

STILL ROOTING FOR CAL POLY STUDENTS

Phonathon donations add up to make a big difference

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— Joan Hughes

Every fall, Joan Hughes (Art and Design, ’85) receives a phone call from a Cal Poly student. These calls give her a chance to stay connected to her alma mater and give back to the program that taught her the poise to handle any art project she encounters.

Hughes made her first donation to the university five years after she graduated while she was working for a packaging design firm in Los Angeles. She has supported the Art and Design Department through the Cal Poly Fund nearly every year since then.

Hughes remembers her first project in the department fondly — it was the first time she had ever built something on her own. “That’s the beauty of Cal Poly,”

she said. “They give you a project that seems daunting, but you plug away and you eventually get it.”

For Hughes, the encouragement of her classmates made any challenge seem surmountable. “I spent a lot of time in a lab with other people, and I hope students today feel the same camaraderie I did,” she said. “We were all working on our own thing, but it felt like we were a team because we would collaborate, and we were all rooting for each other.”

Hughes’ history of giving shows she is still rooting for Cal Poly art and design students. Ongoing contributions like hers are critical to the success of the department. Her gifts over the years have helped to host guest speakers, provide special Learn by



At right (from left): Joan Hughes at her graduation from Cal Poly in 1985; Hughes attends the Cal Poly graduation of her daughter, Catherine (Psychology, ’10).



True Calling

Abigail Fuad comes from a family of Cal Poly Phonathon student callers — with two siblings and two cousins having worked the phones before her. “They always talked about how great the experience was, so I knew I wanted to try when I got to campus,” said Fuad. On each call, she likes to learn about the person on the other end of the line. “It’s fun to hear their stories. I’ve had cool conversations with interesting people, and I’ve learned a lot.” She also enjoys guiding people through areas to give and helping them designate their gifts to departments or funds they are passionate about. Phonathon callers can take payment over the phone or mail donors pledge forms. “It’s a pretty simple process,” said Fuad. “Afterward, we write the individuals we talk to a personal thank-you note.”

Above: Graphic communication junior Abigail Fuad has a family tradition of working the phones at the Cal Poly Phonathon.

Doing opportunities for students, and purchase the latest equipment so students are up to date and the department can maintain its accreditation with the National Association of Schools of Art and Design.

“Most recently, the department used funds to send Paige Ruonala, a graduating senior with a graphic design concentration, to the Motion Design Educational Summit, where she presented an informational video she had created using motion graphics,” said Giancarlo Fiorenza, chair of the Art and Design Department. “She was able to discuss her work with experts in the field, and her video was selected for a Judge’s Choice award.”

Hughes is grateful for the reminder call she gets each year. “Gifts of all sizes add up to make a big difference,” she said. “Together, we are helping to create the next generation of creative people who will come up with the next great idea.”

KRISTA SMITH