information listed on their PolyLink profiles.

While LinkedIn charges for some information and search results, everything in PolyLink is free. Alumni also have the ability to contact roughly 25,000 other alumni through “blind” e-mail sent through the PolyLink network.

Alumni recipients of PolyLink in-system e-mails always have the option of choosing to ignore the message or responding, just like in other online networks. Replies can be direct from the alum’s own e-mail basket, or sent in-network via PolyLink (without revealing any e-mail address information). More than 1,200 PolyLink alumni have said they’re willing to mentor other alumni.

Even if you think your job is secure, Rosky said networking is always a good idea. “The truth is everyone’s career is always in transition.”