Fruitful Endeavors
A team approach to food safety

THE POWER OF A PEEL: Two visionary alumni use onion waste to fuel their business
Everyone knows the value of good communication in our daily lives. It might be communicating with those we work with, our families, or within our diverse interest groups. Thus, I am pleased to write to you again as members of the Cal Poly Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences family with this issue of Agriview.

Agriview sports a fresh new look thanks to new Director of Communications Ellen Cohune. A Cal Poly Communication Studies graduate with extensive experience in marketing and public relations, Ellen most recently served as the North American marketing manager for the HTC-Columbia professional cycling team. She launched a college Facebook page, so find us here: www.facebook.com/calpoly.cafes. Join our conversation and keep up to date with college news and events. And now you can receive future editions of Agriview electronically by going to www.cafes.calpoly.edu.

Europe recently endured a significant E. coli outbreak. Recognizing that all eyes are on the safety of our food, this edition of Agriview contains two stories about our efforts to understand and educate our students about food safety. I can assure you that we are cognizant of the extreme importance of this topic, not only to the health and welfare of our citizens but also to the success of agricultural industries. We strive to increase our activities related to food safety issues, as well as engage other programs at the university in understanding the complete food system from the farm to the fork. Our students are our future leaders and have been for more than 100 years. Our Learn by Doing educational model is ensuring they can meet the challenge.

Thank you for your continued interest in Cal Poly and the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences.

Dean David J. Wehner, Ph.D.
Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
LEADERSHIP

“I’M A PRODUCT OF LEARN BY DOING, AND I DOUBT ANY INSTITUTION DOES IT BETTER THAN CAL POLY.”

President Armstrong, in his Kentucky Association FFA jacket, at the 2011 State FFA Judging Finals with the 2010 California State Officers.

A DISTINGUISHED RECORD

Degrees:
- B.S., Murray State University, Animal Science major, Biology minor
- M.S., North Carolina State University, Physiology major, Biochemistry minor
- Ph.D., North Carolina State University, Physiology

Experience:
- Dean and Professor, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Michigan State University (2001-10)
- As dean, helped raise more than $200 million and increased annual development funds 250 percent
- Department Head and Professor, Animal Sciences, Purdue University (1997-2001)
- Professor, Animal Science, North Carolina State University (1986-97)

Awards:
- Certificate of Appreciation for Distinguished Service as Chair of Board on Agriculture Assembly’s CREATE-21, for overhaul of research, extension program and teaching components of U.S. Farm Bill, 2009
- Alumni Distinguished Professor for Undergraduate Teaching, North Carolina State University, 1993

MEET PRESIDENT JEFFREY D. ARMSTRONG

Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong understands the value of Learn by Doing. “I grew up on a farm where there was an emphasis on doing. And of course, doing forces some learning,” Armstrong said. “But it was in college and later in graduate school when I truly grasped its value. I realized how my learning accelerated exponentially once I had to apply classroom theory to real-world problems, whether it was in my labs or completing hands-on projects for my research. There’s no better way to learn than requiring the application of theory to real problems.”

Armstrong is motivated to help Cal Poly maintain its renowned hands-on education model by developing alternate sources of funding. “Learn by Doing is non-negotiable,” he said. “Since 2007-08, state funding to Cal Poly has declined from $150 million annually to what will be about $97 million for 2011-12. That’s a 33 percent reduction in four years. And this is part of a long-term trend in California. Less than 25 years ago, the state funded 90 percent of the cost of educating a student. Today, the state funds less than half. So I know that a top priority will be expanding grants, contracts and private philanthropy.”

A great example of that kind of partnership with industry is the $5 million that Leprino Foods is investing in Cal Poly. “Leprino Foods is a worldwide leader in dairy food production,” Armstrong said. “They value our graduates, and they want to make sure we continue to produce innovative specialists in dairy science.”

When he took the helm as Cal Poly’s ninth permanent president, Armstrong hit the ground running. Now, with the Class of 2011 successfully launched to pursue their careers, Armstrong reflects on his first months on campus. “I’ve spent my first few months listening and observing. What I’ve heard from all corners of the university is immense pride in what Cal Poly has achieved — and a real belief that Cal Poly can accomplish even more. I find that exciting.”

