



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 18, 2014

Contact: Jay Thompson

805-756-5186; jthomp04@calpoly.edu

Two Cal Poly Seniors Selected for Panetta Institute for Public Policy's Congressional Internship Program

SAN LUIS OBISPO — A pair of Cal Poly seniors are the university's 2014 representatives to the Panetta Institute for Public Policy's Congressional Internship Program.

Jessica Burke, an industrial engineering major from San Luis Obispo, and Yenifer Origel, a business administration major with a concentration in accounting from Hayward, will spend two weeks in August training at the Panetta Institute, located at California State University at Monterey Bay, followed by 11 weeks in Washington, D.C., working full time in the office of a congressional representative.

They are among 26 students from around the Golden State taking part in the program. Participating students were nominated by their respective campus presidents.

"The Panetta Institute provides a tremendous opportunity for these bright and talented students to gain real-world experience in the policy-making arena," said Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong. "I know that Yenifer and Jessica will make Cal Poly proud in our nation's capital and that this experience will benefit them greatly on their journey to becoming tomorrow's industry and community leaders."

Burke, 21, who for the past year has worked at the San Luis Jet Center overseeing fueling operations, is excited by an opportunity to do research that can shape public policy.

"I found that some of the people (in Congress) who are making energy policy don't have a background in science, technology or mathematics," she said. "I can learn about the policy process and someday give a different perspective."

Origel, who serves as a mentor to first-generation college students at Cal Poly while interning at an accounting firm, aspires to be a community leader. The Panetta internship will allow her to gain leadership skills.

"I want to live and learn by doing," the 21-year-old said. "I hope to get exposure to public policy and the government, just to see how it works from backstage."

The Panetta Institute awards scholarships to students from each of the 23 California State University campuses along with one each from Dominican University of California, Santa Clara University and St. Mary's College of California.

The program, now in its 16th year, is open to all academic majors. It is recognized as one of the best of its kind because of the rigorous training it provides and because the scholarship covers all student costs — offering an equal opportunity for all qualified candidates.

Cal Poly's awardees are supported in part through the Ed and Jan Slevin

#

