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California Polytechnic State University

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cal Poly Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Center To Celebrate One-Year Anniversary

SAN LUIS OBISPO - Cal Poly's Pride Alliance, the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) Center will celebrate its one-year anniversary Oct. 10 with a host of activities beginning with a breakfast reception at 10 a.m.

"It's hard to believe that it has only been a year," said Pat Harris, former coordinator and current board member. "We have had so much growth in our student use of the center, and we hope that more faculty and staff members will soon be involved." The Pride Alliance, a program of Cal Poly's Student Life and Leadership, opened on National Coming Out Day in 2002.

After the breakfast, seminars will be offered to the students and faculty and staff members, as well as the public, in preparation for National Coming Out Day, Oct. 11. Each seminar will focus on a particular aspect of the "coming out" process.

At 11 a.m. Dave Smiley, director of the Interfaith Campus Collation, will speak on how to come out as an LGBT individual in the faith community.

At 1 p.m. Mel Commuso, student coordinator of Pride Alliance, will talk about how to come out to your friends.

"This seminar will give people a chance to better understand the coming out process," Commuso said. "You are actually hearing from others and expressing your own feelings."

At 2 p.m. Leathe Allard a doctoral intern with the university's Counseling Services, will discuss how to come out to family members.

From 3 to 5 p.m. an "Ally Training" is planned. The event, the first of seven such trainings to be held at Cal Poly during the year, is designed to provide a greater understanding of LGBT issues. The programs, titled "Respect Zone," are made possible by a grant from the San Luis Obispo Community Foundation. Ally Training, which was originated by Cal Poly's Housing and Residential Life department, is offered as a means to educate the campus community on how to be supportive of LGBT individuals in the workplace and elsewhere and to ensure those individuals are treated fairly and equitably.

Maya Andlig, gender and sexuality program coordinator, said she hopes the event will be one of many that "allies" can attend.

"The events will launch another eventful year for the LGBT Center. Future plans include a monthly speakers series," she said.

For more information and a schedule of events, including locations, call Pride Alliance at 756-PRDE (7733) or Andlig at 756-5839.

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