

## **Cal Poly Professor Receives Fulbright U.S. Scholar Award to Create Nutrition Training Program in Africa**

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Cal Poly nutrition Professor Peggy Papathakis has received a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program award to spend 10 months in Malawi, Africa, teaching and helping to build the curriculum for a nutrition training program for clinical dietitians at the University of Malawi, College of Medicine.

Papathakis joined Cal Poly's Food Science and Nutrition Department in 2006 determined to engage in nutrition research in developing countries and provide global experiences for Cal Poly nutrition students. In the last decade, more than 30 students have worked on her numerous research studies focused on improving the nutritional intake of pregnant women in the small country of Malawi, in southeastern Africa.

Papathakis will now continue her efforts in Malawi by developing the curriculum and supervising students in a new nutrition program for Malawian students seeking careers in the field of nutrition and dietetics. This is Papathakis' second Fulbright Scholarship; she received one as a doctoral student in 2001 to conduct research in South Africa on the dual impact of breastfeeding and HIV on a woman's nutritional status.

"In Africa, only a handful of countries produce nutrition professionals. Malawi has decided to educate and support nutrition professionals and to hire them — creating a class of nutrition-focused workers who will be immediately able to work in the field," Papathakis said. "While there, I will teach similar courses to what I teach at Cal Poly such as medical nutrition therapy and diet for prevention and treatment of diseases."

Papathakis is one of more than 800 U.S. citizens who will teach, conduct research and/or provide expertise abroad for the 2018-19 academic year through the Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program. Recipients of Fulbright awards are selected based on academic and professional achievement as well as record of service and demonstrated leadership in their respective fields.



### About the Fulbright Scholar Program

The [Fulbright Scholar Program](#) is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government and is designed to build lasting connections between the people of the U.S and the people of other countries. It is funded through an annual appropriation made by the U.S. Congress to the U.S. Department of State. Participating governments and host institutions, corporations, and foundations around the world also provide direct and indirect support to the program, which operates in more than 160 countries worldwide.