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Cal Poly Announces Great Grads from Class of 2006

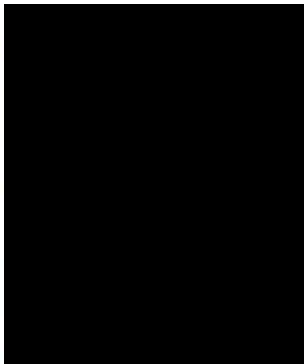
SAN LUIS OBISPO - Cal Poly's class of 2006 includes some 3,700 graduates participating in seven separate commencement ceremonies this year, due to construction at the Alex G. Spanos Stadium.

All the graduates are exceptional. However, if you're looking for interesting grads to profile for a good feature story, consider these "great grads" from class of 2006:

Danielle Burchett

- Burchett will earn her bachelor's degree in psychology with honors from the College of Liberal Arts . She is the outstanding graduating senior in that college's honors program. Burchett is a four-time national champion women's lacrosse goalie. She decided that though she wasn't attending a college on the East Coast, she would try playing an "East Coast" sport at Cal Poly. With no previous experience, she trained and practiced to become a national champ.

Last year she was chosen by the American Psychological Association to participate in an advanced statistical training program in psychology at the University of Maryland . She will attend Kent State in the fall with a full scholarship to pursue her Ph.D. in clinical psychology.



Mariam Khan - Khan will earn her bachelor's degree with honors from the Orfeala College of Business. She and her family moved to the United States

the parents saw all three of their children attend Cal Poly.

Khan's older sister, Rabbia, graduated from the OCOB and received her M.B.A. through the college's 10-month M.B.A. program. Her brother, Ali, is a computer science major in the College of Engineering.

During Mariam Khan's time at Cal Poly, she served as an OCOB student ambassador for two years, and vice president of finance for the Cal Poly chapter of the Golden Key International Honor Society. Khan has a job at Amgen after she graduates.

Molly Lewis

- Lewis is graduating from the College of Liberal Arts with a Social Science major. She will be walking at commencement ceremonies with her father, Steve Lewis, who graduated from Cal Poly 30 years ago. Steve Lewis, a

forestry major who graduated in 1976, did not participate in his commencement ceremony.

Lewis began her college career at Chico State. She decided to move home and attend junior college for a year, planning to apply for Cal Poly. She says she always knew when she graduated from Cal Poly, she wanted her father to walk in the ceremony with her. Molly Lewis arranged with Student Life and Leadership to have Steve Lewis pay commencement fees for his cap and gown and receive 10 tickets. The father and daughter will walk in the College of Liberal Arts commencement ceremony on Sunday, June 11, at 10 a.m. The Lewis family has kept the plan secret to surprise many family and friends who will attend from out of the area.



Sonia Nteso - Nteso will graduate from the College of Science and Mathematics with a degree in biological science and a minor in Spanish. After graduation, she will return to her home in Africa, and plans to work with her mother in their hometown hospital in Maluti, Lesotho, to help with the fight against AIDS in southern Africa.

Nteso moved to the United States in 1994 with her family at the age of 11. She has two older brothers and three younger sisters, who are triplets. Her parents moved back to Africa in 2000, and Nteso stayed in the United States with an aunt to complete her undergraduate degree. Her father died in 2002.

Nteso has been involved in the Allensworth Mentoring Program, the Society of Black Engineers and Scientists, and several other student organizations. She is a strong community service supporter at Cal Poly. She organized and gave an HIV 101 seminar for HIV Vaccine Awareness day in May to help dispel myths surrounding the disease. For her senior project, Nteso worked with biological sciences Professor Candace Winstead to research where drug trials for AIDS failed and why.

Nteso also volunteers with the AIDS Support Network in San Luis Obispo. Her dream is to develop a similar program program in her African hometown.



Kenny Sharma

- Sharma will graduate with a computer science degree after spending only two years at Cal Poly. He attended Oakgrove High School in San Jose, where he was able to complete Advanced Placement courses to satisfy all of his college-level general education requirements in math and English. At Cal Poly, he was able to focus on all of his major courses. Sharma has a job waiting for him at Lockheed in Santa Maria after he graduates.

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