The college continues to grow reaching 1370 students this year; a gain of 500 students in the last decade. Women continue to make up 82% of our student population. In the past, our entering students were comprised of a large percentage of transfer students, accounting for a disproportionately high percentage of seniors (34%). This year, however, first time freshmen increased dramatically, making up 31% of the college student population. The student distribution will change further with the implementation of an improved program that will shorten the time to graduation.

Two academic programs demonstrating significant continued growth are Apparel Merchandising & Management (AMM) and the Animal Health Science (AHS) programs. Dr. Peter Kilduff became chair of AMM during the summer and is very excited about the curriculum, student enthusiasm, and the compliments already received from industry on the quality of our graduates. The accreditation site team from the American Veterinary Medical Association complimented the quality of the AHS degree program; we look forward to the final report which is due in November. Dr. James Alderson has done an exceptional job as Director of the program and, with his faculty, has proven very entrepreneurial in generating resources for equipment and supplies used in teaching.

About seven years ago the CSU created the Agricultural Research Initiative, which stimulated total research and provided seed money for small grants and start up funds for new faculty. Our faculty have also been successful in attracting NIH, USDA, NSF, specialty grant funds, and numerous industry projects. In the last six years, our total ARI funding has totaled $4.166 million and we have produced $4.014 million in cash match, and $0.65 million in in-kind match. This has also led to partnerships between the CAG and the Colleges of Science and CLASS on campus, and with UCLA, UI, UCR, UC Davis, as well as many corporations and agencies.

Cal Poly Pomona hosted the 6th Annual ARI Showcase on Thursday, October 26th, 2007. This year’s Showcase included all four of the CSU agricultural programs (CSU Fresno, CSU Chico, CPSU, SLO and CSPU, Pomona), featuring ARI-sponsored scientists and research projects.

I commend our faculty and staff for their hard work; it is their passion and commitment to our students that make our college grow. Our faculty are dedicated to creative scholarship (grants, contracts and publications) while maintaining a strong teaching commitment to our students and to developing working relations with the community. The faculty-student interactions occur in class, in internship/externships, in special learning activities, in clubs, in national and regional competitions, and in scholarship including research, professional presentations and publications. These experiences build better prepared graduates and stimulate many to continue on to graduate or professional schools.

Wayne Bollick
Dean, College of Agriculture
wbollick@csupomona.edu

Jean Gipe
Interim Associate Dean
jgipe@csupomona.edu

Janet Shandy
Editor
jshandy@csupomona.edu

Deanna Stewart
Graphic Design and Layout
dstewart@csupomona.edu

Penne Fode
College Photographer
pfode@csupomona.edu

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Jean Gipe Appointed Interim Associate Dean

Jean Gipe thought she had the future planned. A member of the College of Agriculture since 1975, Jean was all set to retire in December 2006. After all, she had served her College well over the years, first, as a popular professor in the Home Economics/Foods & Nutrition and Apparel Merchandising & Management Departments and then as Director of the College’s Apparel Technology and Research Center. Most recently, she served as Interim Chair of the Department when the former chair retired in June 2004, vowing to stay through the search for a new chair. When Dr. Peter Kilduff was appointed to lead the department in July, Jean was ready to transfer the reins. She planned to stay on through the Fall quarter to help teach classes and guide the new chair as he became acquainted with the campus and his responsibilities.

Well, you know what they say about “best laid plans.” During the summer, Associate Dean, Lester Young accepted an Interim Associate Vice President position in Student Services, opening up a position critical to the success of the College. Proving, once again, her loyalty and dedication to the College, Jean accepted the appointment of Interim Associate Dean, delaying her retirement plans yet one more time. Her responsibilities will include oversight of the College’s educational programs, learning centered activities, curriculum and college committees.

Retirement Claims One of the College’s Best Loved Teachers

On June 1, 2006, students, faculty and staff gathered to pay homage to one of the College of Agriculture’s most talented and popular teachers. For 28 years, Prof. Freeman taught in the agricultural education program, challenging, cajoling and encouraging his students to achieve more than they believed possible. For much of that time, he was a one-man show, serving as the sole professor in the Agricultural Education and Single Subject Credential Program. A majority of the agriculture teachers in Southern California are graduates of the program which, according to Dean Bidlack, “. . . has been recognized statewide and received plaudits during the accreditation review.”

A recipient of the College of Agriculture’s Teacher and Advisor of the Year Awards and the Calif. Agriculture Teachers Association (CATA) Teacher of Teachers Award (1981-2004), Flint is an amazing instructor whose persona changes instantly the minute he steps in front of a classroom full of students. He is teacher and entertainer extraordinaire, who is able to engage each student in subject matter discussions by means of his charm and wit. He worked very hard at bringing enthusiasm and creativity to every course and challenged himself to take risks and try new things to keep the classroom alive and interesting. As anyone in the college will tell you, this effort included his style of dress. “You always knew immediately if Flint was teaching on any given day by observing the style of his professorial attire. If it was bright enough to stop traffic, then it was a teaching day,” explained Dean Wayne Bidlack.

In an academic world where most instructors have turned to technology to make their jobs easier, Flint believed he would shortchange his students if he made things easier on himself. “I believe that I have a professional responsibility to be their teacher and not just a person who dispenses information.” He corrected every paper and provided each student with individually written notes regardless of his workload.

Flint remained actively involved in the Future Farmers of America (FFA) statewide organization hosting, judging and chairing a variety of activities and contests. For over 20 years he hosted the Southern Region FFA contests here at Cal Poly Pomona. Other contributions to FFA include serving as State Consultant to the State FFA Judicial finals and as a member of the Calif. Dept. of Education’s Ag. Education Advisory Committee. He worked with high school agriculture teachers in Southern California and as liaison between the College and the teachers, thereby serving an average of 12,000 high school agriculture students each year.

