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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Cal Poly Organizes International Symposium on
Building Disaster-Resistant Communities Nov. 3-5**

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Hurricanes Katrina and Rita offer reminders that no community is totally immune from significant natural and human-caused disasters.

Reducing the risks posed by such catastrophic events is the topic of a symposium that will bring international architects, engineers and planners to Cal Poly Thursday, Nov. 3 through Saturday, Nov. 5.

The International Symposium on Urban Disaster Risk Reduction and Regeneration Planning will gather some of the best minds from around the world to discuss how to build and, if necessary, rebuild more durable, disaster-resistant communities.

The public is invited. Those interested in attending should register online at crp@calpoly.edu by Tuesday, Nov. 1. Call (805) 756-1315 for more information.

The symposium will help channel awareness about recent disasters in South Asia, the Gulf Coast and in Pakistan into action to regenerate stricken communities, according to William Siembieda, department head, Cal Poly City and Regional Planning. Symposium organizers hope to educate engineers, planners, architects, landscape architects, natural resource managers, urban administrators and citizens about creating safe, sustainable communities.

"Investing in disaster-resistant cities pays big-time dividends," Siembieda said. "Saving your family's lives and protecting your property are worth the effort. Offsetting disaster and being prepared are core values of the community and the best investments you can make."

Some of the featured speakers will include:

- Paul Farmer, executive director and CEO, American Planning Association
- Haruo Hayashi, director, Research Center for Disaster Reduction Systems, Kyoto University, Japan
- Alejandro Linayo, University of the Andes, Merida, Venezuela
- Kathleen Tierney, director, Natural Hazards Center, Boulder, Colorado

Speakers will discuss what has been learned from recent disasters and examine natural and human-caused risks, planning for catastrophic events, roles of design professionals, improving disaster recovery, as well as economic and social issues.

The event will also provide information about how to join rebuilding efforts in stricken areas, such as New Orleans, the Gulf Coast and Southern Asia.

Financial support for the symposium has come from Cal Poly, the Firewise Communities Program, ImageCat Inc., MacManus Construction, and Public Entity Risk Institute.

For more information, go to <http://planning.calpoly.edu> or send an e-mail to crp@calpoly.edu.

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