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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Cal Poly Business Student Named University Innovation Fellow by NSF-Funded Epicenter

*Professor of Biomedical Engineering Tapped to Lead Faculty Team*

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Cal Poly business administration freshman Nicholas Sinai was one of 66 university students from across the U.S. selected to be a University Innovation Fellow by the National Center for Engineering Pathways to Innovation (Epicenter).

The University Innovation Fellows are a network of student leaders working to create institutional change that will increase student engagement with entrepreneurship, innovation, creativity, design thinking and venture creation. The program aims to help students gain the attitudes, skills and knowledge required to compete in the economy of the future.

The program offers undergraduate students in engineering and other fields the guidance and support to become agents of change and to bring more entrepreneurial activity to their campuses. The fellows have made it their mission to expand the number and quality of resources available to students and to advocate for advancements with external advisory boards, trustees and institutional leaders.

"Every student deserves access to an environment that cultivates the ability to dream, design and deliver," Sinai said. "I'm honored to be in a position to promote the growth of such an environment."

Fellows are sponsored by faculty and administrators at their schools and selected through an application process. Once accepted, students complete six weeks of online training, during which they connect with their network of fellows, examine their current entrepreneurial ecosystems, and formulate action plans for their ideas.

Sinai, who hails from [Dublin, Calif.](#), recently completed the training and will be supported by Cal Poly Orfalea College of Business Professor Jonathan York to create new experiences for students at Cal Poly. York is also faculty director of the Cal Poly Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship.

"We are honored to be part of the Epicenter Program and know that having Nic as our University Innovation Fellow will help us keep a finger on the pulse of student needs and trends in entrepreneurship," York said.

For details about what activities Sinai has planned go

to: [http://universityinnovation.org/wiki/Cal\\_Poly\\_SLO\\_I%26E\\_Improvement\\_and\\_Expansion](http://universityinnovation.org/wiki/Cal_Poly_SLO_I%26E_Improvement_and_Expansion)

Run by Epicenter, the program is funded by the National Science Foundation and directed by Stanford University and the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance.

In addition to the student program, a Cal Poly faculty team led by Bob Crockett, professor of biomedical engineering and director of the General Engineering Program, was one of 12 university teams selected for the Pathways to Innovation Program. The program is designed to help institutions transform the experience of their undergraduate engineering students, ensuring they graduate with the technical skills, tools and attitudes they need to move from ideas to practical solutions that solve real-world problems. The program helps faculty incorporate entrepreneurship and innovation into a range of courses and into co- and extra-curricular offerings.

Epicenter is guiding the faculty and administrator teams through a two-year process to design and implement customized plans for transforming undergraduate education at each institution. Participants receive access to training, content, a national network of engineering and entrepreneurship faculty, and successful models for integrating entrepreneurship into their curriculum.

For more information on the Pathways to Innovation Program, visit:

<http://epicenter.stanford.edu/pathways-to-innovation>.

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