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California Polytechnic State University

NEWS RELEASE

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### Cal Poly Receives Grant to Recruit Disadvantaged Students

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Cal Poly will receive some \$294,000 in federal education grant money over the next three years to help recruit and retain students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

The grant money will pay for recruiting at 32 partner high schools and three Upward Bound programs throughout California. The grant money will also pay for a summer program at Cal Poly to help those students better prepare for college-level work, an academic advisor for the students, and training for 20 Cal Poly faculty and staff members who will serve as their mentors.

Cal Poly has pledged to continue the statewide recruitment after the grant has ended, said Harry Hellenbrand, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and chair of the university's Diversity Enhancement Committee. The university actually began the program this year, before receiving the grant money.

Cal Poly will receive \$94,571 from the federal Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) grant program. The university will receive \$103,781 in 2002 and \$95,989 in 2003 for a total of \$294,341.

The grant is important because it will help the university recruit and retain students from underrepresented ethnic groups or socio-economic groups who meet all qualifications to get into Cal Poly but who might not have chosen to apply because they didn't think they could get in, Hellenbrand said.

"We want to make sure that the university draws qualified students from all socio-economic levels and family backgrounds from throughout the state of California. We are unique within the California State University system, in that Cal Poly is the only member of the CSU that

has a statewide mission," Hellenbrand explained.

Attracting students from underrepresented areas and backgrounds has proved difficult because Cal Poly is "impacted" under the CSU admissions system. It receives roughly four times more applicants every year than it has openings for new students.

Thanks in part to the new grant, Cal Poly will now work with its 32 partner high schools to attract qualified students from those schools and help them stay enrolled at the university. The university will also help those students apply for financial aid.

Those partner high schools include Santa Maria High School, Lompoc High School, Cabrillo Senior High School, Salinas High School, Calexico High School, the California Academy of Math and Science, Chula Vista Senior High School, Coachella Valley High School, Dorsey Senior High School, Etiwanda High School, James Logan High School, the Los Angeles Center of Enriched Study, Crenshaw Senior High School, Garfield Senior High School, Roosevelt Senior High School, Newark Memorial High School, Fremont Senior High School, Ramona Senior High School, Alisa High School, Thurgood Marshall Academy, Andrew P. Hill High School and Wasco High School.

The university will select 10 more partner high schools for the program over the next year, Hellenbrand said.

As part of its effort to recruit students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, the university will also reach out to recruit students from three Upward Bound math and science programs for teenagers held at Cal Lutheran University, UC Berkeley and USC.

Upward Bound serves students whose families are classified at 150 percent below the poverty line or whose parents have not completed high school. The program has a proven record of preparing those students for college.

Cal Poly was among 77 U.S. colleges and universities and six in California to receive such grants from the FIPSE program.

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