

College of Liberal Arts

BRIEF

A look back at fall 2017



Jason Peters, English Department professor.

PROFESSORS WIN \$140,000 USDA GRANT TO TEACH ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

English Professor Jason Peters and Yi-Wen Chiu, professor in the Natural Resources Management and Environmental Sciences Department, were awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The grants are funded through NIFA's Higher Education Challenge Grants Program, which aims to help higher education institutions teach the next generation of food and agricultural science professionals. Chiu and Peters will receive approximately \$140,000 over three years to pilot an undergraduate curriculum that combines environmental science and rhetoric. One goal of the new curriculum is to teach students how to best communicate about sustainable agriculture. The curriculum will consist of required courses in environmental life-cycle analysis combined with courses in public rhetoric and environmental communication. Chiu and Peters plan to publish the results of this collaboration, contributing to the development of interdisciplinary approaches to sustainability at other institutions around the world.



Political science students with Assemblyman Katcho Achadjian.

STUDENTS IN NEW POLITICAL SCIENCE CLASS DRAFT A BILL

Students enrolled in a new political science course drafted a bill that will be sent to the State Legislature in hopes of passing the bill into state law. The class, California Bill Project, is taught by professor Chris Den Hartog, with help from former Assemblyman Katcho Achadjian. The bill they are proposing would lower the amount that students at public universities pay for textbooks. Students will also travel to Sacramento to lobby state legislators.

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KCPR general manager Brian Robbins, a fourth-year journalism major, has been a part of KCPR's team since his sophomore year.

KCPR RANKED FIRST BY GREAT VALUE COLLEGES

Student-run radio station 91.3 KCPR took the No. 1 spot on Great Value Colleges' list of 30 Amazing College Radio Stations of 2017-18. The list of rankings was released in September and includes radio stations from universities such as Georgetown and UC Berkeley. Cal Poly took the top spot based on its "dedication to the students and culture," according to Great Value Colleges, a website dedicated to helping students make decisions about their college education. "Our programming has moved to appeal to a larger demographic on the Cal Poly campus," said journalism senior and General Manager Brian Robbins. "We've really pushed new music in the last three years, and we've gotten a lot more structure as an organization." Students have opportunities to work in music journalism, production, on-air broadcasting, marketing, graphic design and business administration. The station's FM radio signal reaches from Paso Robles to the Santa Maria Valley, and can be streamed live from any location online at kcpr.org.



History Professor Christina Firpo

HISTORY PROFESSOR WINS PRESTIGIOUS COLLEAGUE'S CHOICE BOOK PRIZE

History Professor Christina Firpo's book, "The Uprooted: Race, Children, and Imperialism in French Indochina, 1890-1980," was awarded the 2017 International Convention of Asian Scholars Colleague's Choice Book Prize. There were 330 books submitted this year from 60 different publishers, representing a wide variety of disciplines within Asian Studies. Firpo's book is an in-depth investigation of the child-removal program in Indochina. For over a century, French officials systematically uprooted metis children – those born of Southeast Asian mothers and white, African, or Indian fathers – from their homes. Citing an 1889 French law and claiming that raising children in the Southeast Asian cultural milieu was tantamount to abandonment, colonial officials sought permanent, protective custody of the children, placing them in state-run orphanages or educational institutions to be transformed into little Frenchmen. Although the program succeeded in rescuing homeless children from life on the streets, for those in their mothers' care, it was disastrous.

*dashboard
at a glance*

FALL 2017



8

FACULTY AWARDS
& GRANTS

5

STUDENT
AWARDS



Students celebrate the new queer studies minor at its launch party on Oct. 4, 2017.

QUEER STUDIES MINOR LAUNCHED FALL 2017

The Women's and Gender Studies Department launched a new queer studies minor in fall 2017. Students and faculty gathered in the Robert E. Kennedy Library atrium on Oct. 4 for a launch party to celebrate and speak about the significance of the new minor. "The minor is a step in the direction of a more equitable and inclusive campus and world," said Jane Lehr, chair of the Women's and Gender Studies Department. The minor consists of 24 units. Core classes required for completion of the minor include sexuality studies, queer anthropology and queer ethnic studies, among others.



From left to right: Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong, Chris Trapani, and CLA Dean Doug Epperson.

