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Former Cal Poly Ag Dean Returns to Campus as Senior Advisor to the President

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Former Cal Poly dean of agriculture Joe Jen, who has been serving as under secretary of research, education and economics at the U.S. Department of Agriculture since 2001, has returned to Cal Poly as a senior advisor to President Warren J. Baker and California State University Chancellor Charles Reed.

In his new position as senior advisor to the president for special agricultural and federal initiatives, Jen will assist President Baker and the chancellor on systemwide strategies and provide support for Cal Poly and the CSU in areas related to federal policies and programs.

“Cal Poly, and in particular the College of Agriculture, are indeed fortunate to have Joe Jen return to campus to advise on federal policy and programs,” President Baker said. “Joe will draw on his combined academic, government and industry experience to help Cal Poly identify opportunities to expand its collaboration with the federal government in the areas of undergraduate and graduate education and applied research.”

Working with the dean of research and graduate programs, Jen will support faculty in developing initiatives across the full spectrum of agriculture disciplines, from crop and soil science, to irrigation technology, to agricultural business and marketing, and domestic and international policy.

He will also recommend government experts to conduct seminars on campus and work with students to identify internships and other opportunities with the federal government and help develop international program opportunities.

Jen was appointed by U.S. President George Bush in 2001 as under secretary of research, education and economics at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, overseeing matters related to agricultural research, education and economic and statistical analyses in the United States and abroad. He was responsible for four agencies, with nearly 13,000 employees at 160 locations across the country.

As dean Cal Poly's College of Agriculture from 1992 to 2001, Jen was responsible for personnel, budget and program administration for the College of Agriculture's 10 departments, 17 degree programs and 3,500 students.

Jen's academic experience includes posts at the University of Georgia, Michigan State University, Clemson University, and the National Taiwan University.

From 1980 to 1986, he served as the director of research for the Campbell Institute of Science and Technology, a division of Campbell Soup Co.

Jen has authored numerous book chapters, dozens of scientific articles, and has given more than 1,000 presentations to professional, civic, government and international organizations.

Born in China, Jen earned a Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural chemistry from the National Taiwan University in Taipei. He earned a master's degree in food science from Washington State University in Pullman, a Ph.D. in biochemistry from UC Berkeley, and an MBA from Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville.

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