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Cal Poly Professor, College Donate Books to University in Afghanistan

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA – What started as a service club volunteer assignment for Associate Dean Mark Shelton of Cal Poly's College of Agriculture has turned into a donation of more than 200 textbooks to Nangarhar University in Afghanistan.

The books range in subject from human nutrition to weed science, and from animal physiology to entomology.

Shelton, a member of the Rotary Club of San Luis Obispo de Tolosa, offered to host a Rotary group study exchange participant from Afghanistan in May. His guest was Professor Mohammed Tahir Torakay, the department head of Agronomy at Nangarhar University in Afghanistan. Torakay is also a specialist in soil science.

"Friends and I showed him around Cal Poly and our College of Agriculture," Shelton said. "But the thing he was most struck by were the books we had. I realized then that books are few and far between at their university. So I decided to do something about that."

Shelton was able to gather book donations from various departments at Cal Poly and is shipping them out this week.

The books will be shipped from San Francisco to Afghanistan free of charge by the Asia Foundation, a nonprofit, non-governmental organization committed to the development of a peaceful, prosperous, and open Asia-Pacific region. The Foundation supports programs in Asia that help improve governance and law, economic reform and development, women's empowerment, and international relations.

About the Asia Foundation
Drawing on 50 years of experience in Asia, the Foundation collaborates with private and public partners to support leadership and institutional development, exchanges, and policy research. The Asia Foundation's "Books for Asia" program supports education at all levels by providing books, software and other educational materials throughout Asia.

Visit www.asiafoundation.org for more information.

About Rotary International
Rotary is an organization of business and professional leaders united worldwide, who provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill. There are approximately 1.2 million Rotary members in more than 29,000 chapters in 161 countries. For more information visit www.rotarydetolosa.org or the Rotary International Web site at www.rotary.org.

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Editors note: For a jpg of Shelton and Torakay, contact Teresa Hendrix at thendrix@calpoly.edu.
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