Teaching the community about good nutrition
Hello everyone, I’m happy to say the College of Agriculture has survived one of the toughest budget years ever experienced at Cal Poly Pomona. Our faculty and staff have done an outstanding job of educating an increasing number of students in the College of Agriculture (20% growth since 2005) with significantly less state funding. Thanks to our loyal alumni, friends of the college, and industry supporters, we were able to weather last year’s budget storm and still provide our students an outstanding education. As we go forth in the years ahead, we remain committed to providing exponential “hands on learning” for our students. Our unique way of teaching, that makes Cal Poly Pomona so special, is not cheap. We are continually challenged to go beyond minimal state allocations and seek out external resources to produce high quality graduates who support California’s agricultural community and related areas.

One of the biggest accomplishments for the college was the completion of our 5 year strategic plan last spring (http://www.csupomona.edu/~agri/college/mission.shtml). Our goals are to enhance student success, promote faculty and student scholarship, deepen our engagement with the communities we serve, improve the management of college resources, and develop external relations to build college support. Our plan is based on the grassroots contributions from the faculty, staff, and students of the college. Our next big challenge for the upcoming years is the prioritization and implementation of our plan. I have every confidence we will be headed down the road of success with our plan in hand.

The University and the College of Agriculture are now embarking on a comprehensive campaign to raise significant funding to ensure our future growth, endowments to bring in top notch faculty, and the purchase of new state-of-the-art equipment to ensure our students receive a quality and relevant education. The college has already successfully raised 58% of its $26 million goal, but we still have a way to go in the next 2-3 years. I call upon all of you to dig deep down and pitch in with your donations and gifts-in-kind to help us realize our future.

Again, many thanks to all of our supporters. Your help is greatly appreciated and you do make a difference. I look forward to a new and productive year. Please follow our progress by visiting our website www.csupomona.edu/~agri/college.

With warm regards,

[Signature]

Dr. Lester Young, Dean

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Our deepest appreciation to the J.G. Boswell Foundation for the Boswell Grant which covers the cost of this publication.

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On the cover: The first class of the Estudiante de Dietética program which focuses on improving the health of the Latino community.
Dr. Douglas Lewis Appointed Associate Dean

A well-respected department chair, scholar, and a passionate teacher, Dr. Douglas Lewis was selected to fill the Associate Dean position effective September 2010. Dr. Lewis received his B.S. and Ph.D. degrees in biochemistry from the University of Georgia and Michigan State University respectively. Following a 12-year career as a Research Scientist in the area of human nutrition related diseases at the Southwest Foundation for Biomedical Research in San Antonio, he fulfilled a desire to teach by accepting a position in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition at Iowa State University. In January 2002, he accepted the position of Chair of the Human Nutrition and Food Science Department at Cal Poly Pomona. Under his leadership, the Department continued to grow and expand while maintaining quality programs and faculty.

In September 2010, Dr. Lewis replaced Professor Jean Gipe who had graciously interrupted her retirement to serve as Interim Associate Dean. “I look forward to working with Doug to begin implementing the College of Agriculture strategic plan for this upcoming year,” said Dean Les Young. “We are both committed to maximizing the College’s resources and opportunities for the benefit of our students.”

Dr. Young and the rest of the College community are grateful to Professor Gipe for her outstanding service as the Interim Associate Dean for the College, first during the 2006-07 college year and then again from March 2008 to September 2009. “Her leadership in the role as Associate Dean has helped the College advance through our strategic planning process and our many other challenging endeavors.” Professor Gipe is finally getting to enjoy retirement, but plans to remain as a consultant and helping friend of the College in the future.

Dr. James Alderson Appointed Director of the W. K. Kellogg Arabian Horse Center

In September, Dr. James Alderson was appointed Director of the W. K. Kellogg Arabian Horse Center (AHC) following the retirement of Professor Bill Hughes. The former chair of the Animal & Veterinary Sciences Department, Jim is no stranger to the Center. “Jim literally grew up at the AHC,” said Dean Les Young. “His father was the former head trainer, so he is rooted in the legacy and the importance of the AHC to Cal Poly Pomona. I have every confidence he will excel in his new role.”

After earning his DVM and graduating in the top 10% of his class at U.C. Davis, Jim spent over 20 years in private practice. This included founding Brea Canyon Animal Hospital in 1982 which quickly became one of the most successful practices in the San Gabriel Valley. He sold his business in 1997 and obtained an MBA from Pepperdine University while serving as a veterinary practice manager at multiple practices. In 2003 he joined the Animal & Veterinary Sciences Department and in 2004 took over as coordinator of the fledging Animal Health Science Program. He quickly met his goal to raise the bar and provide more challenges to the students who were required to participate in actual surgeries and externships at area clinics. Under his leadership this accredited program has experienced tremendous growth in the number of majors. Jim was a hit in the classroom, too. In his second year as a professor, “Dr. A” was selected for the College’s Teacher of the Year Award.

Appointed as Chair of the Department in 2008, his continuing success as an educator, and his ties to the legacy of the AHC, made him the obvious choice to follow Professor Bill Hughes as Director. “As the new director, my goals are to continue the legacy of the W. K. Kellogg Arabsians by pursuing excellence in the heritage, breeding, and performance of the Center’s Arabians.”

Alumni Gather to Honor Voorhis Faculty Member

Alumni from the 40’s through the 70’s joined family members at AGRiscapes on January 27th to honor Eddie Appel and to celebrate his 92nd birthday. The event was organized by alumnus and Professor Emeritus, Rex Baker, who was hired in 1976 as Eddie’s replacement.

In 1946 when the Voorhis Campus was reopened after World War II, Eddie Appel was on board and in charge of the Agricultural Services and Inspection program. Alumni and Associate Vice President for Special Projects, Ron Simons remembers Eddie as “one of the most demanding professors but always very fair.” According to Dean Les Young, Eddie “successfully educated hundreds of Agricultural Biology (formerly Ag Services and Inspection) students who went on to successful careers in County Agricultural Commissioners’ Offices as Ag Inspectors, Ag Biologists, and Ag Deputies. He was responsible for producing 25 (nearly half) of the State’s and County’s Ag Commissioners.”

Dr. Lester C. Young, Dean, College of Agriculture

The mission of the California Agricultural Leadership Foundation is to “enhance the long-term viability of California agriculture through leadership development, which in turn benefits the people and communities agriculture serves.” In 1970, it initiated the California Agriculture Leadership Program, “a two-year fellowship program that provides individuals with a transformational leadership experience.” The program includes an extensive curriculum and participants explore the impact of various subjects on a national and international scale by visiting various regions of the country as well as developing nations. (www.agleaders.org)

Each year the California Agricultural Leadership Foundation invites a dean from one of the participating agriculture universities (Cal Poly Pomona, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Cal State Fresno, and U.C. Davis) to experience an international trip with a class of future leaders. I was fortunate to be asked to accompany Class 39 to Peru and Ecuador in February 2010. Although the underlying theme was to experience the differences between foreign and U.S. agriculture, the real purpose of the trip was to observe and learn about the differences in the government, economy, culture, history, and society as a whole. For many of the 24 fellows of Class 39, this was their first, in-depth international experience.

Our first stop was Lima, Peru—a city of stark contrasts. The capital of Peru at first seemed very prosperous and modern, but upon closer examination there was abject poverty in the shadow of the skyscrapers and southern outskirts of the population surrounding the city. The class had an opportunity to visit a very poor southern village in Ica destroyed by an earthquake last year. The people of Ica were still living in makeshift hovels along a river bed. The class had previously raised $10,000 to help those poor villagers rebuild their adobe homes. The money was enough to help build 30 new homes for which the class pitched in to help make adobe bricks. The class even brought along a wheelchair to donate to one of the young girls afflicted with polio as well as school supplies and even soccer balls to help these poor villagers—a very touching and emotional experience. In contrast we saw a contemporary farm in southern Peru which grew asparagus and table grapes with very modern irrigation and trellising which rivaled any farm in California. In fact, these high valued crops were slated for export.

