Cal Poly Earns 30th Consecutive Best in the West Ranking from U.S. News

Cal Poly, the Golden State’s first public polytechnic school that launched its renowned Learn by Doing education in 1903, has been named the best public, master’s-level university in the West for the 30th straight year in U.S. News & World Report’s annual Best Colleges guidebook. The 2023 guide, released Sept. 12, assessed an all-time high 1,500 U.S. bachelor’s degree-granting institutions on 17 measures of academic quality. It lists Cal Poly as No. 2 overall in the West — the same as last year — and as the region’s top-ranked public master’s-level university. In addition, Cal Poly was again named No. 1 in the West for Most Innovative Schools; several Cal Poly College of Engineering programs were ranked among the best in the nation for masters-level educational institutions; and the university was for the third straight year ranked as the top school in the West for veterans among public and private institutions that participate in federal initiatives helping veterans and active-duty service members pay for their degrees. Read more and get a deeper look at how Cal Poly has changed in the last 30 years on the Cal Poly News site: https://www.calpoly.edu/news.

Cal Poly Wins First-Ever Grant on Space Cybersecurity from US National Science Foundation

Cal Poly’s Ethics + Emerging Sciences Group has been awarded a $300,000 grant from the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) to study outer space cybersecurity, both technical and policy dimensions. The two-year project is the first that the NSF has funded on the subject. With interdisciplinary scholars and prominent expert consultants, the new project will generate novel scenarios for space cyberattacks while identifying and analyzing gaps in space law and norms that might allow for misunderstandings and conflict in the already contested but vital domain of outer space. According to the project’s principal investigator Patrick Lin, philosophy professor and director of the Ethics + Emerging Sciences Group, it is urgent to study space cybersecurity given a perfect storm of factors. “All of our space laws, such as the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, are just too old and need to be updated for today’s technological realities,” Lin said. “At the same time, space systems are increasingly complex, which means more cyberattack vectors that need to be anticipated for informed policy planning and technical designs.” Learn more on Cal Poly News site: https://www.calpoly.edu/news or http://ethics.calpoly.edu.

Grand Re-Opening of Renovated and Renamed University Store Set for Sept. 29

Following an extensive remodel, the newly renamed Mustang Shop will host a Grand Re-Opening Celebration on Thursday, Sept. 29. Following years of collaboration with the Cal Poly Corporation and the university, Follett Higher Education has completed the renovation and has more additions coming this academic year. The celebration starts with a continental breakfast at 10 a.m. (no reservations needed) and a ribbon-cutting with Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong, Cal Poly Corporation CEO Cody VanDorn and Follett Higher Education President Ryan Petersen from 2-3 p.m. There will be food, valuable coupons, and music and cheer provided by the Cal Poly Band and Mustang Cheerleaders. The remodel work included a newly relocated entrance in the University Union Plaza, a completely redesigned interior layout and updated lighting to create a brighter, more convenient shopping experience. Students will be able to easily find books and materials, and all customers will be able to shop an expanded assortment of merchandise.
Jennifer Teramoto Pedrotti Selected for Emerging Leaders Program

Jennifer Teramoto Pedrotti, interim associate vice president for academic initiatives in the Office of University Diversity and Inclusion and associate dean for diversity and curriculum in the College of Liberal Arts, has been selected to participate in the 2022 Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) cohort through the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU). Pedrotti will engage with academic and administrative leaders from 31 fellow AASCU institutions in monthly sessions through the end of the year. She will also be responsible for forwarding an initiative at Cal Poly. “Over the last two years, I have been working with divisions and departments across the campus to develop diversity action plans specific to their work,” she said. “I am now looking forward to seeing where these plans are aligned, how they fit with the university’s strategic goals and to see what universitywide goals and metrics we can establish.”

‘Generosity’ Mural Artist Talk, Ribbon-Cutting Set for Sept. 30

Cal Poly will debut its first commissioned outdoor mural, “Generosity,” with an artist’s talk and ribbon-cutting ceremony Friday, Sept. 30. Central Coast-based artist Oscar Pearson painted the mural, located in the newly renovated Via Carta Plaza adjacent to Campus Market. He will give a talk at 11:10 a.m. in Room 0001 in the Advanced Technology Laboratories (No. 7). The ribbon-cutting will follow the talk at 12:10 p.m. near Campus Market. All are welcome. To help beautify, inspire and grow the collection of campus public art, the Cal Poly Corporation commissioned the mural following a thorough proposal process that included a selection committee comprised of students, faculty and staff and a member of the community. The mural has transformed a divided triptych wall into a vibrant mural that encourages student and community interaction. The mural speaks to several themes, including recognizing the valuable contributions of farm laborers on the Central Coast and Cal Poly student contributions to the field of agriculture.

Open Enrollment is Coming Soon

Open Enrollment, which runs Sept. 19 through Oct. 14, is the annual opportunity to review, enroll, cancel or make changes to health, dental, vision, flexcash, dependent care reimbursement account, health care reimbursement account, or voluntary benefits plans, to be effective January 2023. Open enrollment information will be made available on the Open Enrollment webpage at https://afd.calpoly.edu/hr/benefits/open-enrollment as details are provided from the Chancellor’s Office and various providers. Save the date for the Virtual Benefits Fair, at which various health plan and voluntary plan providers will be present to share important information about rates, changes and key features. This is also an opportunity to ask questions about important decisions regarding coverage. The Virtual Benefits Fair will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 5. Expect an email communication from Human Resources next week with more information about Open Enrollment and registration details for the Virtual Benefits Fair.

COVID-19 Vaccines and Boosters Available Sept. 16 and 23

Rite Aid returns to campus Friday, Sept. 16, and Friday, Sept. 23, to administer COVID-19 vaccines and boosters in the Cal Poly Recreation Center, Room 109, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Rite Aid will have Pfizer and Moderna vaccines and the updated booster (bivalent) shots, as well as the flu vaccine. Individuals can get a booster five months after completing their primary Pfizer or Moderna vaccination series, or two months after receiving the Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine. Visit https://coronavirus.calpoly.edu/covid-19-vaccine for more information.

Retirements

Chris Miller will retire from his managing director role at the Performing Arts Center after six and a half years. Throughout his time Miller managed the PAC’s $3 million annual operating budget, and oversaw nearly 400 annual public and university events, hosting approximately 75,000 event attendees annually. The PAC saw financial success during his tenure with operating surpluses each fiscal year, the only exception being the pandemic-shortened 2019-20 season. The PAC’s operating reserve balance has doubled, and nearly $2 million has been added to its Major Maintenance/Capital Renewal Fund. Miller is most proud of how the PAC staff overcame the significant challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, as they pivoted to provide critical support for pandemic response and testing on campus, and quickly developed the capacity to produce complex virtual events, including a concert series featuring local artists. Miller joined the PAC in May 2016, relocating from Seattle, where he enjoyed a 30-year career in various performing arts and venue management positions. His last day on campus will be Oct. 14. Ryan Gruss, current director of Patron Services and Campus Ticketing, will serve as interim managing director starting Oct. 15. There will be a reception to celebrate Miller’s retirement and welcome Gruss from 4-5:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 20, in the PAC lobby. Sign the virtual retirement card for Chris Miller at https://www.kudoboard.com/boards/P0eU3GPB.