Never to be accused of performing a given task in an ordinary fashion, Flint served as the College’s Mace Bearer during the 2006 commencement ceremony—and did so with the greatest panache (and in a tuxedo!). Although we know he will enjoy the slower pace and more time to raise and show his mules (and learning how to use a cell phone), we will all suffer from his absence. The College is proud to have had a faculty member with Professor Freeman’s personal integrity and his commitment and dedication to students. We wish him the best!
Students, faculty, and alumni gathered at the Bronco Student Center last April to celebrate the birth of the Human Nutrition & Food Science Department and achievements over the last 40 years. Students Sheila Ho and Walter Valdez took the lead in planning the event “…which included a birthday cake, punch, balloon animals and a little magic,” said Dawn Rentch, President of FN Forum. “This event,” explained Walter, “will hopefully mark the beginning of a new era where the ties between alumni and current students continue to strengthen through the active participation of both groups.”

Guests reminisced with one another as they leaned through a collection of photo albums that were on display. The highlight of the evening, however, was the keynote speaker, Dr. Ray Dutra, who is credited with founding the department. Guests were treated to a trip back in time as Ray colorfully described the challenges he faced in creating the department and major…

In the early days when Cal Poly Pomona was still an arm of Cal Poly, San Luis Opispo, President Julian McPhee “…wanted pioneers who would do whatever needed to be done without asking for guidance, a budget or release time,” explained Ray. Initially appointed as a member of the Physical Sciences Dept in 1959, Ray “…toyed with the notion of creating my own department” after attending a professional meeting where he learned there was a need for personnel in the area of dietetics. “That,” he said, “would certainly impress the old man.” Because of a moratorium on such programs at that time, however, Ray decided to package dietetics with nutrition and food analysis courses he had already created and “…promote them as a food and nutrition option within the chemistry major, thus by-passing the moratorium.” In spite of some resistance, Ray’s determination and persistence paid off and the FN program and department became a reality in 1965.

Today, the department serves approximately 200 students, has an accredited dietetics program, and offers a Food Science & Technology major along with the Foods & Nutrition major. On-going research is attracting grant funds and the attention of industry, and our student teams are proving to be formidable opponents at regional, state and national competitions. I think Julian McPhee would be proud!

Dan Hostetler, Chair of Plant Science, was taken by surprise when presented an award recognizing his dedication and commitment to the Farmer’s Market at Kaiser Permanente in Baldwin Park. As part of a campaign to encourage healthy eating, Prof. Hostetler and his students began taking Cal Poly Pomona’s Farmstore to the Kaiser facility every other Friday so employees and members of the community could purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. On May 5, 2006, Kaiser and Cal Poly Pomona celebrated the one-year anniversary of this program. Presenting the award to Prof. Hostetler, is John Bigley, M.D., Chief of Staff of Medical Services. Dr. Bigley’s sister, Susan McGinley, is also an alumna of the Plant Science Department.
Customizing Dietary Needs by Genotype

Scientists have long been interested in why people are different. A percentage of our population may become afflicted with cancer while others catch nary a cold. Most of our adult population is above their recommended weight while others are unusually thin. All humans, no matter how they appear on the outside are overwhelmingly alike. In fact, humans share over 99.99% of their genome with each other. Why then, do we appear to be so different?

The answer began to be unraveled with the sequencing of the human genome. We now have the complete DNA sequence of the “average” human – which is good information. Even more useful are the single DNA nucleotide differences between individuals that seem to be involved in influencing person-to-person variation. Scientists using this information have been associating specific nuances in the genetic code with meaningful consequences. One such application is the ability to take a person’s genetic information and custom design a drug therapy. One example of how this information will likely be used in the future is to custom design a diet for your particular genotype.

At Cal Poly Pomona, Dr. Marie Caudill is starting to make connections between a person’s particular genotype and their dietary needs. Dr. Caudill has been studying folate, an essential B-vitamin that plays a part in preventing chronic developmental diseases. Her research has found that genetic variations reduce the ability of the body to effectively use folate. If a person were to know their genetic variation for this particular gene, they could alter the amount of folate in their diet. This genetic knowledge could be of particular importance to women during pregnancy as folate deficiencies have been associated with birth defects. In related work, Dr. Caudill has found that folate appears to affect choline status as well, which provides an example of the inter-relationships among different pathways in our metabolism. Her research provides concrete examples of how single nucleotide differences in critical genes can have profound affects on human health. The folate study is an example of a single gene variant. Scientists know that each individual is likely to contain dozens or even hundreds of variations which may influence how a diet may affect their health and susceptibility to the environment.

Currently, a virulent avian influenza A (H5N1) virus (similar to the 1918 virus that killed 50 million people worldwide) has killed millions of birds worldwide. According to the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, thus far the spread of the H5N1 virus from person to person has been “rare, limited and unsustained”. Most H5N1 infections have passed from birds to humans, and since 2004, over 200 cases have been reported by the World Health Organization. As influenza viruses are known to mutate over time, any mutation that facilitates human-to-human transmission could result in very high rates of illness and death.

Unfortunately there is little natural immunity to H5N1 infection in humans, and recent tests have shown resistance to two commonly used antiviral drugs. A much more effective strategy is to develop vaccines against the influenza virus. The Agriculture Research Initiative is helping to fund the research of Dr. Jill Adler-Moore as she seeks to develop an influenza vaccine that is effective against a broad range of viruses. The challenge of developing a successful vaccine is several-fold. First and foremost, the cell-surface proteins of viruses change over time so vaccine makers must guess what the predominant strain will be previous to the upcoming flu season. If they guess wrong, the vaccine will have limited or no protective benefit. If the H5N1 mutates to facilitate human-to-human transmission, the enabling mutation will not be known until after the fact, which may be in the midst of a pandemic. A second challenge is that the combined global manufacturing capacity could provide at best vaccinations for 450 million people, far short of the number needed to prevent a pandemic.