Back in Lima, we had an opportunity to attend an evening reception with U.S. Ambassador Heather Hodges, the members of the...
Foreign Service mission and several Peruvian government officials and industry leaders. We were briefed on U.S. and Peruvian relationships dealing with agricultural trade, the Peruvian economy, and government relations.

The next day we flew to Cusco, Peru, about 10,000 feet above sea level. Here we experienced the splendor of the Andean mountains surrounded by giant peaks. We drank "Coca tea" to help prevent the onset of altitude sickness, observed potato farming, and the native Peruvian people who still hold onto Incan culture and tradition despite being conquered and vanquished by the Spanish. We saw many Inca ruins and learned about their advanced technology, amazing architecture and fascinating culture. We learned how the Spanish exploited Peru for its gold and tried but failed to destroy the Incan culture.

Our next stop was Quito, Ecuador, also located in the high elevation of the Andes. Unlike Lima, there seemed to be no middle class and not the stark contrast between rich and poor we saw in Peru. The native Ecuadorian Indians (very proud of their culture which was a blend of Spanish and native Indian), but each ethnic group had their own distinctive costumes. Although street vendors are aggressive, we saw very little begging. The agriculture is still somewhat primitive and there were little signs of any modern farming, but we didn't see signs of malnourishment in the children. In fact I had a chance to sample the local fare of roasted "Cuy" which is Incan for Guinea Pig -- very tasty. We later met with USDA officials and personnel with the U.S. Foreign Service mission in Ecuador. Unlike Peru, Ecuador exports very little of its agriculture except for fresh cut roses grown in greenhouses. Its main export is oil which is controversial because it deals with exploiting the natural lands in the tropical rain forests of Ecuador. We had a chance to straddle both the Southern and Northern hemispheres by standing and having our picture taken on the Equator.

We had a chance to visit a local village which was receiving help from the Benson Institute in the form of farming technology, seeds, and extension assistance. We met with several families whose lives were made much better because of the Institute's commitment to encouraging self-sufficiency among impoverished rural families. A former dean of the College of Agriculture at Cal Poly Pomona, Allen Christensen, is the Director of the Benson Institute.

Our final stop was in Ecuador in the eastern rain forest jungle which is located to the east and forms the head waters of the great Amazon River. We stayed in a local village in primitive bamboo huts built on stilts. The jungle was in stark contrast to the "Alpine" conditions of the Andes. It was hot, humid, and full of tropical trees and plants. The native local culture includes growing cassava which they ate and drank as a fermented brew. We even spent the evening with a local Shaman (medicine man) who cleansed a few volunteers by spraying their bodies with mouthfuls of a magical potion. The blessing was to insure a safe and wonderful journey.

The blessing must have worked because Santiago, Chile, experienced a terrible earthquake the day of our departure to the U.S. All the airline computers were down at the Lima airport and there was no record of our return reservations. The airport was in chaos with many international travelers stranded for days. We went up to the ticket counter into immigration and customs and even more so at LAX on the most beautiful and crystal clear Sunday morning. We breezed through immigration and customs and even more so at LAX, all of our luggage arrived and was waiting for us. We were blessed indeed!
Kirk Weatherton harvests hydroponic lettuce

Retirements

Michael Moran

The 2009 recipient of the College’s Staff of the Year Award, Mike’s dedicated service to the University spanned 40 years. His father worked for many years as a professor in the College of Science and Mike eventually followed him to campus, first as a student (Agronomy, ’65) and finally as a staff member in the Plant & Soil Science Department.

As the Department’s technician, Mike was responsible for setting up all soils labs, purchasing supplies, maintaining/repairing equipment, maintaining an inventory worth over $2 million, and serving as the hazardous waste coordinator. Department staff member, Anna Marie Barlet described Mike as “the center cog in the large wheel we were turning every day.” He was the College’s beloved “handy-man” who was always ready to go out of his way to provide assistance with whatever needed doing. Students will certainly miss his presence as they could always count on him for assistance with their senior and research projects.

Department Chair Dan Hosteller is certain there was not a more dedicated and willing employee in the College and University. “Mike has such a positive attitude and generous spirit,” said Dr. Gregory Partida. He was a “reminder of the family feeling that the College has maintained” to the present day.

Linda Schmidt

For 21 years, Linda Schmidt managed the Beef Unit and eventually all the livestock units in the University’s Ag Valley. She was not only responsible for the day-to-day operations of all three units, but also tended to the health care needs of cattle, designed the breeding program, coordinated the buying and selling of cattle, ordered feed and supplies, maintained financial and other operational records, directed another technician and supervised student assistants. She assisted faculty with classes and laboratory programs and provided oversight of student research projects.

In addition, long hours were spent coordinating the livestock show teams, exhibiting cattle at local and regional shows, supporting department and College events like AG Field Day, NACTA and Academic Quadrathlon competitions, and the Pumpkin Festival. Linda organized and coordinated the Department’s annual Feeder Calf Sale which benefited 4-H and FFA students in our community and for several years was in charge of the Jackpot Show held at the Fairplex and sponsored by Nutrena Feeds.

An alumna (Animal Science, ’84) and former College Staff of the Year, Linda also worked with youth in the community as a 4-H Club leader and provided assistance to local high school FFA chapters.

Today, Linda is enjoying her new role as a first-time grandmother and also working alongside her son on a ranch in northern California.

William C. Hughes

In September, Professor Bill Hughes decided it was time to hang up his spurs after 43 years of service at Cal Poly Pomona. Initially hired as a full-time instructor in the Agricultural Business Management Department since 1998 Bill divided his time between the Department and the W. K. Kellogg Arabian Horse Center. During his tenure, the Center received nearly $174,000 from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to build new facilities; the Foundation also donated $3 million toward the expansion of the W. K. Kellogg Arabian Horse Center Library.

In addition to teaching classes, serving on a variety of department/college committees, and running the Center, Bill was very involved with his local community and with the Arabian horse industry. He was recognized on several occasions by the City of Chino Hills for volunteerism including service as a member of the McCoy Equestrian Committee and the Chino Hills Foundation. Bill is past President and Vice President of the International Arabian Horse Association (IAHA) and was chosen to show judge and owner of Arabian horses for over 40 years. When the IAHA and the Arabian Horse Registry moved into the Arabian Horse Association in 2003-04, Bill was elected its first President. Currently, he is serving as the Vice President of the U.S. Equestrian Federation which is the governing body for equestrian sports for the United States and the Olympics.

Gregory J. Partida

After 35 years of dedicated service as a professor in the Plant Science Department, Dr. Greg Partida retired from the University in September 2010. During his tenure, he served as the coordinator of the Agricultural Biology and Fruit Industries programs and manager of the orchards on campus and at Spadra Ranch. For over 20 years he managed the College’s 53-acre Pine Tree Ranch located in Santa Paula.

A caring and conscientious instructor, Greg was selected as the College’s Advisor of the year in 2007. His advice regarding curriculum and career choices made a tremendous difference in the lives of many students. Many of them made close contact with future employers and many obtained scholarships due to Greg’s close ties to the industry.

He served the community in a variety of ways, including serving on the advisory boards of Fullerton and Buena Park High Schools. Considered a “guru” when it comes to growing avocados, he worked with growers in Ventura and San Diego for many years to help them improve production. An experiment with pruning in 1990 earned him worldwide attention, when he found he could triple fruit production by pruning and maintaining trees at a height of 12 to 15 feet.

Although Greg and his wife, Tanya, plan to spend a lot of time traveling and fishing, he will return to the campus to teach during the winter quarters for the next five years as a participant in the Faculty Early Retirement Program.

