# COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN I CALPOLY I FALL 2010

ALUMNI REFLECTIONS
Planning | Designing | Constructing



Dean R. Thomas Jones

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The Gartner residence reflects CAED alumnus Bruce Bolander's architectural talents. Read about Bruce's career on page 12.

PHOTO BY JAMIE GARTNER

### Collaboration is Who We Are

CAED program shines in its interdisciplinary approach, professional partnerships

ne of the hallmarks of the founding model for our college was that all students took the same core courses together before specializing in their majors. Under pressure from our respective industries and professions, beginning in the 1970s, there was a push for more distinct and separate courses within each department.

Thankfully we at Cal Poly never abandoned the co-mingling of our students in early classes, and that has prepared us well, as all of our professions are now calling for the development of more collaborative coursework and experiences among departments. Our faculty created a national AIA award-winning interdisciplinary suite of courses as part of our popular Environmental Design minor 20 years ago, far ahead of the curve on both sustainability and interdisciplinary education.

In the last decade, additional labs, studios, field trips, and off-campus programs have been launched with at least two or more majors involved and with strong engagement of our professional partners.

This expanding innovation in collaboration has found its most recent expression in our newly opened Simpson Strong-Tie Materials Demonstration Lab (*see opposite page*). This represents a full decade of dreaming, fundraising, designing and constructing – a process that from the beginning involved faculty, professionals, and donors from all five departments.

Students joined the crowds of well-wishers at the opening in October and were already abuzz about the events and experiences we will be able to host in this new space. One example is a planned multi-university BIM model and construction competition in which competing interdisciplinary teams will first design

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small structures using digital design technology. Then the teams must construct the structures they've designed using our latest digital fabrication and laser cutter technology.

Another example of how the new space will be used is through the relocation of our burgeoning student-organized CSI forum. We now have the interior and exterior space and infrastructure to mount events, as well as large-building component systems and interactive product trade exhibitions. A myriad of other uses are under development.

The energy and enthusiasm for working and learning together that is so visibly a part of who we are make our students prized and our alumni proud. When I am asked if there is a program in the United States that can lead the way in multidisciplinary education, my answer is an easy one: "By old tradition and by new initiatives, it can and must be us."

K hum forces

R. THOMAS JONES, AIA









Simpson Strong-Tie Chairman Barclay Simpson

### **Dedicated!**

The Simpson Strong-Tie Lab opens to enthusiastic crowd

n October several hundred people attended the dedication ceremony for the college's newest facility, the Simpson Strong-Tie Materials Demonstration Lab.

Designed so students can build and test full-scale models and building components, the 7,000-square-foot lab adds an important interdisciplinary space to the college. At the dedication, Cal Poly Interim President Robert Glidden remarked that "the new lab represents an exciting new phase in this partnership, as it will provide students with hands-on experience using state-of-the-art technology to learn the fundamentals of construction management." Barclay Simpson, chairman and founder of Simpson Strong-Tie, praised the energy and commitment he saw in the students across campus.

The support of Simpson Strong-Tie is deeply rooted in the college, beginning with former faculty members Ken Kohlen and Paul Fratessa's invitation to the company to partner with our students on campus. Simpson Strong-Tie has since conducted workshops for the colleges of architecture and engineering for over 15 years.

"Our students are eager for exposure to the outside world, and Simpson Strong-Tie wanted to help us meet that need," says Dean R. Thomas Jones. "Simpson supported our vision for a facility that pushes learn by doing to an exciting new level."



### Nature By Design

Joni Janecki takes cues from natural surroundings for her landscape designs

ow does a designer create something without making a statement? Sounds like an oxymoron, but that's the creative approach landscape architect Joni Janecki (L.Arch'86) employs in all her designs, whether it be for a small, residential project, corporate headquarters for a large conglomerate, the grounds of a college campus, or revitalizing downtown Santa Cruz – the city she calls home.

Joni approaches each project as environmentally sensitive, taking into consideration the perspective of the neighborhood ... the context and the setting. "I don't want to impose my visions on a place, but rather reveal the potential that is already there," she explains.

She also wants to create a memorable experience for everyone who uses the space. "So I ask myself, 'How can this project add to the community?' And more



Joni Janecki

importantly, 'How can I minimize the impact on the environment?'"

That's the "no-statement" approach to design that has been the foundation of Joni's success in her two decades as founder and president of Joni L. Janecki & Associates (JLJA).

She started JLJA out of her house when she and her husband, Andrew, moved from Southern California to Santa Cruz in 1991.

"At the time, the economy was slow, but I had a good project base, so it seemed like a natural progression," she explains. "I introduced myself to the campus architect at UC Santa Cruz and the city's director of redevelopment. I wanted them to know there was someone new in town."

