



# CAL POLY

## Office of the President

Cal Poly Faculty and Staff,

The role of a university is expansive — extending beyond the bounds of our campuses and students to their families, communities and the world. At Cal Poly, that includes making a meaningful difference across California and the nation through purposeful economic development and advocacy work.

I am pleased to share several updates that reflect our growing impact across the state:

### **Establishing the Office of Innovation, Industry and Economic Development**

We have established a new Office of Innovation, Industry and Economic Development, to be led by Associate Vice President Karen Tillman. Over her three years at Cal Poly, Karen has been an invaluable advisor, advancing initiatives that foster regional economic growth, connect industry with university talent, and expand the impact of the Cal Poly Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship. This new office will further integrate economic and workforce development with corporate engagement, while strengthening Cal Poly's advocacy efforts at the federal, state and local levels.

### **Welcoming Derek Kirk**

We are excited to welcome Derek Kirk as senior director of economic development, effective today. Derek will focus on economic development efforts aligned with Cal Poly Maritime Academy, and other initiatives in Northern California. Derek joins us from the governor's Office of

Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz), where he led the governor's "California Jobs First initiative." His work advanced a coordinated and proactive statewide approach to economic development and played a key role in connecting Cal Poly Maritime Academy with regional economic development opportunities.

Derek will be based on the Solano Campus reporting to Solano Campus Vice President and CEO Corey Cook. He will work closely with Karen and colleagues across both campuses. We look forward to the expertise and leadership he brings to Cal Poly.

I would like to thank Jessica Darin, vice president of strategic initiatives, for leading local, state and federal advocacy for the last two years. This strategic realignment of advocacy will further enhance our economic development strategy as we build the future of Cal Poly.

Cal Poly is among the leaders in higher education navigating — and staying ahead of — an increasingly complex and dynamic environment. Our success is driven by a strong leadership team and the outstanding faculty and staff who support this university every day. I am grateful to leaders like Karen, Jess and Corey, and to new colleagues like Derek, whose work will help Cal Poly continue to thrive for decades to come.

Please join me in congratulating them all.

Go Cal Poly!

Sincerely,

Jeffrey D. Armstrong

President