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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cal Poly Receives \$1.3 Million Dept. of Energy Grant for Algae Biofuels Production Project

SAN LUIS OBISPO – The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has awarded a \$1.3 million grant to a multidisciplinary Cal Poly research team, the Algae Technology Group (ATG), for a project aimed at developing processes that turn waste resources (such as those from municipal and agricultural wastewaters) and nutrients recycled from algae biomass processing into sustainable algal biofuels.

The DOE hopes to significantly improve the sustainability of algae-based biofuels and accelerate technological breakthroughs. The project will be carried out in experimental raceway ponds at the City of San Luis Obispo Water Reclamation Facility, a pilot facility that has been invited to join the U.S. Department of Energy National Algae Biofuel Testbed program.

The DOE research project could result in technology that has the ability to save Californians hundreds of millions of dollars in water recycling costs each year. “Renewable energy and water recycling are necessary for a sustainable society,” said Tryg Lundquist, professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering, “but current technologies are too expensive for many communities to develop themselves.

“Ultimately, we would like our research to help commercialize the use of algae in the wastewater recycling process and production of biofuel.”

ATG is led by Lundquist and Chemistry Professor Corinne Lehr. ATG includes faculty and students from six departments, including environmental engineering, chemistry, biology, animal science, food science, and electrical engineering.

“I am so pleased by Cal Poly students,” Lundquist said. “They take to research projects so easily and seem to appreciate that every bit of data they generate helps this larger worldwide effort to domesticate algae into a biofuel crop.”

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