Peggy Perry

Dr. Peggy Perry’s contributions during 36 years of service are evident at nearly every level of the University. An excellent and sought-after instructor/advisor in the Plant Science Department, Peggy provided leadership on a variety of committees and as the Department’s assistant chair. She was also at the forefront of the planning and implementation of AGRISis, as well as the Department’s graduate program.

Peggy also served the University as an Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and, more recently, as Director of the Faculty Center for Professional Development. Administrative roles also included the Associate Dean and

continued

Interim Dean positions in the College of Agriculture.

A member of Class IX of the California Agricultural Leadership Program, Peggy became campus coordinator for the program in 1989—a position she continues to hold today. She is a past recipient of the University’s George P. Hart Award for outstanding leadership and past participant in the W. K. Kellogg Foundation’s National Fellowship Program.

Fortunately for the College and her Department, Peggy will be participating in the Faculty Early Retirement Program, so for the next five years students will continue to benefit from her knowledge and experience in the fall and spring quarters.
Wild Bees To The Rescue

Since 2006, scientists and farmers have been mystified by the sudden decline of the domesticated honey bee (Apis mellifera). Honey bees are essential to pollinating about a third of the fruits, vegetables, nuts and other crops grown in the United States. The economic value of these pollination services is considerable.

A prime example of a crop that is dependent on insect pollination for fruit production is the quintessential fruit of summer, the U.S. Seedless watermelon (about $15 billion annually). California is a top watermelon producing state, with primary growing regions in the Central Valley and portions of Imperial and Riverside counties.

Managed, domesticated honey bees are the pollinator of choice for commercial watermelon production and previous studies have found that 500-1000 pollen grains must be deposited onto the stigma of a seedless flower to ensure the production of a marketable fruit. Lately, wild or native bees have been gaining some buzz-worthy attention as alternative crop pollinators of watermelons. Researchers at Rutgers, UC Berkeley and UC Davis have shown that in certain growing areas, the pollination services provided by local wild bees alone are sufficient to meet most, or all, of the pollination requirements for watermelon production.

In the Northern Central Valley of California, it has been determined that females of five different native bee species deposit as much or more pollen on the stigma of seedless watermelon flowers than honey bees, indicating these “busy bees” can provide an equivalent or superior pollination service compared to honeybees.

Dr. Joan Leong, a Professor of Biological Sciences here at Cal Poly Pomona, studies the contributions of wild bees and honey bees to watermelon pollination in Southern California, a region of the state that has not been studied. Her ARI (Agriculture Research Institute) sponsored project investigates the abilities of wild bee and honey bee pollinators to transfer pollen between flowers of watermelon plants. She and her team of research students document the abundance and diversity of wild bees and honey bees in watermelon fields and measure the pollinator effectiveness of bee pollinators by quantifying the number of pollen grains deposited on a flower after a single floral visit.

A previous pilot study by Dr. Leong at Cal Poly’s Spadra Ranch has yielded some surprising results. Just adjacent to the Cal Poly campus, near Temple Avenue, eighteen wild or native bee species were found to visit watermelon flowers at Spadra Ranch. Given the predominant suburban landscape around Cal Poly, it was expected that only a handful of wild bee species would exist there. Preliminary results also suggest that several common native bee species deposit as much or more pollen on watermelon flowers during a single visit than do honey bees.

The possible use of wild or native bees for crop pollination is not a new idea, but one that has increasing appeal because of the recent scarcity of domesticated honey bee colonies. Currently, farmers who need crop pollination rely almost exclusively on the services of our one domesticated honey bee species (Apis mellifera). Investigations into potential alternative crop pollinators, like those being conducted by Dr. Leong and her team, may provide farmers with some welcome options for reducing their dependence upon the domesticated honey bees. Furthermore, farmers who might choose to cultivate some wild bee populations in the vicinity of their fields will not be the only ones to benefit; local wildflowers and wildlife that depend on interactions with wild bees are likely to benefit as well. California farmers, in particular, stand to gain from this line of research, since California has an impressively large and diverse wild bee fauna that could potentially serve “double-duty” on the farm and in the wild.

Anti-Vitamins – The Answer to Pest Control?

Everyone needs to take their vitamins, or so the vitamin makers would like us to believe. While the jury is still out on the benefits of daily vitamin supplements, vitamin deficiencies can leave us debilitated. Stories abound of sailors suffering scurvy from vitamin C deficiency. Women deficient in folic acid are at increased risk of having babies with birth defects. A lot of effort has gone into determining the recommended daily vitamin allowances to keep people healthy. Rather than preventing vitamin deficiency, the LaMunyon laboratory is attempting to create vitamin deficiencies – in worms – as a method of control.

Every year, tiny microscopic worms wreak havoc in agriculture. These parasitic round worms attack both plants and animals, costing billions in pesticides and lost yields. Many of the pesticides are so toxic that they are nearly as bad as the worms themselves. Typical of the struggle between pests and pesticides, nematode pests have evolved resistance to several nematicides. Creating new nematicide control measures is of ultimate importance: enter vitamin deficiency.

In a moment of serendipity, Dr. Craig LaMunyon realized that he was studying in the laboratory could contribute to the nematode control measures needed by the agricultural industry. His laboratory had been studying the transport of folic acid in a nematode that has become an industry in itself: Caenorhabditis elegans. Thousands of scientists worldwide study this little worm, measuring less than a millimeter to discover basic facts of life. Indeed, it was the first complex animal to have its genome sequenced as part of the human genome project. C. elegans is not a pest, living an unassuming life devouring bacteria in the soil. However, that characteristic is one that makes this worm valuable to studies of potential nematicides; it can be grown easily in the laboratory without a host. In addition, every gene in its genome is known and the development of every cell in its body has been tracked.

The LaMunyon laboratory discovered when they knocked out the gene that encodes a folate transporter protein, the folate deficient worms were very sick – and they were sterile. The idea seemed simple enough: induce folate deficiency in nematodes, and voila, they are controlled. Unfortunately, it is impossible to just knock out the folate transporter gene in pests in the agricultural setting, so the laboratory set out to determine what was making the folate deficient worms so sick, with the idea that the sickness might be mimicked by other treatments.

The folate metabolic pathways are complex, but one intermediate homocysteine stuck out like a sore thumb. Homocysteine is known to be a toxic molecule, and folate is required to recycle it. When graduate student Jason Rothman exposed normal worms to homocysteine, it made them sick. Now, it would not be good – or cheap – to use homocysteine as a control agent, but Jason reasoned that a large dose of the molecule that is converted to homocysteine, the amino acid methionine, might also sicken the worms. To his delight, methionine worked: and the worms became sick, although not as sick as when they are completely folate deficient.

In a strange twist, a large dose of the vitamin thiamine makes folate deficient worms healthier. Given this observation, the laboratory tried knocking out thiamine uptake in the folate deficient worms – the worms were stopped in their tracks. The race is now on to identify a method to reduce thiamine uptake in worms exposed to a large dose of methionine. Several potential methods are currently being tested. Once an effective method is developed, it will be tried on distantly related species, with the ultimate aim of testing the treatment on pest nematodes. The laboratory has similar studies occurring with riboflavin, which is also a critical vitamin and potentially useful in nematode pest control.

People take vitamin pills in the hopes of becoming healthier. The LaMunyon laboratory is developing anti-vitamins to make pest nematodes sick, and that can be good for people too.
The local community has provided a valuable training ground for nutrition students who want real-world experiences and the opportunity to help residents live healthier lives.

Latinos suffer disproportionately from nutrition-related diseases, such as obesity, Type 2 diabetes, and higher rates of iron deficiency and poor dental health, according to the most recent data from the 2010 Healthy People Initiative review. The study indicates that new cases of diabetes and diabetes-related deaths are 50 to 90 percent higher in the Latino population than in the non-Latino white population. Given the increasing growth of the Hispanic community, the development of effective nutrition interventions is imperative in order to improve their health and nutrition status.