Dr. Adler-Moore’s research addresses both of these issues. First, her vaccine targets a cell-surface protein that is conserved across several strains of influenza viruses. Using molecular techniques, she has combined several proteins in a single fusion protein. This she believes, will make the vaccine effective against a broad range of viruses and minimizes the risk of making the “wrong” vaccine ahead of the flu season. Her research, and that by the major pharmaceutical manufacturer Novartis, shows that introducing the protein with an adjuvant will make them more effective at lower doses. Adler-Moore’s vaccine is introduced to the immune system via an injection containing a 200 nm liposome with the fused protein in the center of it. Tests are ongoing, but she hopes to find evidence that the fused proteins are effective against a broad range of influenza viruses. If the liposome adjuvant proves more effective in stimulating antibody production than the fused protein alone, this would have the effect of providing vaccinations for hundreds of millions more people with the same amount of starting material. If her strategy works, then she has addressed two critical issues that will go far in protecting the world’s population in the face of a pandemic.
Food Safety Research to Benefit CPP’s Meats Lab

Food borne illnesses are surprisingly common and are estimated by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to affect 76 million people each year in the United States. Numerous pathogens are transmitted through food, and these include Campylobacter, Escherichia coli (STEC) 0157, Listeria, Salmonella and Yersinia. The recent outbreak of E. coli in spinach is a reminder that fruits, vegetables and meat can become contaminated and the consequences to human health are quite significant.

These disease-causing pathogens may enter the food supply in the field, during processing, or in the home by consumers. During food processing, microbiologists monitor pathogens in processing plants in order to maintain a safe food supply. They must be able to detect and identify a pathogen and determine its abundance in order to control and prevent food borne illnesses. Dr. Shelton Murinda, Assistant Professor in the Animal and Veterinary Science program, is involved in research that will establish protocols and guidelines for the meat processing plant at Cal Poly Pomona. The plant would like to establish safety protocols that would allow for the processing of deli meats, sausages, and barbecued meats to supply the on-campus diners and sales through the farm store. In addition to classical microbiological methods, Dr. Shelton employs molecular biology methods to identify the pathogen’s DNA fingerprint. These techniques use PCR- (polymerase chain reaction) based techniques that identify not only the species of pathogen, but also provide enough detailed information that the strain of pathogen is determined as well. This information is crucial in tracking down the source of contamination, and the use of this PCR-based technique is how food borne disease outbreaks are traced back to their origin.

Monitoring methods such as those utilized by Dr. Murinda helps ensure our food supply is safe. However, the consumer must take care that proper food handling and storage techniques are followed at home. Information on consumer food safety can be found on the Food and Drug Administration’s web site: (http://www.fda.gov/fdac/reprints/dinguest.html). Included at the bottom of the web page are the informative “How Long Will it Keep” storage guidelines.

NEW FACES

Dr. Peter Kilduff to Lead Apparel Merchandising and Management Department

On July 1, 2006, Dr. Peter Kilduff joined the College of Agriculture as the new chair of the Apparel Merchandising & Management Department (AMM). Dr. Kilduff, who hails from the United Kingdom, earned his Ph.D. at the University of Leeds in March 1990. Prior to entering the world of academia, he worked in the industry as a marketing assistant for Carpets International, a management consultant for London Business Consultants, and then as a Unit Director/Principal for Textile Intelligence Centre in Leeds. His academic experience includes serving as an associate professor at North Carolina State University and, more recently, at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. His field of expertise—textiles—compliments the existing knowledge base of the department.

“AMM has come a long way in just 10 years” said Peter. “As chair, I have inherited a vibrant program that has established its credentials, not only in California, but also nationally. Our challenge is to build on this momentum to move to the next level.”

Danilo Franco joins the Faculty in Animal & Veterinary Sciences

A few years after obtaining his D.V.M. degree from the Central University of Venezuela, Dr. Danilo Franco came to the United States to study avian physiology at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. An increasing interest in poultry physiology eventually led to a Ph.D. in Animal Physiology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2004. Before joining Cal Poly Pomona in November, Danilo served as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Alberta.

Danilo not only filled a need for a physiologist in the Animal & Veterinary Sciences Department, but, according to former chair, Dr. Edward Fonda, “... he possesses biotechnology skills... he has a strong background in the area of animal immunology... and has the ability to teach endocrinology courses as well.” He has had extensive teaching experience and has a strong interest in research. In fact, explained Dr. Fonda, “... his poultry contacts in Alberta have provided him with valuable and immediate research collaboration possibilities to significantly jump start his research at Cal Poly Pomona and cooperate with the California Poultry Association.”

Dr. Franco’s broad background and wealth of experiences will add a new and exciting dimension to the animal science program.
History

In response to the tremendous growth of the apparel industry in California coupled with the need to change focus and provide new opportunities for students, Prof. Betty Tracy and Jean Gipe created the Apparel Merchandising and Management (AMM) program. Following final approval in the Fall of 1995, Prof. Tracy devoted her efforts to launching the new degree while Prof. Gipe moved over to government contract work of the new Apparel Technology and Research Center (ATRC). Since then, the program has grown by leaps and bounds with 242 majors enrolled as of Fall 2006 and our facilities are much improved including new computers and industry-related software. In July 2006 Dr. Peter Kilduff was chosen to lead the Department. His great leadership and vision will take AMM to the next 10 years and beyond.

Reflections on our 10th Anniversary Year

We started the year with a “Happy 10th Birthday Party for AMM”. This kicked off student events and activities which included multiple quarterly scholarship competitions including “AMM Project Runway” and the “AMM Merchandising Apprentice.” Our student clubs—AMMA and Phi Upsilon Omicron Honor Society—were involved in campus and community service activities including the Pumpkin Festival, assisting a local Girl Scout troop with their “fashion” badges, sewing “gators” and writing letters for our military servicemen in Iraq through www.anysolider.com. Students interacted with business leaders through career presentations by industry and AMM Advisory Board representatives, the first on-campus AMM Career Day, working on Visual Merchandising assignments at a local Target store, and “Mock Interviews” with a Target, Inc. recruiter. Students attended the MAGIC tradeshow in Las Vegas in February, participated in the Study Tour to Europe in June, and assisted at Market Week at the Los Angeles California Market Center during Spring break.