THREE 2017 CAL POLY HONORED ALUMNI FROM THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

The CLA Honored Alumnus for 2017 was Chris Trapani, who graduated in 1990 with a degree in political science. He is the founder and CEO of Sereno Group, a residential real estate company, which was named the "Best Place to Work" by the Bay Area News Group for eight consecutive years. Trapani is committed to the environment and community development through philanthropy. Sereno Group was recently honored as one of the top 50 corporate givers in the Bay Area by the Silicon Valley Business Journal. Trapani is a member of the Cal Poly President's Council of Advisors and is playing a lead role in raising funds for the Expressive Technology Studios to open on campus in 2021.

The Alumni Association's Distinguished Service Award went to Kelly Bannon Lashley (Political Science, '95). She is a partner at Calleton, Merritt, De Francisco & Bannon, LLP and a certified specialist in estate planning, trust and probate law. Bannon Lashley played softball for Cal Poly and is the founder and president of the Cal Poly Varsity Club, an alumni chapter for former student-athletes. She has served on the Mustang Athletic Fund Board of Directors, the Alumni Association Board of Directors, and the Athletics Director's Advisory Council.

Steve Jones (Political Science, '92) was honored by Cal Poly Athletics. He is the CEO of Allied Universal, a Fortune 500 company providing security and staffing solutions. Jones played football at Cal Poly and was an honor roll student. He and his wife Stacy have made significant contributions to Cal Poly Athletics, including a lead donation to the Steven S. Jones Family Football Locker Room.

25
FACULTY
PUBLICATIONS



94,184
CREDIT UNITS TAUGHT



\$2,553,840
PHILANTHROPIC
DOLLARS RAISED YTD

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Students in a German course work on a class project.

MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES DEPARTMENT GETS NEW NAME

In fall 2017, the department officially changed its name to World Languages and Cultures to adapt to current changes and trends among language departments in universities across the country. “The department will continue to teach literature as an aspect of culture, but the department’s former name did not encompass every aspect of culture the department aims to teach,” said World Languages and Cultures Department Chair John Thompson. In addition to the name change, the department partnered with the Cal Poly School of Education to develop a new single-subject teaching credential for bilingual students.



From left to right: graphic communication students Patrick Bittner, Brienne Hong, Jessica Fauria, Kayleigh Macdonald and Linnea Londgren at a training on the Kongsberg digital cutting tables donated by Esko Graphics.

GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT RECEIVES CUTTING TABLES AND DIGITAL FRONT END

The Graphic Communication Department received two Kongsberg digital cutting tables from Esko Graphics, which will allow students to further explore finishing and packaging technologies both in the classroom and in graphic communication clubs. Esko also donated tooling for the two tables, training, software, installation and delivery. The approximate value of the Kongsberg configuration as equipped is \$185,000. The cutting tables, the Kongsberg XE and the Kongsberg X24, are able to accurately cut various materials such as foam, wood and plastics from digital design documents. In addition, the department received a Fiery digital front end (DFE) from Electronics For Imaging Inc. (EFI), a Silicon Valley-based leader in digital imaging technology. The DFE will allow students in the student-run printing company, University Graphic Systems, to print specialty gold and silver inks. The new Fiery DFE, which has a market value of \$85,000, will be used in conjunction with the department’s Xerox Color 1000i Press donated by Xerox.



Scott Glysson, Cal Poly’s new director of choral activities.

NEW DIRECTOR OF CHORAL ACTIVITIES

The Music Department welcomed new director of choral activities, Scott Glysson. The Cal Poly Choirs’ fall concert, “Reflections on Life and Love,” was his inaugural Cal Poly concert. Previously, Glysson was director of choral activities at West Liberty University in Wheeling, West Virginia. He earned a Doctorate of Musical Arts and a Master of Music in choral conducting from the University of Arizona, and a Bachelor of Music in music education from George Mason University. Glysson was recently selected to represent the U.S. in the ACDA International Conductors Exchange Program Fellowship. He and five other conductors will travel to Kenya this summer to work with choirs from across the country.



From left to right, Yessenia Sanchez and Megan Boyd at the Campeonato Mundial Universitario de Debate en Español (CMUDE) in Guatemala City.