“The bedrock of our teaching approach will remain Learn by Doing. It’s in Cal Poly’s DNA. My job will be to make sure Learn by Doing not only survives, but thrives in the years to come.”
DAIRY SCIENCE GAINS $5 MILLION FROM LEPRINO FOODS

Cal Poly’s Dairy Science Department will receive $5 million from Denver-based Leprino Foods Co.

The pledge will support an endowed faculty position, cover costs to remodel dairy science teaching laboratories, and provide initial start-up costs for a new master’s degree program.

The first of its kind in the United States, the new Master of Professional Studies in Dairy Foods degree program will include classroom study, hands-on production, and an industry internship. The goal is to produce graduates who will be well prepared to enter California’s dairy foods industry.

Recognizing Cal Poly’s hands-on program as an essential component in the training it seeks for its employees, Leprino Foods believes that this partnership is critical to the goal of developing the next generation of dairy industry leaders. For many years, Leprino Foods, which operates three plants in California, has had great success hiring Cal Poly Dairy Science graduates. The company is also a research partner through Cal Poly’s Dairy Products Technology Center and buys milk from Cal Poly’s dairy.

“Leprino Foods and Cal Poly have always been committed to innovation in the dairy industry, and Leprino Foods is excited about this opportunity. This investment will help develop the future talent in our industry,” said Dan Vecchiarelli, vice chairman of the board, Leprino Foods.

Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong believes the partnership is a crucial accomplishment in Cal Poly’s overall effort to attract the best talent possible and to address the needs of the growing dairy industry. “We are proud that Leprino Foods has selected Cal Poly as a long-term partner, and its commitment will inspire other industry leaders to join in support of Dairy Science,” Armstrong said.
REACHING OUT • Cal Poly’s regional development directors are your direct link to the university. This field team enables our valued alumni, friends and industry partners to learn firsthand about all the exciting things happening on campus.

ALLIE JONES  
California Central Valley  
Jones started at Cal Poly in 2006 as scholarship coordinator, establishing and administering scholarships, awards and endowments for the university. She came from Children’s Hospital Central California in her native Fresno, where she was the foundation representative for major and planned gifts.

RICHARD LEROY  
Northern California  
LeRoy became the first regional development director in 2009. He previously served as director of Pacific Programs for International Education, where he managed faculty-led study-abroad programs, then as assistant director of the Cal Poly Alumni Association, managing regional alumni chapters.

ROSEY PARKS  
Central Coast  
As director of advancement at Cal Poly’s Kennedy Library, Parks created a fundraising program from the ground up. Previously she was Cal Poly’s associate director, Alumni Relations, responsible for chapter development, communication, volunteer coordination and the CPAA travel program.

CAROL WIDMER  
Southern California  
Widmer’s extensive fundraising experience includes director of Planned Giving for CSU Fresno and fundraising for Union College in New York and for hospitals in Ohio and Los Angeles. Widmer is a native of Chicago and a certified financial planner who moved to California in 2000.

RAISE A GLASS TO CAL POLY  
Cal Poly’s Wine and Viticulture program received the prestigious 2011 Lifetime Achievement Award from the California Exposition & State Fair. The award is presented each year for outstanding contributions to the advancement of California’s wine industry.

“Since its inception, Cal Poly’s Wine and Viticulture program has evolved to become the largest program of its kind in the United States,” said Program Director John Peterson. “We are honored to be recognized among past recipients such as Program Director Jerry Lohr, Robert Gallo and Peter Mondavi, and we are proud that our hands-on interdisciplinary learning experience continues to produce the future leaders of the California wine industry.”
START YOUR ENGINES!

Cal Poly students are known for parlaying their hands-on learning into exciting real-world jobs. One career-minded student, Kimberly Saavedra (Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration '13), pictured above with Andy Lally, stepped up to the podium when she turned an internship with NASCAR into a full-time seasonal position with the stock car racing sanctioning body.

Saavedra is one of four selected students to participate in NASCAR’s Nationwide Diversity Mentorship program. “I learned so much about the sport during my mentorship,” said Saavedra. “While the thought of so much traveling to seven states in nine weeks this summer seems a bit daunting, I am ready for the challenge and the adventure of living on the road with NASCAR. I am blown away that my dream has become a reality.”

FORESTRY FACULTY MEMBERS HONORED

Three Natural Resources Management faculty members named Fellows by the Society of American Foresters

Dr. Norm Pillsbury is a former NRM department head and led the program to accreditation, establishing the major in Forestry and Natural Resources. Among his numerous awards is the Francis Raymond Forester of the Year Award.