Last year, the Human Nutrition & Food Science (HNFS) Department was awarded a three-year, $248,043 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to train dietetic students to better serve the Latino community. Estudiante de Dietética may be the only program of its kind in California or the U.S., according to Dr. Kessler, HNFS Assistant Professor and Principal Investigator on the project. “Our students are already required to take a course on culture, but we want to provide more culturally sensitive dietetic care to improve the health of Latinos and to give our students an edge in the job market.

Students participating in the project take the same courses that are required in the Didactic Program, but are immersed in an environment designed to provide intense training in the Spanish language. The courses are taught in Spanish and service learning projects are conducted at Spanish-only speaking sites. The Department’s Didactic Program*, which prepares students to be registered dietitians, is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetic Education. Students who complete the “Estudiante Dietetico” emphasis will be awarded a special certificate.

As the first year came to a close, the first group of 30 students gave the program high marks. “I must admit it is a bit harder than I expected, but I am enjoying the interaction with fluent/native speakers and I am excited to learn new Spanish vocabulary,” said James Marin. Karla Moreno agreed: “It’s truly a great environment! Lectures are interactive and students are both challenged in the classroom and encouraged to not be afraid to practice their Spanish. It’s a wonderful opportunity and I will never regret joining this program.”

*Over the last 12 years, 98% of Cal Poly Pomona didactic graduates who completed a dietetic internship passed the national Registered Dietitian exam the first time. In addition, their scores on individual components of the exam have been significantly higher than the national average.
A member of Sigma Nu, Daren was involved in the canned food drives conducted each year by the Greek community for the L.A. Regional Food Bank. According to Daren, they would collect thousands of cans and then would have to transport them which created a number of logistical problems. So, when Jacqueline Biserno, Community Liaison, and Amanda Lopez, Site Director, of the Pomona Weed & Seed program expressed a desire to start a food bank, Daren spoke to them about “connecting the dots” and combining forces. Working together, they were able to streamline the process and target families in the local community. Their most recent effort provided food to 150 families “For me, this was just a crazy idea I had”, said Daren. “It’s ballooned into a way that’s amazing.”

Wishing to take this one step further, Daren and fellow foods and nutrition major, Zaleet Rahimi, designed a hot food service targeting children and their families. “For me, this was just a crazy idea I had”, said Darren. “It’s ballooned into a way that’s amazing.”

Students in the College benefit as well, said Plant Science Department Chair Dan Kliebenstein. “The Weed and Seed Program is a community-based strategy sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice which aims to prevent, control, and reduce violent crime, drug abuse, and gang activity. This Weed and Seed Program is a community-based strategy sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice which aims to prevent, control, and reduce violent crime, drug abuse, and gang activity.

“Relaxing Childhood Obesity through Schoolyard Gardens”
During the past two decades, the percentage of American children aged 6 to 11 who are overweight has more than doubled, and the percentage of overweight adolescents aged 12 to 19 has tripled.

Concerned about the students in his district, Rick Cota, Director of Nutrition Services for the Claremont Unified School District (CUSD), teamed up with Cal Poly Pomona’s Human Nutrition & Food Science Department, to create a healthier campus environment via a comprehensive, district-wide Schoolyard Garden and Nutrition Education Curriculum for the public schools located in the city of Claremont. Dr. Sharronda Wallace and Lecturer Jasmin Ilkay (Foods & Nutrition, ‘03) also recognized opportunities for student learning.

This project fits perfectly with Ms. Ilkay’s Community Nutrition course. During the spring quarter, her students worked with local 4-H clubs to educate local girls about nutrition. “I have 12 foods and nutrition students volunteered more than 300 hours to install the edible gardens. Students also created a marketing plan, including a newsletter, brochures, and a slogan, “Let’s Grub,” to encourage a wholesome lifestyle.

During the school year, the students at El Roble and San Antonio will be responsible for maintaining the gardens and harvesting produce. Outdoor work will be reinforced with nutrition classes as well as a hand-on, junior chef academy course at El Roble. “A lot of people know what kind of food is good for them, but not why. We want our students to understand how food affects their health and wellness,” said Cota. “This project will not only teach students about eating fruits and vegetables every day, it will educate their families.”

Both Dr. Wallace and Ms. Ilkay are searching for grants to continue funding this project which they hope will be a model for other districts. Future plans include the development of “a research component that will allow us to fully assess the nutritive values of the foods served both pre and post garden implementation;” said Sharronda.
A hands-on learning experience that not only gives students an opportunity to apply knowledge learned in the classroom but to learn the value of teamwork. Members of the 2010 Food Marketing Team (l-r): Dr. Nancy Merlino, advisor, Rohini Bhagat, Tatiana Assemian, Grace Leung, Lindsey Buswell, Andrew Ostrowski, Anthony Xavier, Leonardo Carrera, Fiona O’Connor, Alexandra Walters, and Jaclyn Lara.

Preparing for the Competition - During the winter quarter, Nancy helps the students identify their strengths and the roles they will fill on the team. They decide who their audience will be and design their presentation for that group.

Nancy works with the students to help them improve their speaking skills and comfort level in front of an audience. They must also learn to think on their feet so they will be able to answer questions from the judges. Initially, students may feel that making class presentations provides adequate training, but soon realize they have to meet a much higher standard. “Nowhere is the marketing competition more real life than in the Q&A portion,” said alumnus Cheyenne Barcelona who is a Strategic National Account Manager for CH Robinson Worldwide, Inc., a third party produce, transportation and logistics company. “We were asked tough questions, we had to know our product and the business better than anyone else, and even if we weren’t sure of the answer, sound confident enough in what we were saying that they believed it. It’s a skill I call on often in most aspects of business and I feel that the marketing competition has helped me tremendously in this area.”

“It’s a lot of work,” said Nancy, “it’s not an average, normal class.” During the last few weeks of the quarter, “basically every extra moment is put toward the project.” Trying to find the necessary time to practice can be a real challenge and the current economy has made it even more difficult. “Students are working full-time, going to school full-time, usually funding themselves, and in some cases, . . . helping their own families survive because they have lost jobs,” Nancy explained. “So, we meet outside of school, we meet here (on campus), we meet anywhere we can; sometimes it’s my house and we eat dinner together and it becomes a family situation . . .

While team members worked on their presentations, they also designed and constructed the display for the Cal Poly Farm Store which began selling the wine in February 2010. They even designed a web site, neck tags for the bottles and CPP Horsehill charms for wine glasses. The neck tags also included recipes with wine as an ingredient and menus to accompany the wine. “They were terrific to work with,” said Farm Store Manager, Dawn Taccone. “The display is very professional and we are selling lots of wine!”

Team member A. J. Ostrowski who designed and built the Farm Store display, found that “the experience of working with a very diverse group of people with many different ideas allowed me to see things from different points of view.” Tatiana Assemian, who helped create the promotional products and helped with data collection, now understands that “team work is not just about completing your part of the project, it’s about completing your part and then helping a fellow team member complete theirs.” She added, “I will never forget how much my teammates helped me grow, I learned so much from them, professionally and personally.”

Nancy’s students competed in the 4-year division against three other teams. The students’ hard work earned them a third place finish, but they were number one in Nancy’s book. “You can pick the College of Agriculture’s Food Marketing Team and Horsehill Wine. The College of Agriculture’s Food Marketing Team (l-r): Dr. Nancy Merlino, advisor, Rohini Bhagat, Tatiana Assemian, Grace Leung, Lindsey Buswell, Andrew Ostrowski, Anthony Xavier, Leonardo Carrera, Fiona O’Connor, Alexandra Walters, and Jaclyn Lara.

Laying the Foundation - Students in Dr. Merlino’s fall quarter marketing class laid the groundwork for the team of students who would present a marketing plan to a panel of judges the following March. They researched wine making and the history of CPP wine from the ground up, working closely with Professor Daniel Höisterk, Chair of Plant Science, and Dr. Marjoe Jones, Assistant Professor, College College of Hospitality Management. They looked at other vineyards; conducted competitive pricing, industry, market, and financial analyses; and surveyed potential customers. The students experienced firsthand what would be required in the business world if asked to obtain primary data for a future product. During this stage of the process, stars emerged who would eventually come together as the marketing team and represent the University at the WCFMC.

