

May 10, 2013  
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## *Cal Poly Professor Partners with S.F. Giants to Evaluate Junior Giants Program*

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Brian Greenwood, an associate professor in Cal Poly's Recreation, Parks & Tourism Administration (RPTA) Department, was recently approved to continue his third year of a research partnership with the San Francisco Giants Community Fund to evaluate its flagship program, the Junior Giants.

The Junior Giants is a free baseball program providing opportunities for children in underserved communities to stay active in the summer in an environment that promotes healthy choices, character development, and violence prevention.

Entering its 19th year of service, the program has 82 Junior Giants leagues serving communities throughout California and in parts of Nevada and Oregon.

Greenwood's research has centered on assessing the program outcomes by interpreting data from participants, parents and coaches. "Ultimately, survival for today's nonprofit programs depends in part on a successful evaluation program. Evaluation is critical in documenting success and improving critical areas," Greenwood said.

The partnership has generated a wealth of opportunities for Cal Poly students. In the pilot year of 2011, four Cal Poly research assistants were hired to visit leagues and collect data at the 10 pilot sites. In 2012, the study was expanded to include 25 leagues, and an ambassador program was developed in which college students served as regional liaisons for the leagues and research assistants for the study. Eight of the 23 initial ambassadors were Cal Poly students, and RPTA graduate student Jeanette Kim was funded as a graduate assistant.

In 2013, the ambassador program was expanded to 50 paid interns. Eighteen Cal Poly students applied for positions, and the selected ambassadors will be assigned leagues in which to work directly during the eight-week summer season.

In addition, Matt Hanson, a fourth-year Cal Poly RPTA student, was named lead ambassador. He will complete his internship this summer through the program and travel to leagues across the region to assist them and their ambassadors with their operations.

Traveling to leagues and hearing parents speak about what Junior Giants means to them and their children has made an impression on Greenwood. "On my very first league visit, a mother in Modesto chased me down as I was leaving," he said. "She told me how wonderful the program is for her and her boys. 'I live paycheck to paycheck and cannot afford Little League,' she said. 'Without Junior Giants, my boys would not receive the gift of baseball in their lives. It means so much to us.'"

For more information about the Giants Community Fund and the Junior Giants, visit <http://sanfrancisco.giants.mlb.com/sf/community/gcf/juniorgiants.jsp>.

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