Our AM2 and ApparelScapes students were very busy this year. The senior production students had their first trunk show of the new AM2 line of clothing at the Bronco Bookstore in a “Meet the Designer” event. The senior retail students had a very successful selling season at the Cal Poly Farmstore in the ApparelScapes area but additionally created their own showroom in Bldg. 45 to work with campus customers on private label merchandise orders.

We’re very proud of how far we’ve come in 10 years and the chance to share these highlights with you!
On June 11, Dr. Kent Kurtz was recognized posthumously for 35 years of outstanding teaching with the College of Agriculture’s Teacher of the Year Award. A recognized leader in the turfgrass and golf course management industry, both here and abroad, Kent lost his battle with cancer on Saturday, February 18, 2006.

When Dr. Kurtz joined the Department, the turfgrass program did not exist. By the time he retired from the University in June 2004, it was one of the best programs in the western United States and he had become one of Southern California’s leading experts in the management of turfgrass for the golf course, sports turf, and landscape industries. His numerous awards and accomplishments include a renovation of Cal Poly Pomona’s Scolinos field, with assistance from his students. He was a founding member of the Southern California Turfgrass Council and recipient of their Distinguished Service Award. Kent was an active member of the Sports Turf Managers Association and recognized as Sport Turf Magazine’s “Man of the Year” (1993). He was called upon to help prepare stadiums for the Super Bowl, Rose Bowl, Fiesta Bowl, Freedom Bowl as well as for two major league All Star games.

Of all the honors he received, Kent was probably most proud of being an active advisor, mentor, and father figure to all of his students. “He was so devoted to students… that he’d take a contingent to the National Golf Course Superintendent’s Conference on an annual basis,” explained Dr. Fred Roth, a colleague in the Plant Science Department. To them he was “Doc,” a man who guided them into careers which were beyond even their scope of imagination. Affectionately dubbed “Der Fuhrer” in more recent times, he was also a demanding taskmaster, making sure these young people developed a strong work ethic and were actively engaged in a variety of activities in the College and University. According to Dr. Terry Fujimoto, “Kent upheld and instilled values in our students that are hard to teach in the classroom. As an advisor, he was a strong advocate of developing and building character in students… so that they’d be able to perform in industry.” Over the years, Kent placed as many as 200 graduates at local courses and major stadiums. If you golf anywhere in Southern California, there is an excellent chance of Cal Poly Pomona’s alumni now hold leadership positions in the U.S. Golf Association, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, and in the industry.

Dr. Kurtz was buried in Durrand, Illinois. A memorial service was held on campus in April; those in attendance (approximately 200) included family members, representatives from the campus, and the turf industry. “Doc” is survived by his wife Marilyn; a daughter, Heather; a son, Todd; and brother, Kerry. Kent’s Teacher of the Year Award was presented to Marilyn, Heather, and Todd during the 2006 graduation ceremony.

On October it was announced that Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger appointed Wayne Bidlack, Dean of the College of Agriculture, to the State Board of Food and Agriculture. Dr. Bidlack will represent the California State University on the 15-member board which advises the governor and the Secretary of Food and Agriculture on agricultural issues and consumer needs. All members serve four-year terms and do not receive a salary. The board meets about once a month, and its meetings are open to the public. Following his first meeting with the Board, Dr. Bidlack stated: “I am impressed by the breadth of interests of those serving on the Board and how eager they are to solve important agricultural issues to benefit the people of California.”

Dr. Bidlack served as Chair of the Food Science & Human Nutrition Department and Director of the Center for Designing Foods to Improve Nutrition at Iowa State University prior to his appointment as Dean in 1995. He began his academic career in 1974 as an assistant professor of pharmacology and nutrition at the USC School of Medicine. His nearly 18 years there included administrative positions as assistant dean of Student Affairs and Vice Chair and Interim Chair of the Department of Pharmacology and Nutrition. He has published more than 50 research papers, review articles and book chapters; is currently a book editor for the Journal of the American College of Nutrition; and has co-edited five books on phytochemicals published by Technomics and CRC Publications. He is an active member of the Institute of Food Technologists and has served on the International Life Sciences Institute Committee on Nutrition and Food Safety.

Hired in July 2001 to assist the Associate Dean and serve as receptionist in the Dean’s Office, it did not take long to realize that Penne is an amazing—and very special—human being. She quickly grasped her duties and responsibilities, which include processing student petitions, ordering supplies, screening calls, making appointments and preparing correspondence and reports. Ever the problem-solver, she also finds appropriate classrooms for faculty at a moment’s notice, “… unjams the copy machines when a faculty member is minutes from giving a test and needs 50 copies, and knows the ins and outs of the technology classrooms so Power Point lectures and presentations can be given without a hitch.”… said co-worker and former Staff of the Year, Sharon Roth.

The last few years Penne has served as a co-advisor to Ag Council and is a key player in the College of Agriculture’s annual Pumpkin Festival. She has endeared herself to the students and they look to her for advice on a variety of problems and concerns. “She has a wonderful sense of humor, compassion, and understanding for those seeking her help,” confirms Nicole Souza, a ‘05/06 Ag Council officer. This year’s Ag Council President, Dana Tanaka, agrees, “Penne has been there for me non-stop personally, emotionally, and mentally.” According to Dr. Les Young the former Associate Dean, “She has also been an inspiration due to the personal challenges she has had to face in raising a child with autism.”

At the June commencement ceremony, Penne was honored for her caring, hard work, initiative, and doing so much more than asked. On behalf of the College, Dean Bidlack thanked her for contributions and presented her with a plaque and monetary award.
Two Faculty Honored for OUTSTANDING Advising

Martin Sancho-Madriz, Professor of Food Science & Technology: Known for being tough but fair, Dr. Sancho-Madriz, helps students succeed on their own while providing the necessary mentoring and encouragement. As student Elizabeth Costanzo explains, meeting his high standards gave her the confidence to “. . . apply for internships and jobs” and “. . . to converse with people in the industry.”