MEMBERS OF INAUGURAL SPANISH-LANGUAGE DEBATE TEAM RANKED AS WORLD FINALISTS

Spanish-language debate team members Megan Boyd and Yessenia Sanchez finished as finalists at the Campeonato Mundial Universitario de Debate en Español (CMUDE). Throughout the 10-day competition, Boyd, a biology senior, and Sanchez, a business senior, competed with approximately 300 other participants from around the world. The two students argued their way to the final round in the Spanish as a Foreign Language category, competing against world-class teams from Venezuela, Mexico, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Spain and Guatemala, among others. “Boyd’s and Sanchez’s groundbreaking success in the CMUDE represents the expansion of the Cal Poly debate team into the Spanish language world of debate,” said Marion Hart, Cal Poly Spanish-language team coach and adjunct professor in the World Languages and Cultures Department. “It extends Cal Poly’s historic recognition in the national and international worlds of competitive academic debate,” added Christopher Skiles, acting director of forensics at Cal Poly.



Jeremiah Hernandez, ethnic studies and sociology student, received the 2017 California State University Trustees’ Award for Outstanding Achievement.

ETHNIC STUDIES AND SOCIOLOGY STUDENT RECEIVES CSU TRUSTEES’ AWARD

Jeremiah Hernandez, an ethnic studies and sociology student from Santa Maria, received the 2017 CSU Trustees’ Award for Outstanding Achievement. The awards are presented annually to one student from each of the CSU system’s 23 campuses. Like his counterparts throughout the state, Hernandez was selected for superior academic performance, personal accomplishments, community service and financial need. As part of the recognition, he will receive a \$6,000 scholarship as the state’s Michael A. and Debe Lucki Scholar. “I’m honored and humbled,” Hernandez said. “Recognition is not something that I’m particularly fond of. What is more exciting for me is seeing the possibility of being another positive example for my community of Santa Maria.” That dedication influenced ethnic studies Professor Jenell Navarro to recommend him for the award. “He is willing to speak up on behalf of underrepresented students and ensure their voices are not pushed to the periphery or represented inaccurately,” Navarro said. The product of a working-class family, Hernandez understands that attending college is an important goal. However, life’s realities – earning a living, getting married and divorced, overcoming health challenges, and being a single father to daughter Savannah – kept him from reaching that goal for many years. Wanting to be a positive example to his daughter, the 2006 Santa Maria High School graduate returned to college in 2012 after several academic false starts – this time more determined than ever to earn his degree.

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Package designed by Cal Poly students.

CAL POLY TEAMS PLACE IN NATIONAL STUDENT PACKAGING DESIGN COMPETITION

Four interdisciplinary student teams, which included students from the Art and Design and Graphic Communication Departments, were among the top award winners at the Paperboard Packaging Alliance 2017 Student Design Challenge, announced at PackExpo, an annual packaging industry conference. Students had to design interactive packaging for wearable fitness trackers that allows a consumer to try on the wristband and later reuse it to store the device. More than 60 student teams from 14 universities across the U.S. submitted entries. Cal Poly students developed their entries as Learn by Doing projects in a series of packaging and design courses taught in the spring. The university's top entry, made from 100 percent compostable and recyclable materials, earned second place.

PROFESSORS RECEIVE HEARST FOUNDATION AWARD FOR SCHOLARSHIP IN EDUCATION

Cal Poly liberal arts and engineering studies (LAES) Professor David Gillette, along with architecture Professor Thomas Fowler, received the Hearst Foundation Award for Scholarship in Education for their 2 Towns Passageway project in Sacramento. The project is a collaboration between the Downtown Community Board in Sacramento and Cal Poly — primarily the LAES program and the Architecture Department — to help upgrade the underground pedestrian passageway between Old Town and New Town Sacramento. "The goal is to make it more inviting and something families want to come to with their children — something that's a little more of an event than just a passageway," said Gillette. The award, which totals \$30,000, will go toward the design of interactive installations in the passageway. The vision is to create a space for rotating art installations that involve the latest innovative technology, including virtual reality, augmented reality and an interactive display system.

