Alumni and Students Work to Revive Poly Canyon

More than 140 student, alumni and faculty volunteers trekked to Poly Canyon for a massive one day clean up effort.

The Poly Canyon Structural Design Laboratory, commonly known as Poly Canyon, is home to more than twenty experimental prototypes – all student built - ranging from sculptures to residential design/build projects. Poly Canyon is a living legacy to generations of College of Architecture & Environmental Design (CAED) alumni. Due to its remote location, many of the structures have been vandalized. The canyon workday was the first of many to revive the canyon - commonly referred to as the architectural graveyard.

Architectural engineering student, Nicole O’Hearne is determined to improve the image of Poly Canyon. She worked with alumni and CAED Associate Dean, Kevin Dong to establish the Canyon Days committee. “I believe the event was a huge success and a great way to start taking care of some of the problems we have been seeing in the canyon.” O’Hearne said. “It is sad to have seen the Canyon not being used for the right purposes, but I believe if we continue to host events like Canyon Days, we will be able to get the canyon back on track and ready for its original purpose of being an experimental structures laboratory for students to Learn by Doing and test out their ideas.”

The canyon cleanup day is part of a larger effort by the college to implement a restoration plan that will sustain the canyon structures, re-engage students in learn by making opportunities and provide ongoing security and maintenance. A second Canyon Cleanup Day is scheduled for Saturday April 11, 2015. Visit Canyon Days Facebook https://www.facebook.com/canyondays and CAED Facebook. To see more photos click here.
Applause rang through a small town in Haiti.
It was a sound very similar to the ringing bell towers of a church rebuilt by Cal Poly students after the devastating 2010 earthquake.

When graduating architectural engineering senior Caleb Dunne described his experience working in Haiti with Structural Engineering Students for Humanity, nothing could hide the passion in his voice.

“Theyir church had been completely demolished,” Dunne said. “When we had finished rebuilding the bell towers, there was this very emotional ceremony where the entire town came out and they rang the bells for the first time.”

Dunne worked with a non-government organization doing aid work to design and implement a project in Haiti. The project was to take three 500-pound bells from the debris of the demolished church and give them life again. Along with this first experience with Structural Engineering Students for Humanity, Dunne went back to Haiti as an intern for Build Change in Port-au-Prince, an organization that provides engineering services, training and education. Instead of rebuilding things, they taught Haitians how to do it themselves.

According to Dunne, these are the experiences that have shaped him at Cal Poly.
“I realized that a lot of what I’ve done at Cal Poly has not just been getting through my courses and keeping my head down,” Dunne said. “There’s been a lot of personal enrichment with all of the groups and experiences I’ve been involved in at Cal Poly.”

Dunne’s “personal enrichment” is also due to his role on the board of the Structural Engineers Association of California (SEAOC). John Lawson, associate professor for architectural engineering, has taught Dunne in two of his courses — foundation design and a design lab — and knows Dunne best through the SEAOC.

“He is confident in the roles he’s placed in,” Lawson said. “Someone that you can always invite into a formal or professional situation and never worry about what he’s going to say or do.”

In the SEAOC, Dunne was in charge of planning the Structural Form, the department’s biggest off-campus event. The event incorporates keynote speakers while different companies pay to attend.
“I was the Structural Forum chair,” Dunne said. “I was in charge of organizing Structural Forum, which is a huge conference for architecture, civil engineers and architecture-engineering students.”
Even with all of his time put toward his major and being involved, Dunne never hesitated to mix it up a bit.
“I play the tenor drums in the drum line for the Cal Poly marching band,” Dunne said. “It’s a huge group and performing with that many people has been a wonderful experience.”

But Dunne was not always this excited about being involved — it was not until he entered Cal Poly as a freshman that he realized he’d missed out on past opportunities.
“In high school I just went to my classes and was in the drum line and that was it,” Dunne lamented. “I looked back at the end of high school and decided when I came here I would get involved in as many things as possible.”
But with the urge to be involved and step out of his comfort zone, Dunne also discovered that college is very much a balancing act.
“When I first came to Cal Poly as a freshman, I wanted to try everything, but I eventually found that I had a breaking point.”
It seems Dunne has come full circle in his quest to be involved and try new things. As he graduates at the end of the fall quarter, Dunne is excited to start his own life.
“I definitely feel excited to go out into the world. I’m itching to go somewhere and do something totally different.”

And even if his endeavors were to take him somewhere completely unexpected, Dunne is game.
“I’ll be up for any opportunity that comes my way. If a project were to take me to Antarctica, I’d be all for it,” he said.

For now, Dunne is looking forward to being in the real world and having a job. He plans to be a consulting engineer and work for a firm.
“I’m most excited to go out and start my own life,” Dunne said. “When we graduated high school, we still weren’t in the real world yet; it’s still this little bubble. Finally getting out in the real world and starting a whole new life is exciting.”

Story is re-printed with permission from Madi Salvati, staff writer for Mustang News.
ARCH Studio 400 Tape Installation

Watch the creation of STUCK a fifth year studio installation created with 35 miles of packing tape.

