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Oct. 15, 2003

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cal Poly Horticulture Judging Team Wins National Contest Third Straight Year

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- For the third year in a row, the Cal Poly Horticulture Judging Team has taken first place at the national contest held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Society for Horticultural Science.

Besides placing first overall in the comprehensive test of horticultural knowledge, the four-member team took first place in the nursery and vegetable divisions, and the members -- all environmental horticultural science majors -- placed in the individual competitions.

Daniel Stever, from Manitowoc, Wis., was the best overall individual student in the nation and placed second in floriculture.

Kearney Brooks, from Santa Rosa, placed third overall and in the fruit and nut division and tied for third on the written exam.

Jon-Paul Williams, San Diego, placed second in the nursery division, and Amanda Clanton, Valley Center, placed second on the written exam.

The contest is divided into four divisions: floriculture, nursery, fruits and nuts, and vegetables. Students judge commodity quality, take an extensive written test covering horticulture, botany and plant physiology, and try to identify 400 nursery and floriculture crops by scientific name.

The team began preparing last spring and worked over the summer to learn plant identification. Final training included a two-day intensive workshop and a visit to the Arnold Arboretum in Boston.

This year's meeting was the centennial gathering of the American Society for Horticultural Science. It was held in Providence, R.I., Oct. 4.

Selection and fund-raising for next year's team, which will compete in Austin, Texas, in August, is already under way.

The team is coached by Horticulture and Crop Science Professor Robert Rice.

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