CAL POLY ETHICS BOWL SENDING TEAM TO NATIONALS

For the second year in a row, Cal Poly will send an Ethics Bowl team to the national competition. Cal Poly sent two teams to this year's regional competition at San Diego State, where they faced off against teams from UC Santa Cruz, Santa Clara University, San Diego State, San Jose State, Cal Poly Pomona and many others. The Cal Poly Ethics Bowl team, mostly made up of philosophy majors, placed in the top four, which earned them an invitation to compete for the national championship to be held in Chicago on March 2-3.



Robert Hass gave a reading at Cal Poly on Oct. 27, 2017.

CLA SPEAKS SERIES OPENS WITH FORMER U.S. POET LAUREATE, PULITZER WINNER ROBERT HASS

National Book Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Robert Hass gave a poetry reading on Oct. 27 as part of the 2017-18 CLA Speaks series. Hass is a professor of English at UC Berkeley and has worked as a poet, essayist, editor, translator and activist throughout his career. While U.S. Poet Laureate from 1995-97, he sought to combat American illiteracy. His reading was followed by an on-stage interview and conversation with Cal Poly English Professor Mira Rosenthal about the poet's life and his successful career in poetry and environmental activism. Hass signed copies of his books, including the newly released "A Little Book on Form." Founded in 2015, CLA Speaks is an annual speaker series that showcases the ways that disciplines in the College of Liberal Arts shape important and meaningful conversations about our world, our cultures, and our imagination. The theme for 2017-18 is "Visualizing, Storytelling and Imagining."

COMMUNICATION STUDIES SENIOR CONDUCTS RESEARCH WITH CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY

Communication studies senior Allie Blaising was one of 20 students in the U.S. selected as research intern in the Human Computer Interaction lab at Carnegie Mellon University last summer. She worked alongside a doctoral student and a faculty advisor to conduct qualitative research on the intersection between psychology and human computer interaction. "The internship taught me the importance of embracing the ambiguity of my liberal arts classes," said Blaising. "I used to be constantly searching for a right or wrong answer in my work. But over the summer, I found that one of my greatest assets according to my research advisor was that I was able to navigate the ambiguity of a complex problem on my own."



Mary Glick was named a fellow for the Disruptive Journalism Educators program.

JOURNALISM CHAIR IS FELLOW IN DISRUPTIVE JOURNALISM EDUCATORS PROGRAM

Mary Glick, chair of the Journalism Department, was selected by the Tow-Knight Center for Entrepreneurial Journalism as a fellow in its Disruptive Journalism Educators program. Each fellow champions and engages other educators around a specific aspect of journalism education. Her focus is on how to instill a sense of innovation, "intrepreneurship" and entrepreneurship and see it flourish within student media organizations. She will share her insights on classroom best practices and journalism education issues with colleagues online and in person, in consultation with Tow-Knight. Fellows also participated in the Online News Association's Educators Meetup in October.

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STUDENTS RECOGNIZED AT RECEPTION FOR 2017-18 FRESH VOICES PUBLICATION

Students representing a range of majors from across campus were honored at a reception for “Fresh Voices: Composition at Cal Poly,” an annual publication that features essays written by students in last year’s English 133, 134 and 145 classes. The 2017-18 edition of Fresh Voices includes 40 essays, seven photos and one drawing that were selected from more than 250 submissions. Students in this academic year’s classes will study their peers’ essays as models for their own writing. More than 100 people attended the reception, including about 30 of the students, faculty members, and many friends and family members. The editors of this year’s collection were English Professor and Writing Director Brenda M. Helmbrecht, Director of the Writing and Rhetoric Center Dawn Janke and English Professor Jason Peters.

JOURNALISM STUDENT SELECTED AS ONE OF FOUR FELLOWS

Journalism student Bianka Pantoja was selected as a fellow for the 2018 College Media Business and Advertising Managers (CMBAM) convention in Kansas City, Mo., which will take place in late March. CMBAM is a national organization that runs the premier national awards competition for excellence in business and advertising operations. The organization also hosts an annual convention featuring dozens of sessions led by national industry experts. Fellowships for the convention are extended to four extremely qualified students each year. Fellows are selected based on their qualifications and personal recommendations. Pantoja will assist with marketing and planning and serve as a copy editor for associated advertisements and convention programs. She will also receive complimentary travel, registration and hotel expenses for the duration of her time at the convention.



Winter 2018 Events

For a complete list of winter quarter events, visit cla.calpoly.edu/events