STUCK was created by Professor Karen Lange’s fifth year studio students to provide a playful environment to read Studio 400’s thesis research books. The ethereal installation took four days and 35 miles of tape to construct. The design and structural integrity of the packing tape was tested through a series of mock up in the studio prior to installation.

After removing their shoes, visitors entered the installation through a main tunnel leading into the main atriums. Once inside they could browse through thesis research books or retreat into a tendrils for more intimate reading. Each tendril could hold up to five people at a time and provided cozy spaces for reading and lounging.

As darkness fell, STRUCK transformed into an alternate experience filled with thought-providing videos and music.

City & Regional Planning Professor Reveals Tech Trends in Urban Planning

15% of city planning departments are optimized for smartphones
21% of cities offer online permitting — these are two of the findings from CRP Professor William Riggs’ recently published report.

City & Regional Planning Professor William Riggs recently released the findings from the study “Technology Use by City Planning Departments,” published by Planetizen.com.

The study tracked Internet use in 523 cities across the U.S. to predict how technology trends will impact planning departments in 2015-16. The report found emerging technologies are fundamentally changing how urban areas are planned, developed and managed.

Students in Riggs’ Planning Information Systems class conducted some of the preliminary data.

“It is exciting to see the creative ways that many planning agencies are using technology, but there is still room for growth — especially in the areas of social media, basic readability, and mobile compatibility,” said Riggs.

Some of the findings include:
— 15 percent of city planning department websites are optimized for smartphones.
— 21 percent of cities offer online permitting.
— 10 percent of city planning departments have dedicated social media channels.
— 21 percent of city planning departments do not offer their general plan online.
— 40 percent of cities offer online property lookups using geographic information systems (GIS) software.

“The study allows us to benchmark how planners across our country are using these technologies to plan, communicate planning concepts, and engage citizens in the planning process,” said Chris Steins, chief executive officer of Urban Insight, and study co-author.

To view the study, go to http://www.planetizen.com/node/73480.

More on City & Regional Planning Department
Construction Management Students Rank High at International Builder’s Show Competition

An interdisciplinary team of Cal Poly students captured second place in the four-year college category at the recent 2015 National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Residential Construction Management Competition.

The competition has become a highlight of the annual International Builders’ Show. At this year’s Las Vegas event, 54 teams participated, representing NAHB student chapters at universities, community colleges and high schools from across the country.

The competition gives students the opportunity to apply skills learned in the classroom to a real construction management problem by completing a land acquisition proposal. During the convention, students present their proposals and defend their projects in front of a panel of industry experts.

Cal Poly’s proposal included market research and sales strategy, product and site design, green building initiatives, land development, estimates, schedules and a financial analysis.

“Congratulations to the NAHB student chapter at Cal Poly,” said Jerry Howard, CEO of NAHB. “They and their competitors showed a great deal of talent along with a depth of understanding of building industry management, from land development to marketing to scheduling to estimating.”

Cal Poly team members included construction management students Josh Gleason and Eric Sanchez, architecture student Derik DeLonzor, business students Chris Bet and Anna Costa, and city and regional planning student Darya Oreizi. Business student Scott Heath and construction management student Nick Gibson also assisted with preparing the proposal.

Bet acted as team captain and was also recognized as an outstanding student during the awards ceremony. This distinction was given based on Bet’s grade point average, involvement in the local student chapter club, and interest in pursuing a career in the housing industry.

“I think this is a big step for both the Orfalea College of Business and the College of Architecture & Environmental Design,” Bet said. “In the past, teams from just one discipline competed. This accomplishment shows how strong we can be when we come together.”

Cal Poly Construction Management Professor Scott Kelting served as faculty advisor to the students. Finance Professor Pratish Patel also worked with the team as they prepared for the finance and business portions of the project.

Cal Poly has participated in the competition since 2001, finishing in the top five during 10 of the last 15 competitions. Cal Poly placed first in 2005, 2006 and 2011.

Follow CM on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/ConstructionManagementDepartment
LA Students Help Design/Build Award-Winning 2015 Rose Float

Students from the LA department were part of the team that helped construct the 2015 Rose Float, “Soaring Stories,” which was the Cal Poly universities’ entry in this year’s Tournament of Roses Parade. The float won the Lathrop K. Leishman Trophy for the most beautiful non-commercial float.

Students from the LA department were part of the team that helped construct the 2015 Rose Float, “Soaring Stories,” which was the Cal Poly universities’ entry in this year’s Tournament of Roses Parade. The float won the Lathrop K. Leishman Trophy for the most beautiful non-commercial float. “Soaring Stories” depicts a fairytale castle and mythological griffin springing to life from the pages of storybooks, reflecting the parade theme “Inspiring Stories.”

Fifth year LA major Young Choi served as the float’s production manager. He also designed, constructed and planted the float’s green wall. Jo-Annie Tran (third year) and Ryan Wang (second year) were on the design committee, with Jo-Annie serving as assistant design chair. She will take over as chair of the design committee for next year’s float.

“I never thought I could be part of designing a float, and then making a float by welding pounds of steel and carving blocks of foam,” said Tran. “It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.”


Like Rose Float on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/rosefloat