Forging a Team - According to Nancy, “students have been going to school to get A’s as individuals;” however, many of those who graduate “never really know how to work as a team,” which is critical to their success. The students who go forward to this next phase perform well in the fall class, meet their deadlines, have good ideas and follow through, and have the desire to take this project to the next level. It’s Nancy’s job to not only prepare them for the upcoming competition but take a group of individuals and forge a team that acts as one.

This creative process provides opportunities for the students to learn how to interact with one another and how to treat each other with respect. They also learn the value of considering each idea or suggestion because it could lead to something great. “The students designed a whole new label that is phenomenal,” explained Nancy, because each person’s idea was considered.

Nancy also stresses the importance of good communication and meeting deadlines because it affects everyone on the team. “If something comes up and you are not going to meet your deadline,” she tells her students, “call us and say I can’t make it at 8 this morning, but I can make it at 10.”

and was first held in March 2005. The competition prepares students for the rigors of full-time employment in business by having them compete a project that simulates expectations in the real world. Student teams prepare and present a total marketing plan from concept through execution before a panel of industry judges.

When someone suggested to Dr. Nancy Merlino that the food marketing team promote Cal Poly Pomona’s Horsehill Wine for the 2010 competition, she immediately saw it as a unique opportunity. Not only was it a real (and award-winning) project, but it was CPP produced and soon to be available at the Farm Store. So, in the 2009 Fall quarter, preparations began for the College of Agriculture’s participation in the 10 Western Collegiate Food Marketing Competition (WCFMC). The WCFMC is the brainchild of Dr. Merlino and was first held in March 2005. The competition prepares students for the rigors of full-time employment in business by having them compete a project that simulates expectations in the real world. Student teams prepare and present a total marketing plan from concept through execution before a panel of industry judges.

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people who have had years of speaking experience, who are already top notch, and compete to win,” said Nancy, “but I think it’s more rewarding to select students who are shy to begin with... take them out of their shells and bring them to an entirely different level.” As in past years, she witnessed a total transformation in several of the team members who she referred to as diamonds in the rough. One of these “diamonds” had been criticized in high school for terrible speaking skills and led to believe that success was out of reach. After the competition, Nancy received a heartfelt note of thanks for changing that student’s life. The student discovered that she had the ability and confidence to succeed; she just needed someone to believe in her.

The Rewards – “What I get out of this is knowing... through one student at a time, that I make a difference,” said Nancy. And she has. According to marketing team alumnus Rafael Galvan who is now a grocery buyer for Pro’s Ranch Markets, “What I gained was the self-assurance and confidence of being able to tackle situations in my career that I can relate back to the WCFMC.” “Even if you don’t want to go into marketing as a career,” said Nicole Hambuck who competed in 1996 and 1997, “the time management, teamwork, speaking skills and industry business contacts make this project a great choice for anyone looking to differentiate themselves from the pack.”

On a personal level, Nancy has made life-long friends as a result of this experience. Former team members not only keep in touch but give back to the program in a variety of ways—by offering scholarships, hiring graduates, and by donating their time and talents.

The road has not always been easy, but on occasions when she feels overwhelmed, Nancy will get an e-mail out of the blue from a current or former team member. “This is great practice and helps us get hands-on experience in the field of Community Nutrition,” said dietetic student Ashley Jungman. When Jeannette Hand had the opportunity to volunteer at a hospital and teach classes for congestive heart failure patients, Dr. Kessler provided constant guidance. “After every... meeting, I left with a clear understanding of what needed to be done to make the upcoming CHF class a success,” said Jeannette. Senior dietetics student, Syeda Hussaini, is grateful that Dr. Kessler entrusted her with the organization of an entire wellness fair which was held at the “Cal Poly Downtown Center and attended by 200 members of the Pomona community. I cannot describe in words what wonders did the experience do to my self-confidence,” explained Syeda.

According to Dr. Douglas Lewis, Associate Dean, “What really differentiates Lisa from other excellent instructors is her level of expertise and accomplishment in education programming and research. She is an outstanding classroom teacher with expertise in research and scholarship of teaching and “she attracted extramural support to further develop the curriculum designed to meet emerging issues in application of nutrition to health disparities in the Spanish population.” “This kind of effort and forward thinking,” said Dr. Hollie Gelberg, dietetics graduate student, “is the hallmark of an outstanding academician.”

Faculty and Staff Achievements

Teacher Of The Year - Dr. Lisa Kessler

A skilled teacher in the classroom, Dr. Lisa Kessler is considered an “amazing” professor by her students because of her ability to instill confidence and motivate them to achieve more than they thought possible.

The application of skills and knowledge is key to building confidence, so Dr. Kessler requires students in her Community Nutrition class to work in the local community to help those in need. “This is great practice and helps us get hands-on experience in the field of Community Nutrition,” said dietetic student Ashley Jungman. When Jeannette Hand had the opportunity to volunteer at a hospital and teach classes for congestive heart failure patients, Dr. Kessler provided constant guidance. “After every... meeting, I left with a clear understanding of what needed to be done to make the upcoming CHF class a success,” said Jeannette. Senior dietetics student, Syeda Hussaini, is grateful that Dr. Kessler entrusted her with the organization of an entire wellness fair which was held at the “Cal Poly Downtown Center and attended by 200 members of the Pomona community. I cannot describe in words what wonders did the experience do to my self-confidence,” explained Syeda.

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Dr. Broc Sandelin - Mack Kennington Advisor Of The Year Award & New Department Chair

From freshmen to graduate students, students in the Animal & Veterinary Sciences (AVS) Department were enthusiastic in their support of Dr. Broc Sandelin’s nomination as the College of Agriculture’s 2010 Advisor of the Year. Letters of support were consistent in describing him as an individual who is understanding, caring, honest, reliable, accessible and absolutely dedicated to students’ success. “Despite the challenges of lack of class availability and economic support the university is currently experiencing, Dr. Sandelin manages to encourage me with the possibilities,” said AVS student Savannah Johnson. “As a tutor (at) Elsinore High School... I personally understand the value of his effort to address each student’s individual concerns” and “am aware of the time and energy he invests... as an advisor and professor.” Beatriz Flores believes he truly deserves the recognition because he “helped make my transition into college... better than I could have ever expected because he is an advisor that I could always go to for help.” Rodeo Team members benefit from his guidance as well. “This team is very small compared to all the other colleges that compete in the region,” said Jeremiah Nichols. “Despite this fact the team is able to put on one of the best rodeos in the region, largely due to Dr. Sandelin’s help.” “He is spoken highly of by all of the students in our major,” said Jennifer Gitchen, “as an advisor who has a wealth of knowledge” and an “unwavering dedication to his job and students.”

Appointed as the Assistant Farm Director last year, Dr. Sandelin was unanimously selected by the tenure track and full-time lecturers of the department to serve as Department Chair effective fall 2010. His demonstrated success as an advisor and teacher, service as a college senator, and improvements to the financial and operational management of the livestock areas made him the obvious choice to follow Dr. James Alderson who is now the Director of the W. K. Kellogg Arabian Horse Center.
Recognizing that millennial generation students taking today’s business courses are bored and uninterested, Drs. Nancy Merlino (College of Agriculture) and Rhoda Rhodes (College of Business Administration), conducted a study to discover new teaching strategies that would motivate these students and engage them in the learning process. Dr. Merlino presented her findings at the 39th annual meeting of the Western Decision Sciences Institute (WDSI), a multidisciplinary, international association dedicated to advancing knowledge and improving instruction in all business and related disciplines.

Out of the 154 papers presented at the conference, Drs. Merlino and Rhodes were selected for the Institute’s 2010 Best Paper Award. Nancy also chaired one of the sessions, “Innovative Education/ Curricular Content/Design: Engaging our Students in the 21st Century.”