According to Dr. Bonny Burns-Whitmore, former office mate and colleague, “Even though Martin drives a great distance to Cal Poly, I frequently noticed that he would meet with students outside of his normal office hours to accommodate their schedules rather than his own.” He has built an advising system for the FST students which has contributed to their success, a system which requires active involvement in professional organizations and access to a web site he developed which created an “online community” benefiting students, professors and alumni.

Martin has also been consistent in directing students toward graduate work. Imelda Ryona credits him for her selection as a participant in the 2006 Cornell University Summer Scholarship program and said “This opportunity has boosted my confidence toward my academic achievement up to another level.”

With Martin’s assistance, the Society of Food Science student club was recently accepted as a chapter of the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) Student organization. As a result, CPP students now can compete with other universities in the IFT sponsored college bowl and can participate in a national newsletter allowing the food science program to be recognized at the national level. This would not have occurred without Martin’s advising efforts.

Dr. James Alderson, director of the AHS program, said her “. . . compassionate and ardent approach to her advising duties greatly augments the students’ experience and helps to direct both their college and professional careers.”

Michele Rash, Asst. Professor of Animal Health Sciences: “One of the best things about her is that she is so great at motivating her advisees. Her words of wisdom and inspirational stories keep students enthused. . . .” said AHS major Alexandra Bodan. Fellow student Maria Torres agreed, “She understands her students and relates to the many situations we go through.” Colleagues confirmed Michele Rash’s dedication to students. Dr. James Alderson, director of the AHS program, said her “. . . compassionate and ardent approach to her advising duties greatly augments the students’ experience and helps to direct both their college and professional careers.”

In order to enhance classroom instruction and provide opportunities for students to serve the community, Michele developed a course based on pet therapy for disabled patients in assisted living facilities. She also “involved her students in developing interesting ways to bring agricultural education into the elementary classroom,” a project funded by the 4th Ag District, explained former department chair, Dr. Ed Fonda. As an advisor for the AHSTA student club, she can be credited in large part for the students’ success at raising funds to cover their attendance at the Western States Regional Veterinary Conference meetings. Concerning involvement in professional organizations, Michele says she “. . . has tried to instill the seriousness of attending the seminars and the importance of life-long professional learning experiences. . . .” Her efforts in this regard include annual field trips to “behind the scenes” preparation areas for the Long Beach Aquarium and the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Park to observe real world situations.

Michele believes that “the whole student must be tended to” which means “helping them to achieve career, educational and personal goals. . . .” After all she says, “. . . our youth will be taking care of us soon. We need to take care of them now.”

Russell Plumb - Graduate Student Leader of the Year

Dr. Sowmya Mitra can’t say enough about graduate student, Russell Plumb: “Russell is one of the brightest students I have come across in my professional life and would place him in the top 1% of all students I have advised or interacted with.” When Dr. Mitra, Plant Science Department, was awarded three national research trials, Russell provided much-needed assistance. “I have been impressed with his analytical skills and his problem solving ability. . . .” said Dr. Mitra. “Russell has also been involved with several herbicide and fertilizer product development research trials with Monsanto, Syngenta, Bayer Environmental Sciences, BASF, Dow AgroChemicals, The Scotts Co., and The Andersons.” In fact, his research projects allowed Dr. Mitra to attract a three-year grant, hire a post doctoral candidate, and led to a collaborative relationship with the Statistical Consulting Collaboratory at the University of California, Riverside.

Based on evaluations of students who have attended his classes in the Plant Science Department, Russell has the potential to be an excellent teacher. He has proven to be a good mentor and role model for undergraduate students, as well as a loyal advisor. Students have said “Russell is the best advisor I have ever had. He is always highly dedicated and helpful, and I think he is the best instructor at Cal Poly.”

Dustin Tatsumi – Undergraduate Student Leader of the Year

“A leadership dynamo” is how Dr. Fred Roth described Dustin Tatsumi, a Landscape Irrigation Science major who graduated in June. Dustin set a record by holding a board position on three different clubs simultaneously last year: Vice President of Los Robles, Treasurer of the Turfgrass Club, and President, Irrigation Club. In addition, he “. . .was a spark plug on two PLANET Student Career Day teams. . . .” winning 2nd place awards at the national level both times.

“Dustin exemplifies the epitome of selflessness, generosity, kindness and consideration of others,” said staff member Anna-Marie Barlet. “If Dustin commits to a project, even though his plate is overflowing, he will deliver.”

Dustin also helped write a successful grant proposal to the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. The project, “Water Efficient Landscape” was funded ($8,500) and included several innovative features for regional as well as international consideration. As a member of this project team, Dustin was invited to the World Water Forum in Mexico City in March 2006, a trip funded by the MWD.

Student Leader Awards are funded by an endowment established by alumnus John E. Andrews (ABM ’92). Each recipient receives a $500 cash award and plaque during commencement.
guiding them on various turfgrass research and senior projects. He organized an international trip to Belize with the Los Robles student club. Russell and Dr. Mitra’s post doc were successful in obtaining a three-year, $188,870 Agricultural Research Initiative grant to study heavy metal levels in soils in an urban setting in the greater Los Angeles area. Under his guidance, turf club students conducted research plots which helped establish the Department’s turfgrass research program. Last but not least, Russell was one of 14 students selected (and the only graduate student) for a national scholarship by the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service.

When Will’s mother, Susan, delivered a copy of his commencement address to the Dean’s Office, it was clear that she was more than a little apprehensive. She wasn’t sure that what he planned to say was appropriate for the occasion. After everyone in the Dean’s Office reviewed Will’s speech, however, we all agreed that it was perfect.

As Will explained to his fellow graduates, “My stay at Cal Poly Pomona was very nearly a brief one. It was my first morning as a Cal Poly student, staring at what seemed to be the world’s largest pile of . . . manure. The pile would be my first ‘learn by doing’ experience . . ., but I had my reservations. Dr. Partida, manager of Pine Tree at the time, handed me a shovel, grinned, and yelled, “Good luck, young man,” as he drove away in his faithful, brown pickup.”

