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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cal Poly Places in Top Seven Percent Nationwide at Prestigious Math Competition

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Results were released for the 2013 Putnam Math Competition, and Cal Poly placed an impressive 36th out of 557 schools participating. This is Cal Poly's second top 50 finish in three years on the notoriously difficult annual exam taken by undergraduates.

"To put it in perspective, this is like making it to the third round of the NCAA basketball tournament but with 200 more teams vying for a spot to begin with," said Professor Jonathan Shapiro, who coached the team in past years.

The six-hour exam consists of 12 problems solved in two three-hour sittings, no calculators allowed. Each school selects three students whose scores determine that school's ranking. Out of a possible 120 points, the median score for the 2013 exam was one point.

Brian Jones was the top scorer for Cal Poly with 30 points and an overall ranking of 266th out of 4,113 competitors, which placed him in the top 6 percent. Matthew Rodrigues scored 28 points for a rank of 365th, and freshman Michael Boulos scored 10 points for a rank of 1,324th.

Other Cal Poly students who scored on the Putnam Exam but whose scores did not count toward the final ranking include Lumin Sperling and Tyler Jorgens with 10 points each and Derek Tietze and Michael Bower with eight points each.

"We are very excited about our students' performances," said Professor Morgan Sherman, who coached the team this year. "The exam focuses on creativity and problem-solving skills, areas where Cal Poly students excel, and we see that they can compete with some of the best schools in the country."

For more on the competition and the 2013 results, go to the website for the [Mathematical Association of America](#).

[About the Putnam Competition](#)

The William Lowell Putnam Mathematical Competition is an annual [mathematics competition](#) for [undergraduate college students](#) enrolled at institutions of higher learning in the [U.S.](#) and [Canada](#), and Tel-Aviv University. It awards [scholarships](#) with cash prizes ranging from \$250 to \$2,500 for the top students and \$5,000 to \$25,000 for the top schools. The top 10 individual finishers get tuition waived at Harvard. It is considered by many to be the most prestigious university-level mathematics exam in the world. The competition was founded in 1927 by [Elizabeth Lowell Putnam](#) in memory of her husband, [William Lowell Putnam](#), who was an advocate of intercollegiate intellectual competition. The exam has been offered annually since 1938 and is administered by the [Mathematical Association of America](#).

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