The Millennial Generation is very comfortable with the newest in communications, media, and digital technologies, so Drs. Merlino and Rhodes suggested using these technologies to help energize traditional teaching methods. Their online pedagogical strategies included using MySpace, Moodle, YouTube, Blackboard, etc.; classroom strategies included using real-world examples and creating participatory activities such as applied learning, group work, and projects.

Rhonda Ostrowski
Cal Poly Pomona’s 2010 Outstanding Staff

“Rhonda has consistently exhibited an exceptional level of dedication and enthusiasm for her position as the College of Ag Recruitment & Retention Coordinator,” said Professor Jean Gise, Interim Associate Dean. Hired in 1994, Rhonda has acquired additional coursework and internships to improve her College’s recruitment efforts. She has been instrumental in developing and coordinating the College’s First-Year Experience courses, advised new students, and coordinated the College’s Open House. As proof of her efforts, enrollment in the College of Agriculture has grown from 2,900 students in 1984 to over 1,500 today.

Rhonda goes out of her way to make prospective students feel not only well-informed but welcome and connected to Cal Poly Pomona. Her assistant, Marie Robb, is confident that no student she interacts with realizes that Rhonda is “the most important person she has ever met.”

Penne Fode
Cal Poly Pomona’s 2009 Outstanding Staff

Penne has an amazing ability to quickly adapt to new situations. She proved this in July 2001 when she was hired as a staff member in the Dean’s Office, her first experience in an academic setting, and then again in December 2006 when she made a seamless transition from the Dean’s Office to her current position in the Animal & Veterinary Sciences Department. According to former Department Chair, Dr. James Alderson, “There is never a task that Penne will not undertake. She either accomplishes the task or finds a suitable or superior alternative. She enthusiastically accepts new assignments, challenges and responsibilities.” From her first day on the job, Penne endeared herself to the students and they continue to look to her for advice on a variety of problems and concerns. She goes out of her way to provide assistance to visitors, faculty, staff, students and administrators.

Sherri Reichardt
College of Agriculture’s 2010 Staff of the Year

Being a Registered Veterinary Technician with field experience and an alumnus of the College put Sherri Reichardt in a unique position to not only assist the faculty in the Animal & Veterinary Sciences Department but enabled her to serve as a role model and mentor to the students majoring in Animal Health Science.

Elected as Staff Chair for the Department, Sherri has assisted the faculty in the preparation of grant funding, managed several student funding accounts, inventoried and ordered supplies for numerous courses, assisted in the accreditation of . . . and provided technical and logistical support for the AHIS program,” explained Dr. James Alderson.

According to Assistant Professor Michelle Rash, Sherri “is developing a kind of sixth sense with us now and often anticipates our needs before we ask for help. Because of her dedication to our students, her assistance with our labs enhances the learning environment.” Colleague and fellow RVT, Melissa Allert agreed: “Her ease of delivery, clear and effective articulation and gentle manner reduce student anxiety while increasing confidence in their ability to master content and feel the same way about our program, said Professor Rash.” “She’s an amazing asset to our program,” said Professor Rash. “And a shining example to our program’s second generation of Cal Poly graduates and a Registered Veterinary Technician can achieve.”
Leo Holguin – 2010 Valedictorian

Leo Holguin remembered what it was like to be a freshman—a little scared, trying to find his way around this big campus. He remembered the hard work, challenging classes and all night study sessions as well as the frustrations due to budget cuts, cramped classes, fee increases and furlough days. He also remembered how his confidence grew with each passing year. He rejoiced with his fellow graduates on the completion of their degrees quoting William Butler Yeats, “Joy is of the will which labours, which overcomes obstacles, which knows triumph.”

Leo expressed his gratitude to God and to the families, professors and staff members who helped him and the Class of 2009 along the way. The youngest of four children, Leo majored in Animal Science and will seek a position as a lab animal technologist in the research field. He encouraged his fellow graduates to follow their dreams, “apply everything you learned . . . and go with all your heart. This is your day!”

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Leo majored in Animal Health Science and will seek a career in food animal medicine working with livestock. “It was a great experience and I learned about so many students from around the country.” He also announced that he was among 22 students selected based on their essays for the 2010 Agricultural Outlook Forum in Arlington, Virginia, and that his travel, lodging, forum meals, and registration would be provided by USDA’s program sponsors. The 22 students were selected based on their essays “Agriculture as a Career,” and recommendations from professors.

2010 Forum, “Sustainable Agriculture: The Key to Health & Prosperity,” was held in February 2010 and featured government and industry speakers. Miguel “really enjoyed the Forum especially meeting so many students from around the country. He also met Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack as well as many USDA officials and administrators when he toured the USDA building in Washington, D.C. “Overall, it was a great experience and I learned about current issues in agriculture,” said Miguel.

Student Achievements

Leo E. Andrews Student Leader

2009/10 established an endowment to recognize a successful career in management. Prior to enrolling at Cal Poly Pomona, she had worked her way up to her desire of the position at OCE Management Services and had won several awards along the way including “Area Manager of the Year.”

An active member of many student organizations, Jeannette served as Treasurer of the Food & Nutrition Forum and also as a mentor to many undergraduate students. Dr. Bonny Burn-Walton, associate professor, Human Nutrition & Food Science Department, has observed that Jeannette is a natural leader in and outside of the classroom, “the one that becomes group or team leader, or an unofficial spokesperson for the class.”

In the community, Jeannette developed and taught a nutrition class for adults with autism living in a group home. This was a very challenging because not all the clients could read. In addition, the class was conducted online, so she had to develop hands-on teaching methods as well as a creative way to assess learning. “The lesson went very well,” said Jeannette, “and it is nice to be the foundation for my Master’s Thesis.”

Jeannette also volunteered at the Pomona Valley Medical Center where she taught nutrition to staff and outpatients and developed programs to promote nutritional awareness. Chris Lewis, the Clinical Case Manager RN who worked with Jeannette at Pomona Valley gave Jeannette high praise. “Jeannette is a student who is the model of what a dietitian in the hospital setting should be. She comes closest to what I consider to be excellent in all aspects—personality, enjoyment of people, willingness to work above and beyond, a quick learner.”

Jeannette got a job as a dietitian with the VA and is working on her dietetic internship program with above a 3.9 GPA. That decision, she feels, “was one of the best life altering decisions I have ever made for myself.”

John E. Andrews Student Leader

Of The Year Award

In 2009, alumna Jeannette Andrews (Agricultural Business Management, ’92) established an endowment to recognize annual cash awards to one undergraduate and one graduate student who have exhibited exceptional leadership potential. Mr. Andrews is CEO and owner of Trinity Farms and office manager for Robert S. Andrews Farms in Bakersfield, CA. Both companies are major packers, growers, and shippers of lettuce, cabbage, melons, and cotton in the southern San Joaquin Valley.

Vihaney Gonzalez Undergraduate Student Leader

The 2009/10 academic year was a busy one for Vihaney Gonzalez, a senior majoring in both animal science and animal health science. As the Vice President of Ag Council, Vihaney’s primary responsibility was the College’s Ag Career Day held in April 2010. An annual event that provides students with the opportunity to network with industry professionals. Vihaney worked diligently with the Recruitment & Retention Office to make it a success. She actively sought student input with regard to the format and on businesses to invite. She coordinated club involvement and scheduled additional related activities like “Rompannas” and the “Dress for Success” competition. When President Marvin Seaman graduated at the end of winter quarter, Vihaney assumed the role of Asst. Vice President with confidence and quiet authority that enabled a seamless transition.

