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California Polytechnic State University

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cal Poly College of Agriculture Honors Two Faculty Members

SAN LUIS OBISPO - Cal Poly's College of Agriculture has honored the entrepreneurial spirit of two longtime faculty members for their dedication to Student Enterprise Projects.

Professors Robert Spiller and Bob McNeil each received a \$500 award from the Al and Rose Amaral Agricultural Enterprise Program Endowment.

Spiller joined the Cal Poly faculty in 1989 and teaches in the Animal Science Department's poultry program. McNeil joined the faculty in 1976 and teaches in the Horticulture and Crop Science Department, focusing on citrus and avocado production.

Spiller and McNeil together have provided faculty leadership to dozens of enterprise projects involving hundreds of students. Each year, about 350 students participate in 60 different enterprise projects. The students are responsible for the production, management and marketing of their "product," which can range from livestock to dairy products to horticulture to crops.

"Enterprise projects take student learning into a whole new dimension of marketplace challenges outside of the classroom," explained Associate Dean of Agriculture Mark Shelton. "Students get their arms around the whole value chain of food production, from idea to product to consumer."

Amaral, longtime executive director of the Cal Poly Foundation and a Cal Poly alumnus, said he and his wife support the endowment award because they are very familiar with the challenges of entrepreneurship in an academic setting. "I hope others will join us. To be successful, it takes a good idea well executed, dedicated faculty, eager students, and money," he said. "We've always had a bumper crop of the first three. It's exciting to see what these kids can do with a little

venture capital!"

-30-

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