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Cal Poly Graphic Communication Students Awarded Prizes in Bookbuilders West Competition

SAN LUIS OBISPO - Cal Poly Graphic Communication students won three out of seven prizes in the 2005 Bookbuilders West book design competition in San Francisco.

Nick Bernal was awarded the Steve Renick Memorial Award from UC Press for his project. The $1,000 award was presented at the 2005 Bookbuilders Scholarship fundraiser in San Francisco on June 25.

Bernal won for his design of "Frankenstein" by Mary Shelley. His project included a leather bound handmade book with a relief stitched into the hard cover. The book was carefully designed and produced as a project in Assistant Professor Lorraine Donegan's Book Design Technology course (GrC 439).

Two other Cal Poly students, Jaime Merz and Tiffany Mine, were also honored for their book designs. Merz and Mine each received a $500 Honorable Mention in the competition.

Merz won for her design of "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee. Her book included a leather bound cover with a handmade birdhouse to hold the book. An imprint of a custom-designed stamp of a bird can be seen through a peephole in the birdhouse. She designed and built the birdhouse with her father. "I enjoyed every step of the process," said Merz. "We used to work on things together all the time and it was fun to work with him on this part of the project."

Tiffany Mine's book, "The Joy Luck Club" by Amy Tan, was encased in handmade Chinese paper and laid into a basket with Mah Jong tiles. Mine is interning for Harcourt Publishers in San Diego.

Student competitors were asked to select and redesign a classic book. Their page designs had to include layout and typography; the cover designs had to convey the author's intent and the atmosphere and content of the story. Industry professionals judged the entries on creativity, meeting design objectives and presentation.

"Our student projects are always wonderful, and how the judges actually choose the winning designs is amazing - they're all so wonderful! Each student puts their heart and soul into their book, designing every last detail," said Donegan.

Donegan says that the book design project brings together technical and creative knowledge the students learn in their classes. "Within the Graphic Communication department, the book design class is one of the Capstone courses offered for students concentrating on design reproduction technology," she said.

Malcom Keif, acting department head of the Graphic Communication Department is proud of the work the students and faculty are doing. "Cal Poly's success in the Bookbuilders West competition over several years is a testament to the level work Professor Donegan and her students produce and the outstanding instruction being provided," said Keif.
About Bookbuilders West
Bookbuilders West is a nonprofit association founded in San Francisco in 1969. Its objectives are to promote and support book publishing in 13 Western states. The annual Bookbuilders West Scholarship is available to students currently enrolled in a four-year university, college or technical school with the intent of pursuing a career in the field of book design.

About Cal Poly's Graphic Communication Department
Founded in 1946, Cal Poly's Graphic Communication program (www.grc.calpoly.edu) is one of the largest and best-known in the nation. With more than 33,000 square feet of space, the department houses some of the most modern laboratory facilities in graphic arts education. The department received national accreditation by the Accreditation Council of Collegiate Graphic Communications and has nearly 3,000 alumni.

The department also houses the Graphic Communication Institute (www.grci.calpoly.edu), the department's arm that conducts research, testing, product evaluations, seminars, workshops and conferences.

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