

Monday's Message – January 30, 2012

Greetings All!

He is, and always will be, Mr. Cal Poly Pomona. But soon he will also be known as [Dr. Ron Simons](#).

Among the purposes of honorary doctorates is “to honor meritorious and outstanding service to the California State University, collectively, or to its campuses, individually; to the State of California; to the United States; or to humanity at large.”

It is hard to imagine too many people with a greater legacy of service and achievement to Cal Poly Pomona than Ron Simons.

Simply put, his life has been dedicated to this university. From the day he walked onto the campus in 1960, to receiving two bachelor's degrees in 1964 and 1969, to a career of over three decades of university service, his contributions are widespread and significant. And he still plays a role in campus life, working in advancement in support of the comprehensive campaign.

Come this June, he will receive his formal hood as part of the commencement ceremony for the College of Agriculture. Congratulations, Ron.

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Congratulations to Dr. Erin Questad of the Biological Sciences department. Under her guidance, Cal Poly Pomona is the lead organization for a \$1.4 million grant recently awarded by the Department of Defense's Environmental Security Technology Certification program.

The grant supports research using sophisticated topographic models to identify areas within dry ecosystems that have the most potential for ecological restoration. Dr. Questad will join colleagues from the University of Maryland and the USDA Forest Service and will conduct their work at sites in Southern California and on Hawaii.

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Over the past few years, Cal Poly Pomona has been forced to reduce funding in a number of areas. But one place where we refuse to sacrifice is your safety. Last year, I launched a special task force to evaluate our ability to communicate to you in the event of an emergency.

Many of you are aware of our Safety Alert system which sends out phone and text messages, as well as e-mails. Every quarter, we test the system to gauge speed and efficiency. While this process serves us in contacting you off campus, we have some real problems in reaching you immediately on campus during normal business hours.

The task force conducted a request for proposals from companies specializing in emergency communication. By early February, we will have heard presentations from each company so we can best determine our next steps. This will not be an inexpensive investment, but all we need to do is look at events at Virginia Tech, the University of Texas and Northern Illinois. We never know what tomorrow will bring, but we can do everything in our power to be prepared. As decisions are made, I look forward to sharing those details with everyone.

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Speaking of public safety, I have some news about a new program for our campus police officers. We know that environmental sustainability is one of our core values, so our officers will soon be getting around campus using pedal power. The police department recently completed a bicycle pilot program, so those skateboarders better watch out (*smile*). Congratulations to Chief Mike Guerin and his great team of police officers.

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The teams in ASI and Student Affairs have been working to enhance campus life, especially during evenings and weekends. Through this, they have created First Friday, a special event night that occurs on the first Friday of every month throughout the academic year.

Each event is planned and executed by any number of campus organizations. The next First Friday event will be held this week on Feb. 3. As you can see on the screen, there is a lot of unique activity, so have fun this Friday night at the BSC.

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In closing, let me extend my congratulations to [Carolyn Forrester](#). She is an instructional support technician in the chemistry department and is the recipient of the Governor's Employee Safety Award. Carolyn earned the award for creating safety-related handbooks and training materials in the laboratories.

She has worked at Cal Poly Pomona for nearly 27 years, and she also received the award in 1999. The award was established in 1980 to highlight and encourage safety on the job. Awards are given to individuals or groups who have responded to hazardous or life-threatening events, as well as to those that have developed safety programs. This award is the 23rd for Cal Poly Pomona.

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It looks like we are going to have yet another beautiful week of weather. I hope your time on campus is just as grand. See you soon.