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Cal Poly Society of Women Engineers Again Named Nation’s Best Student Chapter

SAN LUIS OBISPO – For the fourth straight year, the Cal Poly Society of Women Engineers was named the Outstanding Student Section in the nation. Cal Poly SWE, which finished ahead of the University of Texas at Austin and Purdue University for the 2005 award, also won the Team Tech competition and received four other honors at the SWE National Conference Nov. 4-5 in Anaheim.

“It was thrilling,” said Helene Finger, director of Cal Poly’s Women’s Engineering Program. “When you realize there are more than 300 SWE student sections in the country, and all the top engineering schools are at the conference, you really feel the significance of the award. Cal Poly SWE students continue to do amazing work, building on the success of the past and continuing to improve every year.”

Cal Poly College of Engineering Dean Peter Y. Lee received SWE’s Rodney D. Chipp Memorial Award for his contribution to “the acceptance and advancement of women in engineering” on the first day of the conference. Cal Poly received six awards and two scholarships at the final awards banquet. They included:

- First place in Team Tech
- Multicultural Award for large student sections
- Career Guidance Scribe award
- Membership program award for large sections (Cal Poly leads the nation with 484 members)
- Membership upgrade award
- Mechanical Engineering student Rachel Santee won the $2,500 Rockwell Automation Scholarship.

Civil and Environmental Engineering alum Seema Shah, currently a graduate student at Colorado State University, received the $2,000 Lydia I. Pickup Memorial Scholarship.

Cal Poly’s winning Team Tech project involved working with Walt Disney Imagineering on the design of a maintenance vehicle for a new Disney World ride called “Expedition Everest.” The annual Team Tech competition enables students from all disciplines and levels of engineering to gain hands-on experience beyond the classroom.


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