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Contact: Mary Somerville  
Cal Poly Kennedy Library  
(805) 756-1398; [msomervi@calpoly.edu](mailto:msomervi@calpoly.edu)

## Cal Poly Names Two Research Scholars for New Program

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly has named two Research Scholars in Residence as the first appointees in a new university program designed to encourage and support faculty research and professional development.

USC Professor Emeritus George Bekey and Georgia Institute of Technology Professor Emeritus Theodore Hill will assist Cal Poly faculty and staff with research, project development, grant-writing, scholarly publications and interdisciplinary concept development. They will also serve as mentors for students in the University Honors Program and help integrate the Honors Program into research projects.

Bekey, a computer scientist, and Hill, a mathematician, were selected in part because of their extensive backgrounds in research and their experience in attracting funding from federal agencies.

Bekey served as associate dean for research in USC's School of Engineering from 1995 to 2000 and as chair of that campus's Computer Science Department from 1984 to 1989. He has more than 35 years of research funding from such agencies as the National Science Foundation, NASA, and the National Institutes of Health.

His primary research emphasis for the past 20 years has been in the field of robotics, including work on walking machines, human-like hands for robots, and the development of robot helicopters. He has published more than 200 technical papers and several books, including a major book on robotics.

Hill has spent the past three decades studying and conducting research in the mathematical theory of probability and Benford's law, which deals with an unexpected phenomenon in numerical data that is now being used by the IRS and other agencies to detect fraud.

Hill's numerous research awards including funding from such federal agencies as the Air Force Office of Scientific Research, the Fulbright Commission, and the National Science Foundation. He is currently working on a National Security Agency research grant through Cal Poly. He has been granted two Fulbright awards, an Israel-U.S. Bi-national Science Foundation Grant, a NATO/NSF grant to the Netherlands and has taught and conducted research in Israel, Italy, Mexico, Costa Rica and Amsterdam.

"The new Research Scholars in Residence program will not only enrich the academic and scholastic environment at Cal Poly, it will also attract research grant funding and provide an environment that promotes interaction among scholars regardless of their disciplines," said Cal Poly Interim Provost Robert Detweiler.

Another component of the program will be the development of cross-disciplinary projects, which will provide a great variety of research challenges. "The most interesting problems are found on the boundaries between disciplines," Bekey said.

The Kennedy Library and the University Honors Program developed the Research Scholars in Residence program to foster "collaborative intellectual communities of people who have the expertise and experience, as well as the time, to devote to scholarly pursuits," according to Dean of Library Services Hiram Davis. "The program reflects a national trend to enrich the academic and scholastic environment while focusing on attracting distinguished scholars," he said.

The program is also expected to expand Cal Poly and San Luis Obispo County outreach and service activities related to research and professional development and result in enriched intellectual and cultural activities for the campus and community.

For more information about the Research Scholars in Residence Program, visit <http://lib.calpoly.edu/research/scholars/>

or contact Mary Somerville, assistant dean for information and instructional services at Kennedy Library, at [msomervi@calpoly.edu](mailto:msomervi@calpoly.edu) or 756-1398.

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California Polytechnic State University  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407  
805.756.7266  
[polynews@calpoly.edu](mailto:polynews@calpoly.edu)