Dr. Wally Mark was a key founder of our forestry concentration. He was associate dean of the college, director of Institutional Studies, head of the Dairy Science Department and director of Swanton Pacific Ranch. He received the CAFES outstanding faculty award in 2005.

Dr. Doug Piirto, head of the NRM Department, was appointed by the governor as a member of the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection in 2007. Piirto’s leadership in SAF includes chair of the Los Padres and High Sierra Chapters and chair for the SoCal SAF State Society.

NEW HEADS FOR TWO DEPARTMENTS

• JAY NOEL is the new chair of Cal Poly’s Agribusiness Department. Noel joined the AGB faculty in 1990, after earning his degree from UC Davis. He teaches agricultural trade policy, marketing, economics, natural resource policy and information systems.

• The Food Science and Nutrition Department welcomes Department Head GOUR CHOUDHURY. Choudhury comes from CSU Fresno, where he was director of the Center for Food Science and Nutrition Research. His current research includes innovative technologies for market expansion of California products, and he holds six patents in process engineering and automation.
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING ASSOCIATION TEAM WINS NATIONAL COMPETITION

Cal Poly’s National Agricultural Marketing Association (NAMA) Team earned first place at the 2011 National Agri-Marketing Association student marketing competition in Kansas City, Mo. The award-winning team of Agribusiness majors presented a comprehensive marketing plan for their client, Future Fruit, LLC, a Visalia, Calif.-based producer of Liora seedless lemons.

In the annual competition among 30 teams, Cal Poly edged out second-place Purdue University, taking first place for the eighth time in 22 years. The winning plan, aimed at marketing the patented seedless lemons to high-end restaurants in the San Francisco and Los Angeles areas, was developed by 14 students.

“The team’s achievement is a testament to the quality of its dedicated teamwork, our faculty and the department as a whole,” said Brandon Banner, Cal Poly’s graduate student NAMA team adviser.

“The NAMA program and this national competition have been the most rewarding experiences of my education,” said senior LeighAnne Thomsen of Newport Beach, Calif. “It provided me with a real-world simulation and has truly prepared me for a successful future.”

QUIZ BOWL TEAM WINS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

The Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration Department’s Academic Quiz Bowl team was crowned champion of the inaugural National Recreation and Park Association Academic Quiz Bowl in Minneapolis, Minn., in spring 2011.

The event coincided with the association’s Annual Congress, attended by more than 5,000 park and recreation professionals, students and faculty from all over the United States. The winning team included RPTA students Amber Black, Amy Lepp, Kristen McClay and Kelsey Pavao.

“Our students prevailed with poise and an incredible performance demonstrating their knowledge in many facets of our discipline. This really puts Cal Poly at the forefront of our discipline on a national stage,” said RPTA Department Head Bill Hendricks.

Using a familiar Jeopardy-style format, the Quiz Bowl questions were based on accreditation standards and other categories related to the recreation industry. Cal Poly beat out Western Illinois, Texas A&M and BYU in the final single-elimination competition.
THE SCIENCE OF FOOD SAFETY

In a unique collaboration, Cal Poly’s packaging research consortium explores questions of sustainability and safety.
Companies have raced to meet the perceived demand for ‘environmentally friendly’ products. But by neglecting to calculate the true cost of package sustainability, one that is driven by science and not emotion, these companies are neglecting the fundamental requirements for long-term business success. The result is an open door to unscrupulous and opportunistic firms whose claims of sustainability are often exaggerated and sometimes demonstrably false.

—Keith Vorst, Ph.D.

In today’s global economy, the safety of the foods we eat — and the packages they come in — is of paramount concern. After all, fresh fruits and vegetables often come from far-flung sources, and the recycled plastics used to extend their shelf life are often of unknown provenance. With all these variables, how can we be sure that no contaminants are entering our food supply?

This is the critical question that motivates Cal Poly produce scientist Wyatt Brown, Ph.D., to do his groundbreaking research into the packaging of fresh foods. "We are very concerned about having safe plastics, especially in the packages used for pre-cut foods, which are vulnerable to contamination," said Brown. "There’s no supervisory agency policing the contaminants in these materials. As scientists, we have an important opportunity to proactively perform data-driven studies that we hope will lead to improved food safety. We are trying to give a wake-up call — to suppliers, packagers, even consumers — who have not thought about whether any real science has been performed on these products."

