• The Staff Council Cultural Awareness Committee earned the first President's Diversity Award for sponsoring a variety of workshops, including seminars on diverse student populations and racism, and Culture Talks with the Multicultural Center.

• Eight student groups and 14 students were recognized at the 12th Annual Cal Poly President's Awards for Outstanding Community Service. The group recipient of this year's Emerging Service Leader's Award was the Voter Education, Citizenship, Immigration, Naturalization, Outreach (VECINO, or “neighbor” in Spanish) Program. Also honored were the Newman Catholic Club, and VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Students), which earned the Service-Learning Award.

• Martin J. Harms has been appointed dean of the College of Architecture and Environmental Design, succeeding Paul R. Neel, who has retired. Harms was formerly dean of the College of Architecture at Texas Tech. He also taught at the University of Pennsylvania, North Carolina State, Cornell, and Cal Poly.

• Joe Weatherby, political science professor, was one of 13 U.S. educators and community leaders awarded a Joseph J. Malone Fellowship, sponsored by the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations, to participate in a two-week Arabic and Islamic studies program in Saudi Arabia.

• Leanne Berning, assistant professor of dairy science, has been named the American Association of Schools and Colleges of Agriculture and Renewable Resources's 1997 outstanding educator by the National Association of Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture.

• Ilene Rockman, associate dean at the Kennedy Library, was one of 15 librarians and information specialists from the United States and Canada invited to attend the 1997 Senior Fellows Institute at Long Island University's Palmer School of Library and Information Science.

• Linda Vanasupa, materials engineering associate professor, was awarded the Dow Outstanding New Faculty Award at the American Society for Engineering Education Pacific Southwest Regional Conference held at Cal Poly.

• University Center for Teacher Education alumna Teresa Iturriria (LS '90) is one of 34 educators in the nation named a 1997 American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education-Metropolitan Life Foundation Fellow. She team-teaches at Oakley Elementary School in Santa Maria, where she also conducts credential courses and supervises student teachers.

• Accounting Professor Jack Robison has received the first Outstanding Accounting Educator Award from the national accounting firm, Ernst & Young. A $4,000 award was established by the company to recognize teaching excellence based on student evaluations and curriculum innovations.

• The Journalism Department has received full accreditation by a unanimous vote from the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, ending a three-year qualifying process. The accreditation places the department in the top one-third of journalism schools nationwide.

• Cal Poly's 1996-97 Distinguished Teachers are Leonard Davidman, a University Center for Teacher Education faculty member since 1977; Al Landwehr, an English professor since 1970; and Robert Thompson, who has taught agribusiness since 1978.

• More Hispanics earn bachelor's degrees in architecture at Cal Poly than at any other university nationwide, according to Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education. Cal Poly is also number two in awarding undergraduate agriculture degrees to Hispanics, and seventh in engineering.