Vihaney is a first generation college student who managed to maintain a GPA above 3.0 despite a heavy course load and her extracurricular activities, “setting an excellent example to her younger cousins, who frequently ask her about ‘what it’s like to go to college.’” Several students and professors have commented on Vihaney’s leadership potential. Mr. Andrews is CEO and owner of Trinity Farms and office manager for Robert S. Andrews Farms in Bakersfield, CA. Both companies are major packers, growers, and shippers of lettuce, cabbage, melons, and cotton in the southern San Joaquin Valley.

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PMA Foundation Sponsors FMAM Students

Five Food Marketing and Agribusiness Management (FMAM) students were able to attend the 2010 Southern California Fresh Produce & Floral Expo (FPFE) at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim thanks to sponsorships from the FPFE and the Produce Marketing Association Foundation for Industry Talent (PMA FIT). Sarah Maso, Steven Hoffner, Fiona O’Connor, Blanca Gomez, and Karina Arguello attended the two-day event accompanied by alumna Katie (Hall) Horvath (FMAM ’08). Every year, PMA FIT partners with organizations like FPFE to provide students and faculty from the U.S. and abroad with opportunities to learn more about the industry and to network with industry professionals. “This experience includes customized workshops involving industry leaders and is designed to educate students about diverse career options and rewards of working in produce.” (PMA FIT website)

Attending the Expo was a “life-changing experience,” said Karina Arguello who is also President of Ag Council this year. “I never thought a career in the produce industry could be so much fun and fast paced.” Not only did the students have opportunities to question professionals about the industry and related careers, but each student was assigned an industry mentor “who could introduce us to other professionals and share their own personal success stories and information about their niche in the industry,” said Steven Hoffner. “I have gained a further passion for the industry and knowledge that will help guide me in my career decisions.”

The students were selected by Dr. Nancy Merlino, a FMAM faculty member, based on their academic achievements, proven leadership, and ability to be good representatives of Cal Poly Pomona and the FMAM program. Ms. Horvath is a former member of Dr. Merlino’s competitive food marketing team and was one of the students sponsored by PMA FIT. Today she works for Fresh and Easy “bringing conceptual ideas to market.” She volunteered to accompany the students because she “figured it of Dr. Merlino’s competitive food marketing team and was one of the students sponsored by PMA FIT. Today she works for Fresh and Easy “bringing conceptual ideas to market.” She volunteered to accompany the students because she “figured it

In addition, two AMM seniors, Trib Le Barge and Allie Poon, were honored with Joyce Eisenberg-Keever scholarships for their outstanding work. Each received a one-year, FBI associate membership plus $600 credit for any of the 80 plus FBI seminars and classes. The awards were presented by Ethan El ter, Building Manager of the New Mart.

Target 2010 Case Study Competition

Four teams of undergraduates from Cal Poly Pomona’s Apparel Merchandising & Management (AMM) Program competed for a first prize of $4,000 in Target’s annual case study competition run severally at universities across the United States. The theme of this year’s competition, selected from a set of choices provided by Target, was “Meeting the Needs of Changing Demographics”. The case question was “how could Target ensure that its merchandising mix matches that of the changing cultures and environments where stores are being built.”

From an initial field of 17 teams, four, four-student teams were selected by AMM faculty as finalists. The four finalists proposed a range of solutions to the problem. The second place team, proposed the introduction of a customer loyalty card to gather information, reward loyal shoppers with discounts and special offers, while gathering information that would enable Target to adjust its merchandise mix to local ethnicities. The winning team proposed the creation of an umbrella brand “Cul ture Compass to create an in-store identity for ethnic products.

Students presented their solutions to an audience of Target personnel, AMM advisory board members, faculty and students. Judging the competition was a panel of Target team members drawn from local stores and headed by Shelley Stanyer, Group Operations Leader for the local region.

Target’s Case Studies are designed for colleges and universities to use in promoting hands-on learning for students. They provide real-world business challenges that give students a chance to develop strategies for solving current challenges in today’s retail environment. In the process, the students gain a stronger understanding of the complexities of the retail sector.

Shelley Stanyer of Target explained: “It is a demanding exercise that gives students a real taste of analyzing critical business problems and presenting solutions in an authentic corporate setting.”

AMM department chair Peter Kittuff noted that “the Target Case study competition energizes students in the program.” He added: “The AMM faculty and our advisory board members were impressed by the ingenuity and professionalism demonstrated by teams in framing the problem, identifying potential strategies, gathering data, and presenting their solutions.”

Marketing Team Wins Statewide Competition

A suggestion from a student to market a gluten free cookie to individuals with gluten intolerance turned into a winning project for the Gluten Freedom marketing team. Although they did not place at the Western Collegiate Food Marketing Competition held at CSU Fresno, they took note of the judges’ responses, made the necessary changes, and then took their show on the road to the Business Education Statewide Advisory Committee Conference (BESAC), April 29-May 1, 2010, in Costa Mesa.

The Team’s chosen product was “Cookie Time,” a gluten-free cookie alternative for children and adults with allergies. For their marketing plan, the students designed the packaging, product logo, and name; they also included information on market and sales potential, market segmentation, advertising, product history, SWOT analysis, and financial and operational budgets.

The BESAC Conference includes a statewide competition for teams to present ideas to improve business, academics, and curriculum. Each contestant is graded by their peers. The Cal Poly Pomona team of Steve Hoffner, Jena Krushin, Jackie Smith, and Sara Shepard, Team Advisor Rick Mathias, center, Team members (left to right): Steven Hoffner, Jena Krushin, Jackie Smith, and Sara Shepard. Team Advisor Rick Mathias.

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The BESAC Conference includes a statewide competition for teams to present ideas to improve business, academics, and curriculum. Each contestant is graded by their peers. The Cal Poly Pomona team of Steve Hoffner, Jena Krushin, Sara Shepherd, and Jackie Smith competed against 22 teams composed of faculty, industry professionals, and students. Gluten Freedom was awarded first place for the “Best Overall Presentation,” receiving a score of 4.879 out of a perfect 5. Each member of Cal Poly Pomona’s Gluten Freedom Team received a $500 scholarship and plaque from the BESAC Committee; the Conference awarded the Team an additional $500.

Team advisor, Rick Mathias, Food Marketing & Agribusiness Management/Agricultural Education Department, says: “There has been so much interest in it that we are now in the process of ‘branding’ the product and will offer it for sale in the near future. We also have been asked to present the product to retailers for their consideration.”

AMM Students’ Case Studies Earn Big Profits

Entrepreneurial Scholarships

Students from the Apparel Merchandising & Management (AMM) Department swept six of the eight Joyce Eisenberg-Keever Entrepreneurial Scholarships awarded annually through the Fashion Business Inc. (FBI) of Los Angeles.

Sophomores Nicole Palumbo, Lynette Salgado, Samantha Gagne and Renee Roberts split a prize of $1,000, awarded to students from a four-year college who can present the best written business plan and for the best design concept for a line of apparel or accessories. The four sophomores developed a case analysis of Target’s women’s wear business, proposing a new business plan that would enhance bottom line profitability through improved merchandising and visual display strategies centered on the concept of “My Brand.”

These same students also won first place in Target’s case study competition in Spring 2009.

Team members (l-r): Steven Hoffner, Jena Krushin, Jackie Smith, and Sara Shepard. Team Advisor Rick Mathias, center.

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Turf Bowl Team Makes Top Ten In National Competition

Competing against 67 teams representing 31 universities from across the United States, Cal Poly Pomona’s Turf Bowl Team placed among the top ten finishers at the Collegiate Turf Bowl Competition last February in San Diego. They found themselves in good company with teams from Purdue, Penn State, the Universities of Massachusetts and Minnesota, Rutgers University, and first place winner Iowa State University.

The Collegiate Turf Bowl Competition is held every year as part of the GCSSAA (Golf Course Superintendents Association of America) Conference and the Golf Industry Show. The contest consists of a written exam covering the areas of mathematics, turfgrass growth and development, and identification of soils, diseases, weeds, insects, and turfgrass species. In addition, each team is required to prepare a written essay based on a business-financial case study scenario.

