Dear CLA Alumni and Friends:

Since arriving at Cal Poly, I have been impressed by the close-knit community that comprises the College of Liberal Arts — both on and off campus. The College of Liberal Arts’ alumni and friends that I have met are just as passionate about Cal Poly now, if not more so, as when they first stepped on campus.

This is a testament to our outstanding faculty and staff, who truly care about students’ academic, professional and personal success. Your achievements have established the high value of a liberal arts degree at Cal Poly. The college’s respect for you and our continuing commitment to students require that we sustain across future generations of students the excellence for which we are known. By striving to innovate and expand opportunities for students, we position them and us at the forefront of our traditional disciplines and emerging interdisciplinary fields.

Collectively, our CLA community is doing amazing things on campus, in the community, and in the world. Our community’s accomplishments exceed the pages of this publication, but we hope to provide you with a sense of the depth and breadth of the CLA story of excellence.

With this publication and our quarterly e-newsletter, The Link, we reaffirm our commitment to staying connected with our ever-increasing network of alumni and friends. I hope you join me in this commitment. Please keep us updated on your activities, support the college through your time and philanthropic gifts, and most important, help tell the Cal Poly CLA story.

Thank you for all your support. Together, we can raise the level of excellence and recognition of the College of Liberal Arts exponentially.

Best regards,
Douglas Epperson
Dean, College of Liberal Arts

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STUDENTS
In recognition of their work last year on “A Year with Frog and Toad,” Ian Billings and Cadence Mitchell (Theatre & Dance) received Meritorious Achievement Awards from the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival. / Mariah Cochiolo (Graphic Communication) was selected as the Scholar Athlete of the Year for the Big West Conference. / Kevin DeBoer’s (Art & Design) project, “American Forests,” won an Applied Arts magazine award and was published in the November/December 2013 issue. / Mustang News, the Journalism Department’s student-run integrated newsroom, received 20 national and state awards in March from the Associated Collegiate Press and California College Media Association, including first in Best of Show – Website Large School category and first in Best of Show – Multimedia Package. / Bryan Pride (Master of Public Policy) and Nicola Williams (History) were two of 10 students selected to represent Cal Poly in the statewide CSU Research Competition. Pride’s project is based on his independent research titled “Taking Back the Farm: How Corporate Farms Create Food Insecure Communities.” Williams’ research is titled “Fashion, Feminism and Morality: A New Look at the New Woman.”

FACULTY
Ryan Alaniz (Social Sciences) was accepted as a World Social Science Fellow. Additionally, he was selected as one of the San Luis Obispo Tribune’s 2014 “Top 20 under 40” award winners. / Richard Besel and Jnan Blau (Communication Studies) are the editors of a new book, “Performance on Behalf of the Environment” (2013). / Bernard Duffy (Communication Studies) was the 2013 recipient of the university’s Distinguished Scholarship Award. / Two of the three Cal Poly professors accepted into the Coleman Foundation Faculty Entrepreneurship Fellows program are from CLA — Mary Glick (Journalism) and Lorraine Donegan (Graphic Communication). The Coleman Foundation is committing nearly $500,000 for fellowship grants and program support at involved campuses. / Jasna Jovanovic (Psychology & Child Development) and a colleague were awarded a $100,000 National Science Foundation grant to study women in STEM fields. The study examines factors that promote the entry, retention and success of underrepresented women. / Jane Lehr (Ethnic Studies) and colleagues Helene Finger and Beverley Kwang received the American Society of Engineering Education 2013 Best Zone Paper Award for their paper titled “When, Why, How, Who — Lessons from First-Year Female Engineering Students at Cal Poly for Efforts to Increase Recruitment.” / Charmaine Martinez (Art & Design) was awarded a 2013 American Graphic Design Award from Graphic Design USA for her project “Visualizing a Healthy Food System” — a comprehensive branding campaign for Central Coast Grown. / Kathleen S. Murphy (History) received a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies for the 2013-14 academic year. The award supports research in the humanities and humanistic social sciences that the council considers to be particularly promising. Murphy received the fellowship to support her research into the history of science of the slave trade. / Todd Pierce’s (English) short story “Rockman 1951” appeared in the Harvard Review. / Univisión (the Spanish-language TV conglomerate and most-watched TV channel in the world) featured Craig Russell (Music) in a fall news segment. In the segment, Russell was filmed in the Santa Barbara Mission, discussing (in Spanish) California mission music. / Tom Trice (History and Women’s & Gender Studies) taught at the Padma Kanya campus in Kathmandu, Nepal, as part of his Fulbright Scholar award. / Gloria Velásquez (Modern Languages & Literatures) published her ninth novel in the Roosevelt High School series, “Tommy Stands Tall.”

