

A TRIBUTE TO PRESIDENT BAKER



DEAR FRIENDS:

The challenge in editing Cal Poly Magazine is selecting which great stories to share with you. The sheer abundance of stories about the success students, alumni, faculty and staff, is inspiring – but still, the editor has to decide which stories live or die.

For this issue, it was easy to decide to highlight Warren Baker's 31-year tenure as

Cal Poly president. But deciding on which highlights could be packaged into the magazine? Well ... not so easy.

So we sought presidential guidance, and as you might guess, we learned a few things.

For starters, it was “almost by accident” that Dr. Baker became a university president, let alone stayed for 31 years. In speaking with us recently, he recalled that he never thought academic administration would be his long-term career at all.

“I accidentally got into this at a relatively young age, when I tried out being a dean at a college of engineering,” Baker said. “I really thought that I would not stay in the academic world.

“I have an engineering background. I had a consulting background, and I had worked with two or three corporations in that field. I didn't have a plan to be a university president.”

But as president, he had a plan – quite a few plans, in fact, that over the years helped Cal Poly blossom in reputation for its learn-by-doing teaching methods and its ability to produce resourceful professionals ready to contribute to the workforce on Day One.

Along the way, Cal Poly became a truly comprehensive polytechnic university, renowned for its scientific and technical curriculum as well as for its distinctive offerings in business and the liberal arts.

Indeed, it was a fortunate accident for Cal Poly that Warren Baker found his way to San Luis Obispo – and stayed.

Now, as he is set to retire once a successor is identified and assumes office sometime in the next few months, we look back on a remarkable 31 years of Cal Poly's growth. □

— Matt Lazier, *Editor*

WORK BEGINS ON REC CENTER EXPANSION



CONSTRUCTION BEGAN during winter quarter on the renovation and expansion of the Cal Poly Recreation Center.

Students voted by an overwhelming 75 percent in February 2008 to increase the Student Union fee by \$65 per quarter to fund the expansion project. However, the fee will not be implemented until the facility is complete.

Crews are renovating the men's and women's locker rooms, tripling the center's overall exercise space and adding new components such as an indoor jogging track, a squash court, a multi-purpose activity gym, a leisure pool and deck and an additional sand volleyball court.

The Recreation Center Expansion Project will use current and future best sustainable building practices to ensure that the renovated facility meets and/or exceeds State of California standards for energy efficiency. To the fullest extent possible, LEED credits will be pursued and green building strategies will be incorporated into the project.

Work is expected to continue on the project until summer 2012. For more information, visit www.asi.calpoly.edu/rec_center_project or call 805-756-2211. □