A FRUITFUL PARTNERSHIP

This vital “wake-up call” is, in fact, one of the most exciting recent developments on campus, because it represents a whole new model of conducting research. Brown is the director of the Cal Poly Cooperative Research Consortium in Packaging Science and Technology, an interdisciplinary partnership between industry members and the university. Founded in 2008, the consortium is the first of its kind at Cal Poly, connecting two colleges — the Orfalea College of Business, which is well known for its Industrial Technology Department, and the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences — with industry partners that pool resources to fund research projects of shared interest.

The consortium’s objectives are driven by the real-world needs of its members. In addition to studying the health impact of packaging on fresh produce, the consortium analyzes packaging sustainability, forensics, design, materials and processes, and conducts life-cycle assessment studies. The overarching goals are to improve shelf life and food safety, advance the use of greener materials and processes, and develop packaging that uses less material.

The consortium has 12 industry partners — including Dow, Earthbound Farm, Ocean Mist Farms Inc., and Safeway — that contribute to the program. The members vote on three or four research projects each year and get first access to the data, which they can apply to their own industries for no extra licensing cost.

“The power of this model is that it leverages each company’s investment,” said Lou Tornatzky, Ph.D., area chair and professor of Industrial Technology at Cal Poly, and the consortium’s founding director. “For a nominal investment, each company gets access to a lot of research. At the same time, the work being done advances the science and technology of the field. As with most things, people can do more together than they can individually, and collaborations like
We view the consortium as a win-win. The industry partners get timely research, an amplification of their research dollars, and the opportunity to improve their operations. Cal Poly gets a stable cash flow for applied research, our students gain practical experience, and the faculty advances its knowledge. The interdisciplinary collaboration is the strength of this approach. It allows us to generate agenda-free, defensible data. And data is power.

—Wyatt Brown, Ph.D.
GOT MILK?

ALL MILK CONTAINERS ARE NOT CREATED EQUAL — AND A RECENT CONSORTIUM STUDY TURNED UP SOME SURPRISING FINDINGS

The research team chose three types of plastic milk jugs — what they call the “original,” the “cube” and the “stackable” — for a life-cycle comparison. With their classic, tapered design, the original and cube containers needed to be stacked in plastic crates, adding another layer of materials; the stackable model, with its distinctive flat top, does not. It might seem, then, that stackable jugs are a better choice in terms of sustainability. But the researchers’ detailed analysis concluded that, in fact, the opposite is true.

Why? One reason is that the stackable containers require more plastic per unit in order to be stackable, and this contributes to greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption. The scientists analyzed a host of other factors, including waste, transportation and refrigeration, and concluded that the stackable jugs were more of an environmental burden than the other models, even with the extra crates they require.

So next time you shop the supermarket aisles, bear this in mind: A product’s carbon footprint may be more — or less — than meets the eye.

BUILDING ON SUCCESS

Now entering its fourth year, the consortium already has conducted a wide range of studies, overseen by three Cal Poly professors: Brown, assistant department head for Horticulture and Crop Science, and Keith Vorst, Ph.D., and Jay Singh, Ph.D., of Cal Poly’s Industrial Technology Department. While the three frequently work together, each brings a distinct set of skills and interests to the mix.

For example, Brown, a postharvest technologist who focuses on pre-cut fruits and vegetables, and Vorst, a plastics expert, have combined their expertise to study heavy metals in plastic food packaging. One of their current projects involves looking at how contaminants such as chromium, lead and nickel can potentially migrate from recycled plastics onto food. “Because we don’t always know where recycled plastic comes from, heavy metal contamination is a heightened consumer concern,” explained Brown. “It’s a large-scale problem and not just with plastics from China, but also from India, South America and elsewhere. We are finding that just because something is called sustainable and is 100 percent recycled does not mean it has fewer health costs than virgin plastic.”

Vorst underscores that the consortium has a nonbiased approach to “sustainability,” a term, he said, to which people have an emotional attachment. “Green sells nowadays, but what does ‘green’ mean?” asked Vorst. “Our work is about separating fact from fiction.”

The third team leader, Singh, studies packaging life cycles, distribution, and tracking and traceability, which, he emphasizes, is of utmost importance for consumable goods. His projects have included assessing the sustainability of different containers for strawberries, carrots and grapes, and comparing the environmental burdens of three common types of milk containers (see sidebar).

