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California Polytechnic State University

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Civil Engineering Club Sweeps Regional Conference Competition, Heads to Nationals

Cal Poly's Society of Civil Engineers student club placed first overall for the eighth consecutive year at the recent American Society of Civil Engineers Pacific Southwest Regional Conference April 11-13 at UC Irvine.

Some 50 Cal Poly club members took part in all 14 competitions at the conference, scoring first place in all major events, including a quiz bowl and contests involving steel bridge design and concrete canoe design.

The civil engineering club has placed first overall in the ASCE division competition eight of the past 11 years. At this year's conference, teams from 17 universities participated, including UC San Diego, UC Irvine, UCLA, the University of Arizona, the University of Hawaii and the University of Nevada Las Vegas.

The steel bridge design competition tests both the structural strength of the design and the construction speed of the team, simulating factors civil engineers contend with every day in actual projects. The Cal Poly team's time for its first-place design was less than four minutes. The steel bridge design team included civil engineering seniors Nicholas Rodrigues of San Luis Obispo, Dave Jennings of Long Beach, Earl Chow of Sacramento and Doug Morales of San Luis Obispo.

"As a civil engineering student, you learn a lot in class," said steel bridge design team captain Rodrigues. "But in a project like this, you get real experience in managing a project, organizing and leading a team and fund raising. It is invaluable."

Club president Giovanni Damato said the concrete canoe competition was particularly gratifying because Cal Poly's team won every race this year as well as the conference's "best product" award. Concrete Canoe

team members were Michelle Chu of San Francisco, Rebecca Lester of Rancho Cordova, Molly Frisbee of Gig Harbor, WA, Arlene Mendoza of Santa Cruz, Jessyca Cochran of San Jacinto, Wilbur Hoyt of Ukiah, Sage Shingle of Santa Barbara, Matt Stetkevich of Yucaipa, Cord Meier of Cloverdale and Cesar Moran of Long Beach.

Damato said the string of ASCE competition wins has brought the team and Cal Poly's College of Engineering industry recognition.

"Employers notice this competition," Damato said. "They always say, 'So, you're from Cal Poly - want a job?' I don't think anyone in civil engineering in the US hasn't heard of Cal Poly, partly as a result of student competition results like this."

As regional winners, the Cal Poly engineering club will go on to compete at the national conference in Madison, Wis., June 20-23. The conference will mark the ASCE's 150th anniversary.

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