California Polytechnic State University

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Cal Poly Names Two Longtime Professors
To Receive University’s First Distinguished Research Award

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly has named two longtime professors, both internationally known in their fields, to receive the university’s Distinguished Research, Creative Activity, and Professional Development Award for 2003-2004, the first year for the award program.

BioResource and Agricultural Engineering Professor Charles Burt and Art and Design Professor Joanne Ruggles were recognized for outstanding accomplishments in research and creative endeavors. They will be honored at morning commencement ceremonies June 12 and during the university’s Fall Conference General Session on Sept. 13.

“This new award acknowledges the important place of research, creative and scholarly activity in the careers of Cal Poly’s outstanding and dedicated teaching faculty,” said Cal Poly President Warren Baker. “Professors Burt and Ruggles’ work in diverse fields graphically illustrates the scope and breadth of our faculty’s professional interests and competencies. They are very worthy recipients of the inaugural award.”

Burt, who lives in San Luis Obispo, was honored “for his leadership and exemplary accomplishments related to irrigation, canal modernization, and efficiency in the use of water resources,” according to remarks by selection committee members.

Additional comments by colleagues included:

• “His contributions to Cal Poly through the creation and leadership of the Irrigation Training and Research Center has brought worldwide recognition to Cal Poly’s leadership in this field.”

• “His research activities and teaching have inspired generations of students in this area.”

• “He is internationally recognized through his extensive publications,
awards and service as advisor to many public agencies and industrial organizations.”

Burt, a Cal Poly alumnus, has been teaching at Cal Poly since 1978. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Cal Poly in 1973 and a master’s degree (1975) and doctorate (1983) from Utah State University.

Ruggles, also of San Luis Obispo, was singled out for outstanding accomplishments as an artist and a teacher.

Colleagues said:

• “She is internationally recognized for her creative work in depicting the human figure and form.”

• “Her work has been displayed at many major museums and exhibits throughout the United States, Asia and Europe, as well as South and Central America.”

• “Her widespread peer recognition for the importance of her work is matched only by her recognized talent to inspire and challenge students toward new ways of thinking.”

Ruggles joined the Cal Poly faculty in 1973. She earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1968 and a master’s in 1970, both from Ohio State University.

The new Distinguished Research, Creative Activity and Professional Development Award recognizes achievement in research, creative work and other professional development activities. It is intended to support research and other creative endeavors and to encourage faculty efforts toward professional growth and achievement.

“Cal Poly is very pleased to honor Professors Burt and Ruggles for their significant achievements in the area of research, creative activity and professional development,” said Interim Provost Bob Detweiler. “They epitomize the strengths of our faculty and the professional development work they accomplish in their respective disciplines, which ultimately benefit the students of Cal Poly and their academic programs.”

Burt and Ruggles were selected from a group of 23 nominees and 10 finalists.

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