FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Perry Angle
(559) 278-1908

Cal Poly Among 10 CSU Campuses Receiving Grant To Fight Student Alcohol Abuse, Traffic Deaths

FRESNO -- Representatives from 10 California State University campuses -- including Cal Poly -- gathered at Fresno State Jan. 28 to learn about a new $750,000 CSU Alcohol and Traffic Safety grant. The grant is intended to help the 10 campuses reduce alcohol abuse, alcohol-related crashes and alcohol-related misconduct among college students.

The grant is sponsoring a new CSU Alcohol and Traffic Safety (CSU ATS) program at the 10 campuses: Bakersfield, Cal Poly (San Luis Obispo) Chico, Dominguez Hills, Fullerton, Pomona, San Diego, San Marcos, Sonoma, and Stanislaus.

“This program works to change an environment from one where binge drinking is socially acceptable to one that encourages more responsible behavior,” said Sunne Wright McPeak, Secretary of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, which administered the funds through the Office of Traffic Safety. “The end result will be increased awareness which translates into lives saved.”

The Fresno State Division of Student Affairs will serve as headquarters for the CSU grant program and training.

Representatives from the 10 CSU campuses participated in a two-hour training session Jan. 28 at Fresno State to launch the campaign, said Perry Angle, director of the new CSU Alcohol and Traffic Safety. Dave Doucette, OTS regional coordinator, also is in Fresno today for the training session.

Through a series of mini-grants, the new CSU Alcohol and Traffic Safety funds will promote anti-DUI initiatives created by campus Alcohol Advisory Councils, said Paul Oliaro, vice president for student affairs and dean of students at Fresno State.

“The program addresses alcohol-related incidents at the college level, particularly driving under the influence and campus misconduct,” Oliaro said.

The program's two key goals are to reduce the incidence of driving after consuming alcohol among 18-25 year-old CSU students and reduce alcohol-related misconduct by CSU students. Organizers are aiming to cut those incident rates by five percent by Dec. 30, 2006.
The program’s complete objectives are:

- To improve and/or develop partnerships with law enforcement to accomplish goals like increasing DUI checkpoints, campus policy enforcement
- To train at least 500 CSU beverage servers (on and near campus) using ABC regional trainers by September 30, 2006.
- To assist campuses in developing or improving on-line personal drinking assessment programs similar to e-CHUG (Check Up to Go) and MyStudentBody.com
- To identify strategies at each campus to reduce availability and accessibility of alcohol, particularly to minors.
- To organize, schedule, and promote a minimum of four guest speakers for the CSU and/or participating campuses.
- To provide support to campus peer educators through training and information outreach
- To work with media throughout the state and at each campus to publicize the project, keep the public informed of its progress, and to inform the general public about other alcohol related items and events.

This is the second grant CSU has received for alcohol awareness and prevention measures. In 2002, nearly $2 million in state grants was awarded to the CSU to fight alcohol abuse on its campuses.

Called the Sober Drive Initiative, that program’s funds were used for training, education, enforcement and prevention programs at all 23 CSU campuses. In the previous CSU Sober Driver Initiative, projects employed social norms marketing strategies to change the misperceptions students have regarding college drinking.

“This project will emphasize managing the campus environment, peer education, and law enforcement partnerships,” said Angle, who is also director of the CSU Sober Driver Initiative.

With the new program, both OTS grants have now served two-thirds of CSU campuses, he added.

Angle said that Office of Traffic Safety data shows that fatalities in alcohol-involved collisions increased 8.3 percent between 2001 and 2002 - up from 1,308 in 2001 to 1,416 in 2002. Since 1998, California has experienced a 32 percent increase in persons killed in alcohol-involved collisions, according to OTS statistics.

However, in cities with OTS grant programs, alcohol-involved fatal and injury collisions decreased 26.3%. In 2003, 1,445 people were killed and 31,337 injured in alcohol-related crashes in California -- the fifth consecutive year of increases in alcohol-related fatalities after more than a decade of decline.

For more information about the program, contact Angle at (559) 278-1908 or Doucette at (916) 262-0990.

###