The success of the consortium’s work to date has created palpable excitement on campus, and plans to expand the consortium’s scope are already in the works. “We’re hoping to expand the membership of the consortium this year to a ‘critical mass’ of 20 members,” stated Brown. “By doing so, we will be able to form research clusters within the consortium — migration and food safety, plastics composition, life-cycle analysis and traceability — to better serve the diverse interests of our membership.”

This help us realize our mission as a polytechnic university.”

It also creates an unparalleled learning opportunity for students. Every year, several graduate students and senior-level undergraduates join the consortium as researchers, working with state-of-the-art analytic equipment, learning about experimental design, and contributing to the field’s knowledge base. “Our students gain valuable experience that will help them be more marketable when applying for jobs,” said Brown. “They also get immense satisfaction in doing real-world research that helps ensure the safety of food and plastics.”
ONION POWER

For the two enterprising alumni who created Gills Onions, waste products make dollars and sense.
Steve Gill (Crop Science ’75) and David Gill (Crop Science ’73) had just one customer when they started their onion-processing company in 1983. Fast-forward a few decades, however, and the brothers’ business is booming. Gills Onions is now among its industry’s largest operators, processing up to a million pounds of onions per day, and delivering peeled and diced reds and yellows to grocery stores, restaurants and food plants across the country.

But being an agriculture heavyweight doesn’t lend itself to tidiness: The Gills’ Oxnard plant generates as much as 300,000 pounds of onion waste a day. And as the business has grown, figuring out what to do with the detritus has become even more challenging. A few years ago, the situation became critical, with too much waste to continue trucking to the onion fields for compost.

“It was costing us $450,000 per year to get rid of and was starting to attract pests and create problems for our growers,” said Director of Sustainability Nikki Rodoni. “We had to find a solution.”

After much trial and error, the Gills found a cutting-edge way to solve the problem by installing a complex on-site system that turns their onion waste into electricity (see sidebar). The company’s Advanced Energy Recovery System, which began operating in mid-2009, now provides 100 percent of the base-load electricity used by the processing plant. While the innovative solution has won Gills Onions national recognition and has established the company as an industry leader in sustainability, the Gill brothers say the project’s roots come from their hands-on education at Cal Poly.

Both brothers majored in Crop Science, learning by doing as they planted, cultivated and brought to market different enterprise and trial crops. Working alongside students from across the state allowed the brothers to compare best practices with people from a variety of agricultural backgrounds. David still recalls spending his final quarter in the field working on an herbicide trial for his senior project as a particularly fond Cal Poly memory, while Steve says farmers-turned-professors like Gordon Van de Vanter provided invaluable instruction.

After graduating, the Gills found that practice paid off as they embarked on their own agricultural ventures. The Gills continued drawing from their Cal Poly experience as their business expanded, and they eventually implemented their renowned energy recovery system. “We were forced out of necessity to solve a problem, and that goes back to Learn by Doing,” said Steve. “You keep working at something until you get it right.”

But the Gills haven’t stopped with their waste-to-energy system, which last year was given the Grand Conceptor Award, America’s highest engineering honor. According to Rodoni, the company also strives for a 15 percent reduction in its water usage by 2013, and plans to continue looking for ways to maximize its energy efficiency.

“Sustainability isn’t going away, and companies are going to have to pay more and more serious attention to it,” said Rodoni. “We’re not perfect yet, but that’s what this is really about — continually growing and improving.”
BLOGGING ABOUT THE BUSINESS OF THE JOB HUNT
Trish Berg is looking for work. And she’s talking about it.

Like thousands of graduates around the country, Agricultural Communication major Trish Berg needs a job. But she’s attacking the task with two hands on the problem — and the keyboard. Berg was smart about preparing herself for the inevitable job search, winning industry internships since her freshman year. A summer public relations stint at Blue Diamond Growers in Sacramento and an internship at Wells Fargo Insurance Services landed Berg a blogging position at the Wall Street Journal’s Hire Education blog.

“Following career trends in the news helps inspire me,” said Berg. “I am proud to represent the agriculture industry and Cal Poly. I grew up reading the Wall Street Journal, and I followed it on Facebook, which led me to the blog. From my interactions with leaders and professionals this year, I am convinced that Cal Poly’s Agricultural Education and Communication Department does an excellent job preparing seniors for the work force.” Read Trish’s blog at blogs.wsj.com/hire-education/.

