FOR HONORED ALUMNI, CAL POLY WAS A CAREER LAUNCHING PAD

BY MATT LAZIER

THE SIX PEOPLE CELEBRATED by the Cal Poly Alumni Association as this year’s Honored Alumni have followed different paths to their individual accomplishments. But they share a common thread, tracing the roots of their success to their Cal Poly educations.

“Cal Poly was the launching pad for my career,” said Michael G. Griffith, honoree for the College of Liberal Arts. “It gave me the confidence and the credibility to succeed in my work. I’m in the entertainment lighting business now, and I learned those basic skills in my time at Cal Poly.”

The Cal Poly education taught these alumni how to envision ever higher frontiers for themselves. “The co-op programs that Cal Poly supported were invaluable,” said College of Science and Mathematics honoree Eric E. Schadt. “My experiences with IBM and Chevron Research gave me the chance to apply theory that I had learned and experience different career paths. They were critical in my decision to continue on to grad school.”

Working on senior projects helped some develop their teamwork skills. Said Patrick M. DeLong, the Orfalea College of Business honoree: “Something that was cemented in me during my senior project was the ability to work with and lead teams. Not a day goes by in my work when I don’t use and continue to develop this skill.”

And the Learn by Doing model – the hallmark of the Cal Poly education – played an important role in shaping these future industry leaders when they were here. “It meant that when I started my first job after graduation, I knew what to do,” said College of Engineering honoree Richard A. Bergquist. “There was no need to train on the job; I was ready to go.”

The Cal Poly Alumni Association also honored Marilyn Edling, a former vice president with Hewlett-Packard and a Cal Poly parent, with the Sandra Gardening Ogren Leadership Award for her work with the Cal Poly Foundation Board, the university’s main fundraising arm.

Alumnus Kenric B. Stone (B.S. Architecture, 1979 and B.Arch., 1980) received the Alumni Association’s Distinguished Service Award. A two-time president and nearly 20-year veteran of the Cal Poly Alumni Association Board of Directors and a current member of the Cal Poly Foundation Board, Stone is compelled by his Cal Poly experience to continue to work with the university: “A lot of us who volunteer, we’re here because we feel a huge debt that we can’t pay off. We need to make sure what we received is available to those who come after us.”

THE 2011 HONORED ALUMNI

Patrick M. DeLong (B.S., Business Administration, 1989), Orfalea College of Business, Chief Operating and Financial Officer, Crimson Wine Group, Ltd.

Richard A. Bergquist (B.S., Computer Science, 1977), College of Engineering, Board of Directors, Locus Technology

Michael G. Griffith (History, 1984), College of Liberal Arts, Director of Sales, Electronic Theater Controls, Inc.

Eric E. Schadt (B.S., Mathematics, 1991), College of Science and Mathematics, Chief Scientific Officer, Pacific Biosciences

John F. Salmonson (B.S., Crop Production, 1967), College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences, President, Monterey Agresources


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Bequest – Toward the end of each year, many people also review their long-range estate and financial plans.

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