

THREE CLA GRADS ARE RECOGNIZED AS 2016 HONORED ALUMNI



Alumnus Jim Kouf,
Cal Poly President
Jeff Armstrong,
alumnus Charles E.
Bell Jr. and Cal Poly
Alumni Association
President Rik Floyd.

The CLA selected Jim Kouf as its Honored Alumnus for 2016. Kouf, who graduated in 1974 with a degree in English and a minor in history, is a screenwriter, director and producer. He has written more than 20 feature films, including “Rush Hour,” “National Treasure” and “Stakeout,” for which he earned the 1988 Edgar Award for Best Motion Picture Screenplay. In 2011, Kouf created, wrote and produced the pilot for “Grimm” with his partner, David Greenwalt. The show is now in its sixth successful season. Kouf discovered he could write at Cal Poly. He said in a Mustang News interview, “It was when I took playwriting that I discovered I could do this and get A’s, and I really enjoyed it,” he said. “Everyone was suffering with their senior projects, and I wrote a play. It was really then that I discovered I could maybe do this and make a living at it.” Kouf devotes significant time and energy to the Cal Poly English Department’s Career Connections Program.

The Alumni Association’s Distinguished Service Award went to Charles E. Bell Jr., who graduated in 2004 with a degree in political science and minor in ethnic studies. He is currently a deputy city attorney for the City of San Diego, Office of the City Attorney. He is the cofounder of Cal Poly’s Black Alumni Chapter and an avid volunteer coordinator for the annual Black Legacy Weekend. Through his leadership, he has expanded participation in and promoted recognition of the chapter’s activities, including recruiting, mentoring and supporting students.

Social sciences alumnus James Newkirk was honored by the Athletics Department. After graduating in 1962, Newkirk taught at the high school level and invested in real estate. From his first duplex, he grew Newkirk Enterprises into a large company operating thousands of rental units in Southern California. A baseball player while at Cal Poly, Newkirk is a longtime supporter of the team.

CLASS NOTES

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1970s

Susan Beatie (Social Sciences, '74) created the Atascadero Charles Paddock Zoo's life-size bronze tiger 25 years ago, which just had a makeover by Genesis Bronze Foundry. A video is being made that shows the makeover and the original process 25 years ago.

1980s

Paul Cousineau (Graphic Communication, '85), vice president of prepress operations for Dow Jones & Company, received one of the most prestigious awards in the graphic communication industry in 2016, the Technical Association of the Graphic Arts' Michael H. Bruno Award. / **Ann Neumann** (English, '80) was the grand prize winner in the 2016 San Francisco Writing Contest.



Laura Lawton-Forsyth

1990s

Jennifer Abbott (Speech Communication, '96) copublished a book as associate chair and department chair in the Rhetoric Department at Wabash College. The book is titled "Public Speaking and Democratic Participation: Speech, Deliberation and Analysis in the Civic Realm." / **Anna Binneweg** (Music, '96) conducted the Chernihiv Philharmonic Orchestra in eastern Ukraine. / **Jeremy Jessup** (Social Sciences, '97) was recognized by Worldwide Registry for excellence in

law. / **Laura Lawton-Forsyth** (Graphic Communication, '90) was inducted into the 2016 Printing Industry Hall of Fame. / **Jody Skenderian** (Political Science, '95) was named interim CEO of Girl Scouts of America: California's Central Coast.

2000s

Kendra Aronson (Modern Languages and Literatures, '09) published a cookbook inspired by the San Luis Obispo farmers market. / **Rachael Byron** (English, '07) was named the San Ramon Valley Unified School District's Teacher of the Year. / **Melissa James** (Social Sciences, '05) is the director of economic development initiatives and regional advocacy for the San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce. / **Marquel Sheree Macaraeg Ramirez** (Modern Languages and Literatures, '07) graduated from the David A. Clarke School of Law in Washington, D.C., and is a new member of the Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia. She also received the prestigious Peggy Browning Fund Fellowship in 2015, which recognized her advocacy for workplace justice. / **Mi Yung Shin** (Music, '00) was one of The San Luis Obispo Tribune's Top 20 Under 40. Shin is the music education director for the San Luis Obispo Symphony. / **Adrienne "Corrie" Stallings** (Music, '09) received glowing reviews for her performance in Pittsburgh Opera's April 2016 production of Rossini's "The Barber of Seville."

2010s

Mady Aitchison (History, '15) accepted a prestigious Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship. / **Alexa Arndt** (Political Science, '15) is working with the Homeless Advocacy Project this summer in Philadelphia, visiting low-income high schools to teach about the Constitution. / **Michelle Beam** (Modern Languages and Literatures, '10) received a Fulbright-Fogarty fellow-

ship and worked on a community-based parasitology research project in Northern Peru during 2016-2017. / **Matthew E. Boutte** (Master of Public Policy, '10) opened his own law practice. / **Kacey Hadick** (Anthropology and Geography, '13) and Social Sciences Department Chair Terry Jones were recognized at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco in March 2016 for their contribution to a major new UC Press book, "Ecosystems of California." / **Christina Favuzzi** (Journalism, '15) is the new coanchor of KSBY-TV's morning show, "Daybreak." / **Richard Gallegos** (Child Development, '16) published his senior project comic book on Amazon. / **Jon Hall** (Music, '10) played one of the leads in Lin-Manuel Miranda and Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson's "Millennials: The Musical." / **Casey Higginbotham** (Political Science, '15) spoke in Munich on "The Great American Paddle," his paddleboard journey down the West Coast. / **Noya Kansky** (Anthropology and Geography, '14) received a President's Community Service Award in 2016 for her work as the AmeriCorps Vista program member with the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority and Underrepresented Student Participation in STEM program at Cal Poly. / **Daisy Ocampo** (Political Science, '12) is working at a nonprofit in Los Angeles, practicing immigration and family law that focuses on victims of domestic violence. / **Amy (McDougall) Skoll** (Political Science, '14) received a full scholarship to pursue a doctorate in political science at UC Davis. / **Cami Thacher** (Theatre and Dance, '12) is working as a researcher on "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert." / **Daniel Wasta** (Political Science, '15) finished running two Iowa state senate campaigns in the general election and a special election.