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California Polytechnic State University

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cal Poly Grad Named National School Superintendent of the Year

A Cal Poly graduate has been named national Superintendent of the Year by the American Association of School Administrators.

Gail Anderson Uilkema, now superintendent of schools in Piedmont, was recognized at the association's recent national conference in San Diego.

Uilkema earned her master's degree in education at Cal Poly in 1975 after earning a master's in anthropology at UC Santa Barbara. She earned a doctorate in educational administration at Auburn University in Alabama.

In 1976 in Auburn, while still a student, Uilkema took her first school principal's job and helped quickly turn a "disaster" of an elementary school into a success that won national honors. She then returned to her native California and has been superintendent in Piedmont since 1987. The district's high school students earn some of the state's highest scores.

Dean Bonnie Konopak of Cal Poly's University Center for Teacher Education said, "I am delighted that one of our graduates has been awarded this honor. Superintendents play a vital role in student achievement, as has been acknowledged recently by President Bush's reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 'No Child Left Behind.' Preparing administrators to assume leadership positions will be an increasingly important component of providing solutions to the complex issues facing tomorrow's schools."

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