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News Release

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NSF GRANT BOLSTERS CYBER SECURITY EDUCATION AT CAL POLY POMONA

POMONA, Calif. — A \$600,000 cyber security grant awarded to Cal Poly Pomona and a consortium of colleges could bolster the Southern California education system and workforce for years to come.

The universities and colleges participating in the grant aim to produce more graduates who specialize in cyber security, also known as information assurance. The two-year, National Science Foundation (NSF) grant will allow educators to enhance their curriculum, encourage students to study information assurance and promote cyber security studies to other colleges and universities in the state. The consortium plans to apply for a one-year extension that could boost the total grant amount to \$900,000.

Not only has the U.S. Department of Homeland Security deemed this career path important for the country but the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that five of the 20 fastest growing jobs between 2004 and 2014 will be in computing disciplines, including information assurance. Cal Poly Pomona graduates who have studied information assurance are working for law enforcement and district attorney's offices as well as private organizations such as PricewaterhouseCoopers and Ernst & Young.

The university is one of the most prepared institutions in the region to implement the NSF grant.

“Cal Poly Pomona is currently the only institution in Southern California that has been named a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security,” said Dan Manson, interim chair of the Computer

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Information Systems Department. “This grant supports our desire to continue our leadership in this critical area.”

Other grant recipients in the consortium include Mt. San Antonio College, Cal State Los Angeles, Cal State Northridge and Long Beach City College. The NSF award is a renewal of a 2003 grant given to Cal Poly Pomona and Mt. San Antonio College. The initial grant helped Cal Poly Pomona create a computer forensics lab and offer three additional courses in information assurance and security, said Manson who will oversee the university’s allotment of grant money.

Cal Poly Pomona will continue to spearhead the consortium’s effort to encourage other universities and colleges to adopt information assurance programs. Manson and members of the CIS Department were instrumental in helping Cal State Sacramento become a National Center of Academic Excellence. They also have motivated Cal State Los Angeles and Cal State Chico to map out a program in information assurance.

Manson said he is thankful the grant will allow him to help more universities and colleges.

“Information assurance education is not a zero sum game,” Manson said. “The more we help others the better we become.”

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ABOUT CAL POLY POMONA — Striking the perfect balance between urban excitement and rural charm, Cal Poly Pomona is nestled in 1,428 rolling acres in the heart of sunny Southern California. With 2,600 faculty and staff to serve 21,000 students, Cal Poly Pomona’s mission is to advance knowledge by linking theory and practice while preparing students for leadership and careers in a multicultural world. The university champions an approach that places learning at the center of every program, course, and activity on campus. Students are afforded opportunities to apply their knowledge through hands-on projects, collaborate with faculty members on research, and participate in valuable internships and service-learning programs. Seven colleges and one school offer 66 undergraduate and 21 graduate degrees, as well as eight credential programs.