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Cal Poly Adds Veteran Pair to Fundraising and Marketing and Communications Team

Richard Ellison and Jeff Hess to play key roles as university gears up for multi-million dollar fundraising effort

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Cal Poly has named two associate vice presidents to assist with university advancement, fundraising and university marketing and communications initiatives.

Richard E. Ellison, currently vice president of university advancement at California State University, Chico, is the new associate vice president of development. He will begin at Cal Poly on Sept 24.

In his new role, Ellison will be responsible for the university's philanthropic activity, fostering private support from a wide array of constituents, including alumni, private industry, friends of the university and other funding organizations.

Jeff Hess was appointed interim associate vice president for marketing and communications effective June 16. As one of the university's designated spokespersons, he is also responsible for developing an integrated marketing program to support recruitment, donor relations, fundraising, and other campus activities and programs.

Both men will support the university's upcoming multi-million dollar comprehensive fund-raising campaign, the campus's second. The first campaign— the Centennial Campaign, which ended in 2004—raised more than \$264 million over seven years.

"Jeff and Rick have done impressive work in their careers that will help us succeed as we raise private support for Cal Poly, elevate the university's profile, and build a comprehensive outreach program," said Deborah A. W. Read, vice president for University Advancement and CEO of the Cal Poly Foundation. "Each is a proven leader with the experience needed to help advance Cal Poly in bold and transformative ways."

"In addition, each is a veteran of Cal Poly. Rick served as associate vice president for university advancement prior to his move to Chico State nine years ago, and Jeff comes to us from the Orfalea College of Business, where he was the 2014 Distinguished Faculty of the Year."

Ellison brings some 30 years of advancement experience to Cal Poly. He joined Chico State in 2005 as the first vice president for University Advancement, a newly formed division made up of development, public affairs and publications, alumni and parent relations, creative services, advancement services and university events.

He left as chief fundraiser for the university with a student population of more than 16,000, having "raised more money than ever before to support Chico State, and enlisted the help of thousands of new alumni, parent and friend donors, often setting the pace in the (CSU system) in that capacity," said Chico State President Paul Zingg.

While at Cal Poly, from 1998 to 2005, Ellison provided campaign leadership for the campus' Centennial Campaign. His fundraising experience also includes public and private universities from the University of Colorado to Pepperdine University.

Ellison received his master's and bachelor's degrees in business administration from Pepperdine University.

Hess has been a marketing professor at Cal Poly for eight years. Before that he was a senior vice president at TNS Global, an international marketing research firm with a presence in more than 80 nations.

In addition, he has held management positions at Harris Interactive, Qwest Communications Inc. and Mazda Motor of America Inc. and was the project director for J.D. Power and Associates' largest customer research study.

Besides marketing research and data analysis, Hess' professional expertise includes branding, product planning, digital marketing and marketing automation, customer psychology, promotion and advertising, customer service, and call center metrics and management.

He received his doctorate in marketing research methodology from the University of Colorado at Boulder. He has a master's in business administration from Pepperdine and a bachelor's degree in radio, TV and film from Biola University.

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