“I couldn’t help but wonder,” Will continued, “. . . as I stared at the still steaming pile, if agriculture was where I really belonged. But as the sun began to break, I grabbed the nearest shovel and dug in. It was, at first, just an overwhelming pile of stuff… But shovel by shovel, day by day, and week by week, I began to understand and finally appreciate what I was involved in. Eventually, what had once seemed an unknown and insurmountable mass had become, not only manageable and comprehensible, but . . . interesting.”

“. . . that pile really was a metaphor for my college experience . . . but not in the way you might think. For the initially overwhelming task of moving it, shovelful by shovelful, ultimately did resemble the task of attending each lecture and lab, completing each assignment, and fulfilling each internship. At the end of each day that summer, and at the end of each day at Cal Poly, my understanding of agriculture and its interrelated disciplines would develop further, until that mountain disappeared, leaving a vista of new challenges ahead.”

Will expressed his gratitude to faculty, administrators and staff, with sincere appreciation to Dr. Greg Partida in particular, for his support, guidance, and friendship over the last four years. Will also admitted to an “intense feeling of pride,” not only for his accomplishments but for “. . . being able to participate in something that has a long and respected history in our state . . . the tradition of agriculture.” As he told his colleagues, “No matter what branch of agriculture we enter . . ., our lives will enrich our planet.”
The College of Agriculture’s 2nd annual Western Collegiate Food Marketing Competition proved to be twice as much fun and a huge success. Held in conjunction with the Southern California Institute of Food Technologists’ (SCIFTs) Suppliers’ Night, this year’s event doubled in size with two additional divisions: In the 2-Year College Division, students were required to select an existing food product and design a new, one-year promotional campaign with a $3 million budget. For the 4-Year International Division, students had to design a campaign around exporting a food product going to a foreign market. The competition was also expanded to include colleges and universities from four western states—California, Colorado, New Mexico and Nevada.

Student teams presented comprehensive business/marketing plans for an array of food products—from caviar to yogurt-covered bananas. An added bonus, participants also had an opportunity to network with over 400 industry representatives during Suppliers’ Night and each member received a $25 dollar Starbucks gift certificate. Hidden Villa Ranch. Lunch was a buzz with activity from all those who worked behind the scenes to make WCFMC a success. According to Mr. Michael Sencer, Executive Vice President of Hidden Villa Ranch, however, Coordinator Nancy Merlino “...really deserves all the credit for getting this program off the ground.” He strongly feels that she “...has only scratched the surface...” and that the WCFMC “...could become the feeding ground of graduating students into the food sector of the industry... as well as the premier food marketing program of the country.”

The competition could not have taken place without the following sponsors: Illuminators, WAFC, Hidden Villa Ranch, Minute Maid, Crossmark and NuCal Foods. Kroger sponsored the breakfast while Colorado State University sponsored the afternoon break with appetizers, pizza and refreshments. For information on next year’s competition which takes place March 2, 2007, contact Professor Merlino (714) 401-6399 or namerlino@csupomona.edu; you can also visit the department web site at www.csupomona.edu/~fmanaged.

Cal Poly Pomona’s winning ALCA Team poses in front of the BYU stadium. (Top row, l to r: Amy Mariel, Michael Swan, Angelic Rael, Matt Chen, Josh Duncan; bottom row: Prof. Eudell Vis, Zach Reish, Prof. Fred Roth, Dustin Tatsumi, Kevin White, Rene Bettancourt, Peter Zendejas, Priscilla Du; seated is Bryce Carnolli. Not pictured – Luis Sierra

Competing against 52 universities, the College of Agriculture’s ALCA (Association of Landscape Contractors of America) Team captured 4th place at the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) competition held at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah last March. Coached by Prof. Fred Roth and Prof. Emeritus Eudell Vis, the 13-member team participated in a variety of landcare-related contests including Interior Landscape Design, Irrigation Design, Pest Management, Construction Estimating, Business Management, Turf and Turf Pest ID, Arboriculture Techniques, and Personnel Management. Josh Duncan placed 1st in Construction Estimating; Bryer Carnolli and Dustin Tatsumi took 2nd place in Irrigation Assembly; 2nd place in Pest Management went to Angelic Rael; and Kevin White placed 1st in Turf and Turf Pest ID.

A popular component of the competition is the working luncheon sponsored by Hidden Villa Ranch. Lunch was a buzz with activity from all the students working on a new advertising piece for two new Hidden Villa Ranch egg products.

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A year of hard work paid off for Cal Poly Pomona’s Western Horse Show Team which took 5th place at the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association National Championships held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, May 4-7, 2006. The team had to earn the right to compete at the national level by earning points at local and regional contests throughout the preceding academic year. Pitting their skills against 10 other universities from Southern California and Arizona, Cal Poly’s team accumulated the most points in the region. Then, “the first weekend of April, we traveled to Sacramento with 11 riders for the Zones competition, where all the top schools and riders in IHSA’s Zone 8 meet to try to qualify for Nationals,” explained Jen Earles, who coaches Cal Poly Pomona’s team. Our students finished 3rd overall to win a spot at the National College Bowl held at the IFT Annual Meeting and Food Expo in Orlando, Florida in June 2006. Even though Cal Poly Pomona was not the Western Area representative this year, the experiences they learned at this year’s College Bowl were invaluable. The Food Science students sought travel donations from private industry and Southern California IFT, and raised the travel funds for the trip. They also designed and tie-dyed this year’s trip. They also designed and tie-dyed this year’s team shirts, established many future professional contacts at the competition, achieved a very respectable finish in the competition, and had a great time. With plenty of food for thought, Ayako and Misty have already begun organizing practice sessions and preparing for next year’s competition.
Ag Ambassadors Reach Out

Ag Ambassadors are the College of Agriculture’s “face” to the many California high school and community college students with whom they interact. They represent the College at a variety of events both on and off-campus, promoting college attendance, the College of Agriculture, Cal Poly Pomona, and California agriculture. In 2005-06, our fourteen Ag Ambassadors participated in 91 different activities, visited 33 schools, volunteered 1012 hours, and reached over 3900 students.