Three teams represented Cal Poly Pomona and, according to team advisor, Kelly Parkins, they placed 8th, 31st, and 37th in the turf bowl and 1st, 2nd, and 4th on the essay portion of the contest which focused on reclaimed water. “The GCSSAA program director made a special point to come over at the presentation ceremony and tell me what an incredible job (our students) did on the essay,” Kelly said.

Cal Poly Pomona’s student chapter of the GCSSAA supported the team’s efforts to attend this year’s competition. The Turf Bowl Teams are also grateful to the local GCSSAA chapters—High-Lo and Southern California—for their generous donations. John Deere sponsored the event this year with the top 10 teams receiving a monetary award.

The students celebrated by having dinner together and, from the conversation, it was clear they are not going to let any grass grow under their feet. As Kelly explained, “They were already talking about next year.”

Bronco Troop Support

Last winter, College of Agriculture clubs and organizations banded together to support American troops stationed in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kuwait. Spearheaded by Ag Council, students collected a variety of items including snacks, games, reading material, and socks. Donated items filled nearly 80 car packages which were sent to soldiers in all branches of the military. Each box contained a group picture of Ag Council and student club representatives and a short note from each student who proposed the idea.

Ag Council’s publicity officer, Tristan Monterastelli, was not her first time supporting our men and women in the military as she participated in this same activity while in high school. It was she who proposed the troop care packages when Ag Council was searching for a community outreach project, and she guided the Council and the Clubs through the whole process from collecting the items to mailing the boxes. “We really wanted to reach out to the community and do something… a little out of the ordinary, said Tristan.

Anyone wishing to support our troops by sending a care package can get instructions and a list of soldiers’ names on anysoldier.com.

CPP #11 On the Planet!

A team of Plant Science students traveled to Chattahoochee Technical College in Georgia last April for the 34th Annual Student Career Days competition sponsored by the Professional Landscape Network (PLANET). From a field of 68 colleges (883 students), the Cal Poly Pomona team finished 11th. This year the competition went international with entries from Bridgwater College, Bridgwater, England, and the Niagara Parks Commission School of Horticulture, Niagara Falls, Ontario Canada. Two high school FIFA teams were also among those competing in 28 different turf and landscape events including three new contests in 3D Exterior Landscape Design, Personnel Management, and Small Engine Repair.

Peer Advisors Publish Student Handbook & Planner

With the demise of the university sponsored student planner and handbook, the 2009-10 AGREES Peer Advisors jumped at the opportunity to create a student handbook and planner for College of Agriculture students. The idea sprouted during the Peer Advisors’ leadership class spring quarter 2009 and quickly developed into a full-blown project. The Peer Advisors met several times outside of class, brainstormed over pizza what they wanted to see in the handbook, and assigned out duties to each peer advisor–research planner companies, develop a list of possible advertisers, sell ads, and outline content for the 30 handbook pages. It was truly a group effort, with Megan Hill coordinating their efforts as team leader. Other individuals recruited to help with this project were Deanna Stewart, to design the handbook pages; Marie Robb, to keep track of project income and expenses; and Rhonda Ostrowski, to provide editorial assistance.

To fund this project, peer advisors sold advertisements to College of Agriculture departments and student clubs, on-campus departments, and off-campus businesses. The handbook and planner was totally self-funded and was distributed fall quarter 2009 to new freshmen in their AG 100 Orientation to Agriculture classes and to new transfer students at two Transfer Student Roundtables. All new students received their planner free-of-charge. Left over planners were sold to current students for $5.

The 2009-10 College of Agriculture Student Handbook and Planner was a great success, a truly learn-by-doing leadership project for the Peer Advisors. The planners were well received by students and proved to be a useful tool in the AG 100 classes. The 2009-10 AGREES Peer Advisors are to be congratulated on establishing a new an annual tradition and providing a valuable contribution to student success in the college.

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Our 2010 Distinguished Alumnus, Dale Stern (Agricultural Biology, ’84), serves as general counsel to more than 50 nonprofit organizations representing many sectors of California’s food industry, ranging from production agriculture to food processors to grocery stores.

Dale’s practice, Stern, Van Vleck & McCarron LLP, focuses on representing clients in their interactions with government agencies, forming and representing nonprofit organizations, and negotiating and drafting agreements for the sale of agricultural commodities. He also regularly appears on behalf of clients before state and federal courts, administrative agencies, and in mediation and arbitration proceedings.

Dale is a published writer, has served as an expert witness and regularly presents seminars on a variety of topics, including fiduciary duties of directors and officers of nonprofit organizations, and negotiating and drafting sales agreements for California agricultural industries.

Dale said the education he received in the College of Agriculture at Cal Poly Pomona was key to his success. “The learn-by-doing clicked really well with me; it was a perfect fit.” He knew early on that he wanted to be a lawyer and is grateful to Dean Les Young, a professor in the Plant Science Department at that time, with helping him identify the courses he needed to better prepare him for law school. In addition, because he represents farming interests, his agriculture education gave him “a leg up on being able to represent clients more effectively.”

Dale has participated in the Professor-for-a-Day program on numerous occasions and is also serving as the Chair of the Dean’s Advisory Council which was formed during the 2010 Spring Quarter to assist the College with its development efforts. A former member of the Bronco Soccer Team, Dale has also been very supportive of our athletic program at Cal Poly Pomona, participating in their annual alumni fund raising events.

Dale earned his Juris Doctorate at the UC Davis School of Law and his Bachelor of Science Degree in Agricultural Biology with an emphasis on California government regulation of agriculture from Cal Poly Pomona. Dale and his wife, Sheree, live near Sacramento and have two daughters and five grandchildren.

CPP’s Comprehensive Campaign

For the first time, Cal Poly Pomona has launched a comprehensive fundraising campaign. Over the past 12 years, state funding for higher education has fallen more than 60 percent and public funding for education is not expected to return to the levels from a decade ago. The goal is to raise $150 million over five years to strengthen the University’s ability to provide hands-on learning opportunities, to prepare students for the changing demands of the workplace, to increase research and scholarship opportunities, and to ensure that a quality college education is within reach for underrepresented communities.

The campaign’s objective is to generate support for things not funded by the state that enhance education: classroom resources to keep pace with rapidly changing industry, scholarships for promising students, faculty development and research assistance, and community outreach.

With a $42 million gift from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and other major donations, the University is more than halfway toward its ambitious goal. President Ortiz has invited the entire university community to rally around the campaign which will transform and invigorate the University.

IN MEMORIAM

Alumnus (Citrus Production, ’51) and lifelong University supporter of Cal Poly Pomona James “Jim” H. Jones died October 26, 2009 at age 60 after a long illness. A retired U.S. Air Force lieutenant colonel, he resided in Laguna Woods.

For the College of Agriculture, Mr. Jones established the Harold G. & Aileen Wilson Scholarship Endowment as well as the Voehrs Park Endowment, an endowment for the Colleges that have benefited from his support include ornamental horticulture and the Batcheller Conservatory.

In 1962, he established the James Jones Art Collection, which was on long-term loan at Cal Poly Pomona and was eventually donated to the University. In 1984, he added to the collection of his tin and clay pieces, comprising the Dee Roy and Mary M. Jones Collection, named in honor of his parents whose interest in art he inherited. Jones continued to sponsor both collections during his lifetime.

A private reception celebrating his incredible life was held on campus at the W. Keith and Janice Kellogg University Art Gallery on March 29.
Every year the field in front of the Farm Store is covered with pumpkins for the Pumpkin Festival which was held on October 16 and 17, 2010. This little girl seems to have picked out the perfect pumpkin.
Don Huntley ('60 animal husbandry) is a successful businessman, avid collector of contemporary Western art, and a passionate supporter of Cal Poly Pomona. "Window to the West," an exhibit of works donated to the University along with some from his private collection, was held in January through February 2010 at the W. Keith and Janet Kellogg University Art Gallery.