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California Polytechnic State University

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Contact: Jo Ann Lloyd

(805) 756-151

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cal Poly Psychology Professor Seeking Participants for Studies in Age-Related Memory Changes

SAN LUIS OBISPO - Cal Poly Psychology Professor Gary Laver was awarded a \$100,000 grant to conduct studies on age-related changes in memory, and he is seeking volunteers between the ages of 40 and 80 to help with his research. A small stipend will be paid to participants.

The Academic Research Enhancement Award, from the National Institute on Aging, will be used to conduct four experiments in the area of adult age-related changes in memory processes that operate without a person's conscious awareness, Laver said.

"These so-called automatic processes allow us to understand -- in an apparently instantaneous way -- what we hear and read and to anticipate what will likely come next in spoken and written material," Laver explained. "Other automatic memory processes are involved in the establishment of new memories or in the creation of new associations among things we already know.

"It's now believed that some of these functions stand up fairly well as adults age from their 20s through their 70s and beyond; other functions do not fare so well," he said. "My interest is in determining whether some of these memory processes might actually improve with age and in investigating the manner in which other automatic memory processes decline."

Anyone 40 to 80 years old who is interested in being a part of the federally funded research project on memory and vocabulary skills should contact Laver in the Psychology and Child Development Department at Cal Poly. Participants earn \$15 for two 1 1/2-hour sessions. Call Laver at 756-5411 to arrange an appointment.

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Cal Poly Public Affairs

California Polytechnic State University

San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

805.756.7266

polynews@calpoly.edu