Two of the Ag Ambassadors’ favorite events were the World Ag Expo and the FFA State Leadership Conference. At the three-day World Ag Expo, the “Disneyland” of the California agricultural community, the Ag Ambassadors encountered hundreds, if not thousands, of people. The Cal Poly Pomona booth was located on “college row,” and along with student representatives from other agriculture colleges, the Ag Ambassadors talked to kids, students, parents, and grandparents, networked with industry representatives, encountered visitors from other countries, and got to be a part of the largest event of its kind.

The state FFA Leadership Conference, held in Fresno, was an opportunity for the Ag Ambassadors to interact with 3000+ of the “best and brightest” FFA members in California. This was a two-day event where they conducted six educational workshops on Sunday and hosted a half-day information booth at a college and career fair on Monday.

In addition to these two events, the Ag Ambassadors conducted campus tours, connected with prospective students during Open House, presented power-point presentations in many classrooms, were active members of Ag Council, and sponsored the annual College of Agriculture sweatshirt sale.

AG AMBASSADOR ANNUAL ACTIVITIES:

- AG 100 Presentations
- Ag Career Day
- Ag Field Day
- Apparel Forces Days
- Broncofusion
- College of Ag Open House
- College Tours
- Counselor Day
- Email to Prospective Students
- Farm Show
- FARMS Tour
- Feeder Calf Sale
- FFA Leadership Summit
- FFA State Conference
- Graduation Fair
- Greenhand Conference
- HortFest ’05
- Horticulture Day
- Preview Day
- School Visits
- Showcase of Excellence

ALUMNI PRIDE

Terry L. Noriega – 2006 Distinguished Alumnus

Seventeen years after starting his garage-based landscape construction and maintenance business, Terry Noriega (’79, ornamental horticulture), relocated his expanding company and added a nursery operation. Its success led to the formation of a second company - El Native Growers, Inc; a wholesale nursery operation, with three growing grounds - and a 65 acre facility in Ventura County currently in the development stage. Terry hopes his business will become the premier provider of high quality native and drought tolerant plants in Southern California.

Mariposa, his award-winning landscape construction maintenance company, employs more than 300 people and has an impressive client list, including the Norton Simon Museum, USC, Knott’s Berry Farm, UCLA and Pomona College. Mariposa is the back-to-back California Landscape Contractor’s Association sweepstakes award winner for landscape construction at the City of Arcadia Police Station in 2004 and the Burbank Department of Water and Power Facility in 2005.

“The most important thing I learned at Cal Poly Pomona is how incredibly important and effective the ‘learn by doing’ philosophy is at providing a quality education,” said Terry. He gives back to his alma mater by offering internships to our students and contributing to the scholarship program for outstanding incoming freshmen pursuing degrees in plant science. Terry stays involved with current students, supporting the American Landscape Contractors Association (ALCA) student team with both funds and training. In addition, he has served as director of the Irwindale Educational Foundation and the Irwindale Chamber of Commerce.

Former Dean Appointed by President Bush to BIFAD

Last spring, Alleen C. Christensen, former Dean of the College, was appointed to the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development by President George Bush. Dr. Christensen, who retired from CPP in 1994, will serve a two-year term as one of seven board members. “BIFAD advises the U. S. Agency for International Development on agricultural development priorities and issues and monitors activities undertaken under Title XII (“Famine Prevention and Freedom from Hunger”) of the Foreign Assistance Act.” (BYU News web site at http://byunews.byu.edu) Dr. Christensen served on the board previously while at CPP as member of BIFAD’s Joint Committee on Agricultural Research and Development and as chairman of the Inter-University Consortium for International Development (CID).

Dr. Christensen currently serves as Director of Brigham Young University’s Benson Institute, a division of the College of Biology and Agriculture that encourages self-sufficiency among impoverished rural families through research and improvement efforts.
Cal Poly Alumna Returns to Recruit Students for Vet School

A s we sat and listened to Jodi Woods (’91, animal science) address our pre-veterinary students during Ag Council’s annual Career Day, it was clear that she had not lost the passion and zest for life that she had while a student here at Cal Poly Pomona. A multi-talented individual who was able to juggle a number of extracurricular activities in addition to maintaining a high academic standard, she was now an impassioned spokesperson for the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where she is now a student.

Accepted at four different veterinary schools, Jodi selected the University of Wisconsin after they presented her with a highly competitive offer. More importantly, however, it provided a supportive, enthusiastic and nurturing environment and a program that is challenging, yet non-competitive and known for producing quality veterinarians. As Jodi explained, she was given the flexibility to explore different career paths and encouraged to do everything she wanted to do. As she put it, “I’m on the Woods Trail!”

After a false start and a lot of advice and guidance from her new friends at UW, this California girl adjusted to her new environment and designed a career path to meet her specific needs. With the long-term goal of securing “…an academic appointment that allows me to practice clinical veterinary medicine, conduct research, and teach,” Jodi plans to complete her master’s degree in Comparative Biomedical Sciences this year. She will graduate with a D.V.M. in 2008 and, after completing a small animal internship elsewhere, she hopes to return to the UW-SVM to complete a five-year combined small animal surgery residency/Ph.D. program.

Along the way, Jodi has packed a wealth of activities and experiences into her old kit bag. She has traveled extensively throughout the U.S. as an officer and delegate of the Student American Veterinary Medical Association (SAVMA), as a student liaison on the AVMA Member Services Committee, and as a student representative for both the North American Veterinary Conference and Neutal Purina. She also attended the World Small Animal Veterinary Conference in Mexico City and hopes to attend an upcoming conference in Prague, Czech Republic. Her research experience includes being selected as one of ten national Pfizer Animal Health Veterinary Scientist Scholars, working as a research intern under a NIH funded research training grant program, completing a Merck-Merial Summer Research Fellowship, and summer field experiences in Ecuador and Peru. All this would not have been possible, said Jodi, without the support of the folks at Wisconsin’s School of Veterinary Medicine.