Juana Villa (Graphic Communication) was awarded the 2013 California State University (CSU) Trustees’ Award for Outstanding Achievement, one of the highest student distinctions within the CSU system.

Patrick Lin (Philosophy) received a grant of nearly $500,000 from the National Science Foundation for “Safeguarding Cyberspace with Ethical Rules for Cyberwarfare,” a collaborative project with the Naval Postgraduate School and Western Michigan University.
CLASS ACTS

Get to know these faculty members outside of the classroom. Each outstanding educator represents one of the four sectors of the college — communications, humanities, performing arts and social sciences.

BERNARD DUFFY / Communication Studies Department
Specialty Area: Rhetoric and Public Address / Years at Cal Poly: 26

Why did you choose to work at Cal Poly? I was a tenured professor at Clemson in South Carolina, where we had lived for nine years. I wanted to get back to California, where I had family.

What is your guilty pleasure? Every spring I find more Japanese maples to buy. There are more than 200 cultivars. I have planted, in the ground or in pots, about 20 different types of Japanese maples and about 50 in total.

W. TERENCE (TERRY) SPILLER / Music Department
Specialty Area: Piano / Years at Cal Poly: 23

Why did you choose to work at Cal Poly? I was offered the job just as I was finishing my doctoral work at the University of Southern California (USC). I was thrilled to be able to start working right away in one of the most beautiful parts of California.

What is a fact about you that few know? I started college as a fisheries major at the University of Washington.

ROBERT (LARRY) INCHAUSTI / English Department
Specialty Area: Literary Theory and the History of Ideas / Years at Cal Poly: 30

Why did you choose to work at Cal Poly? I wanted to get back to California. When Cal Poly offered me a tenure-track position teaching English to undergraduates, it felt like coming home. To be honest, it felt like winning the lottery.

Are there any scholars or individuals who have inspired you? Way too many to list! Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman, of course. I am particularly drawn to working-class thinkers who shake up the world — people like James Baldwin, Dorothy Day, Vaclav Havel, Jack Kerouac and Pablo Neruda.

DAWN NEILL / Social Sciences Department
Specialty Area: Anthropology / Years at Cal Poly: 6

Why did you choose to work at Cal Poly? Primarily, I was drawn to the interdisciplinary nature of the Social Sciences Department. Additionally, the position I applied for at Cal Poly was specifically oriented to my areas of expertise — nutritional and evolutionary anthropology.

If you were stranded on a desert island and could bring one book, what would it be? Since I do fieldwork on the tropical island of Fiji, often outside the range of Internet access, I ask myself this question frequently. If I had to choose only one book, it would be “Cat’s Cradle” by Kurt Vonnegut.
The Cal Poly Mustang Band was invited to participate in the Feb. 15 Southwest Airlines Chinese New Year Parade in San Francisco, named one of the top 10 parades in the world by the International Festivals and Events Association. Cal Poly was one of only two university bands invited. Parade judges awarded the Mustang Band first place in the Adult Marching Band category.

PolyPhonics, Cal Poly's premier chamber choral ensemble, and the Cal Poly Arab Music Ensemble traveled to New York to give the showcase performance at the World Projects 2014 New York Choral Festival at Carnegie Hall March 16-18. The ensembles also performed at the Graduate Center in New York City and at St. Peter's Church in Philadelphia.

The College of Liberal Arts held its third annual Homecoming for the Mind event following the Homecoming game on Saturday, Nov. 16. Alumni, students, faculty and staff were able to discover what CLA has to offer and catch up on all of the cutting-edge disciplinary and interdisciplinary endeavors of students and faculty. The event featured an intimate and cozy “coffeehouse” setting, with live music performed by Cal Poly’s Jazz Ensemble, a poetry reading, and student project displays.

Enrolled First-Time Freshmen

- 3.75 average weighted GPA
- 614 average SAT Reading
- 607 average SAT Math
- 91% one-year retention rate
- 70% women
- 30% men
- 52% four-year graduation rate
- 83% six-year graduation rate

Affordable Colleges Online has ranked Cal Poly the fifth best college in the nation for return on investment (ROI) for its English and humanities programs. Affordable Colleges Online determines ROI rankings based on total weighted cost and a 30-year net ROI. Cal Poly ranked in the top five among institutions including Harvard University, the University of Pennsylvania, UC Berkeley, and James Madison University.

Music Groups Perform in Chinese New Year Parade and Carnegie Hall

Homecoming for the Mind

Mark your calendars — Homecoming for the Mind 2014 will be held Saturday, Nov. 1. Watch your inbox for more information!