ESPN featured senior Forestry major Erika Schwall at the Stihl Timbersports Western Qualifier at Cal Poly. Our own Walter Page (Forestry and Natural Resources) moved on to the Collegiate Championship airing Sept. 9 on ESPNU.

CAL POLY MAKES SUNSET MAGAZINE’S “100 HOT LIST”

Sunset, the magazine of Western living, recently touted Cal Poly as a “bold new farm school,” citing “more students heading to the West’s ag schools, drawn by new curriculum emphasizing organic methods, sustainability, and the business savvy they’ll need to thrive.”

Sunset magazine celebrated the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences’ Sustainable Agriculture minor for admitting any qualified Cal Poly undergrad, no matter what his or her major. The broad and growing appeal of sustainable agriculture practices has earned Cal Poly’s hands-on cross-disciplinary minor well-deserved kudos.
Learn by Cooking

Cal Poly Food Science and Nutrition students develop recipes to address common health conditions in our society. Here’s a tasty sampling of FSN student Kelsey Christenson’s low-sodium answer to hypertension:

**Tuscan Scramble** • Perfect for a Sunday brunch / Prep time: 25 minutes

**Scramble:**
- 16 ounces rosemary bread, sliced
- 6 egg whites
- 1 whole egg
- 1 cup sun-dried tomatoes, soaked, dried and sliced
- 2 cups homemade pesto sauce
- 2 tablespoons goat cheese
- ¼ cup fresh basil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Prepare the Pesto:
Blanch basil. In a food processor, blend together basil leaves, nuts, lemon juice, garlic and cheese. With processor running, slowly add oil until incorporated. Stir in salt and pepper.

**Pesto Sauce:**
- 16 ounces fresh basil leaves
- ½ cup pine nuts
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 8 cloves garlic, peeled
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

**Prepare the Tuscan Scramble:**
Toast rosemary bread slices until light brown. Scramble the six egg whites along with the whole egg. Add sun-dried tomatoes and salt and pepper to taste. Spread goat cheese evenly on each slice of bread, topping it with pesto. Place scramble mixture on top. Drizzle with pesto and add basil to garnish. Serves 8.

**FOOD SAFETY STARTS HERE**

In a time of growing consumer awareness of food safety, Cal Poly’s Beef Operations Manager Aaron Lazanoff (ASCI ’91) and Feedmill Manager Casey Callaghan (ASCI ’05) have a lot to smile about. “Cal Poly is the first university in the country to earn U.S. Department of Agriculture certification for its Process Verification Program (PVP),” said Lazanoff. Now Cal Poly can verify the age and source of its cattle, making it more marketable. Knowing the age and source of beef is an important way for consumers to ensure their food is safe.

Plus, the Cal Poly Animal Nutrition Center is the only university feed mill program in the U.S. to achieve Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) certified status. HACCP systems document and verify that a product is consistently high-quality and safe. Cal Poly Animal Science students worked for two years alongside Lazanoff, Callaghan, and other staff, faculty and PVP specialists to earn these notable certifications.
The College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences Center for Sustainability celebrates its first anniversary by launching the Sustainable Stewardship Program, made possible by a $50,000 gift to the center. Starting this fall, selected student interns will gain hands-on experience with sustainable practices throughout the college, including programs in natural resource conservation, organic fruit and vegetables, insect biocontrol, biodiesel production, rotational grazing, composting, sustainable viticulture and forestry, xerophytic landscaping, and more. “We are proud to give our students real-world experience that will truly make a difference on Cal Poly’s campus and in our community,” said Hunter Francis, director of the center.

Student volunteer Melissa Styles plants one of 16,000 redwood seedlings following the August 2009 Lockheed fire that burned 1,100 acres of Cal Poly’s Swanton Pacific Ranch in Santa Cruz County, Calif.

In appreciation of Cal Poly’s Learn by Doing education, thoroughbred breeder Walter J. Thomson included the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences in his will. Today, his gift is helping to fund a new 40 stall mare barn named in his honor. The Walter J. Thomson Mare Barn will commemorate his lifelong love of horses, and enrich hands-on learning for countless students for generations to come.

Remembering Cal Poly in your estate planning is an effective way to support Learn by Doing, the cornerstone of a Cal Poly education. Our planned giving experts can help friends and alumni like you leave a lasting legacy that will support the next generation of innovative leaders and resourceful professionals.

For sample bequest language you can share with your estate planning adviser, visit www.plannedgiving.calpoly.edu or contact Cal Poly’s Planned Giving Office.

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