Invited to participate in our Career Day, Jodi informed pre-vet students that the School of Veterinary Medicine at UW would like to increase the number of students from Cal Poly Pomona. The competition is stiff—out of 870 applications they received during the last process, 702 were from non-residents and only 20 non-residents were invited to attend. Because UW does not interview, Jodi advised them to make sure their application reflects who they are. This includes having at least a 3.5 GPA; “…good, solid letters of recommendation, and a stellar essay” which should not only demonstrate good communication skills and critical thinking, but personality, passion, and commitment. Jodi also advised students to call before submitting their application in order to get pre-application counseling. Tuition is lower than many of the top schools and the veterinary school boasts a 95-97% first-time pass rate for the National Boards (national average is 88%) and 100% internship placement for 4th year students.

Addressing faculty and staff later in the day, Jodi said students should recognize what an extraordinary school this is and take advantage of every opportunity to learn and grow professionally. Practicing what she preaches, Jodi is leaving the door open to other possibilities while pursuing her initial goal of becoming a small animal surgeon. When asked what she did for fun, Jodi quickly responded, “What I’m doing IS fun!”
Agriscapes Phase II, a $1.9 million greenhouse project, will break ground in the early spring. Partnerships with several communities and business neighbors have helped to catalyze this project toward completion. Community partners who provided financial support include: Conley’s Greenhouse Manufacturers, Norma’s Orchards, Hidden Villa Ranch and Week’s Wholesale Rose Growers.

After 68 years at their Upland location, Weeks Roses moved their administration offices to the Cal Poly Pomona campus, utilizing space formerly occupied by the Land Lab. Weeks will also occupy 8,000 square feet of space in the new greenhouse range for propagation and research and a few acres of land on Spadra Ranch. In return, Cal Poly Pomona Horticulture, Plant and Soil Science students will have few acres of open land on Spadra Ranch.

Michael C. Cavello

In return, Cal Poly Pomona Horticulture, Plant and Soil Science students will have few acres of open land on Spadra Ranch.
Ag Events . . .

October Every Year
* Annual Pumpkin Festival – 3rd weekend in October
  (909) 869-2215; or www.csupomona.edu/agri and click on “Events”)

November Every Year
* Annual Feeder Calf Auction where feeder steers are sold to 4-H and FFA members throughout the State of California. Educational seminars and a barbecue are held prior to the auction. Visit our website at www.csupomona.edu/agri and click on “Events”.

February ’07
Feb. 13 - 20th Southern Calif. Food Industry Conference, “Emerging Trends: Opportunities for Tomorrow”; Opportunities for sponsorships and exhibit tables; Student Product Development Competition. Kellogg West Conference Center & Lodge, Cal Poly Pomona. For accommodations, call 1-800-KWEST-76 or 909-869-2222 or on-line at www.kelloggwest.org. Companies contact Dr. Martin Sancho-Madriz at 909-869-2164 or at mfsancho@csupomona.edu.

April ’07
* April 26 - Ag Council’s Annual Career Day

Ongoing Events
Raiser/Cal Poly Pomona Farmer’s Market in Baldwin Park – every other Friday: contact (909) 869-2214

* Sunday Horse Shows at the W. K. Kellogg Arabian Horse Center—the 1st Sunday of every month
  October through June

* For more information visit our website at www.csupomona.edu/agri and click on “Events”.

DEPARTMENTS
Animal and Veterinary Sciences
Dr. Cedric Matsushima, Interim Chair
(909) 869-2210
cymatsushima@csupomona.edu

Apparel Merchandising and Mgmt.
Dr. Peter Kilduff, Chair
(909) 869-3377
pkilduff@csupomona.edu

Food Marketing and Agribusiness Mgmt.
Dr. Cedric Matsushima, Interim Chair
(909) 869-2210
cymatsushima@csupomona.edu

Horticulture/Plant & Soil Science
Prof. Dan Hostetler, Chair
(909) 869-2214
dghostetler@csupomona.edu

Human Nutrition and Food Science
Dr. Doug Lewis, Chair
(909) 869-2226
ddlewis@csupomona.edu

DEAN’S OFFICE
Dr. Wayne Bidlack, Dean
(909) 869-2201
wrbidlack@csupomona.edu

Prof. Jean Gipe, Interim Associate Dean
(909) 869-2200
jgipe@csupomona.edu

CENTERS
AGRiscapes
Prof. Dan Hostetler or Anna Marie Barlet
(909) 869-2214
abarlet@csupomona.edu

Equine Research Center
Dr. Steven Wickler, Assoc. Director
(909) 869-4988
swchughes@csupomona.edu

Equine Sciences and the
W.K. Kellogg Arabian Horse Center
Prof. Bill Hughes, Director
(909) 869-4988
wchughes@csupomona.edu

Hey Macarena!
Pictured in Marissa Tabke-Shotwell, a senior majoring in animal science, riding Hey Macarena, an 8 year old Arabian mare who resides at the W. K. Kellogg Arabian Horse Center. Both are wearing native Arabian costumes. Marissa is one of many students who have participated in the Center’s Barn Rider Program in which each student is assigned a horse and held responsible for its care. Marissa and Hey Macarena can also be seen in the Center’s Thursday (for organized groups) and Sunday horse shows.

OTHER
Development Office
Michelle Moyer, Director
(909) 869-2728
mmoyer@csupomona.edu

Student Recruitment & Retention
Rhonda Ostrowski, Coordinator
(909) 869-2869

Ag Education
Alex Hess, Coordinator
(909) 869-2206
ajhess@csupomona.edu

Agricultural Research Initiative
Dr. David Still, Director
(909) 869-3637

WEBSITES
College of Agriculture website:
www.csupomona.edu/agri

Farm Store at Kellogg Ranch:
www.csupomona.edu/farmstore

AGRiscapes:
www.csupomona.edu/agriscapes

Agricultural Research Initiative
www.csupomona.edu/ari

CSU Ag Research Initiative:
ari.calstate.edu

College of Ag Meat Lab
www.csupomona.edu/meatlab
The Annual Pumpkin Festival is held every October. The event entertained and fed over 20,000 people this year.