She hired her first employee within six months, and before the year was out, they moved to an office in downtown Santa Cruz. She is now in her third Santa Cruz location, where she has a staff of nine: four landscape architects, three designers and two administrative assistants.

"The company is a good size," Joni claims. "We work well together and have a truly collaborative environment."

They have been fortunate, too.

"We have a diverse client base and have been able to hold steady and even grow a bit over the last few years," she says, acknowledging that her company seems to be bucking the trend of so many others struggling in this recession-weary economy.

While no one knows for certain why a particular company flourishes, colleague David Tanza (B.Arch '77), has an idea.

"Joni's office is great to work with," David stresses. "Her team is professional and enthusiastic. They seem to love what they do and like doing it together. This is evident in the way her designs seem so natural and blend into their surroundings."

David, vice president of Strategic Construction Management Inc., has known Joni for 15 years. Joni worked with him on UC Santa Cruz's Seymour Center at Long Marine Laboratory, where she was charged with developing outdoor exhibit space within a sensitive coastal bluff environment.

"Her design is extremely successful," David says. "It looks as if the building belongs on the bluff. The existing native coastal landscape was not disturbed."

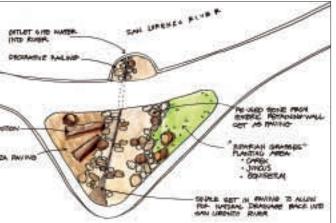
Recently he hired JLJA as part of a consulting team to prepare a physical master plan for Monterey Community College.

"Her team works diligently to meet the project's needs while striving to create a more natural environment, rather than a 'landscaped' environment," David explains.

Joni didn't start out wanting to be a landscape architect. Rather, she was attracted to art and architecture. But while attending community college, a botany professor noticed her innate interest and love of nature and plants and suggested Cal Poly's landscape architecture program.

"Landscape architecture seemed a natural marriage of architecture, art and





Joni's work at UCSC's Engineering II Building (above) – certified LEED® Silver – won the 2006 AIA Merit Award. JLJA's plan for Santa Cruz's River Plaza (left)

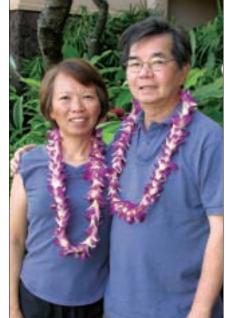
nature," Joni says. And Cal Poly provided her with the tools to work in the field.

"Cal Poly gave me a strong foundation about how drawings are put together – what it takes to document a design so it can be constructed," Joni says. "I learned the history of landscape architecture, which allowed me to come away with a bigger picture of the theory behind design."

And how to not make a statement.



On the team at Burkett & Wong Engineers, Tim provided structural engineering and design services for the Qualcomm Building WT project in San Diego.



Tim Yeun and his wife, Susan, in Hawaii

hen Tim Yeun (ARCE '70) looks out over the water near his office in San Diego, he sees the many places life has taken him. Prior to settling in California, Tim's life was a series of unexpected journeys. At each point, even as a very young man, he demonstrated the perseverance and work ethic that would govern his life as a structural engineer.

His father was kidnapped and killed in the Communist revolution in China before Tim reached his first birthday. Tim has vivid memories of Canton, China, and the precariousness of life.

"We were rural people," he says before describing the beauty of the mountain and valley where his family made their home for centuries prior to the revolution. When life became too difficult, Tim's mother took him and his older brother to Ecuador, where her parents had settled and established a Chinese restaurant.

"We worked hard," Tim said, recalling this portion of his life. Arriving in Ecuador when he was 10 years old, he had to learn Spanish and go to work as a cook in his family's restaurant. "I knew that what I really wanted was an education. If you don't have an education, you don't have the opportunities in life."

Tim confesses to always wanting to build, even in these early, unsettled years. "In China I knew about architects, and I



Among the facilities that sport Tim's structural engineering skills are the Jenny Craig Pavilion (above) and the Petco Park Garden Building (right), both in San Diego.

knew from when I was very small that this was my dream, to work on buildings."

After six years in Ecuador, the chance to take a first step toward his dream came with the help of a Protestant missionary who found Tim a spot in a Christian high school in Miami, Fla.

"New country, new language, first time in school," is how Tim remembers that transition. "I would stay up late into the night translating the English lesson into Spanish or Chinese so I could understand the words, then I would try to understand the subject matter."

By this point Tim knew he wanted to be a structural engineer, and he says that

the teachers at the high school did everything they could to help him succeed. "They were run by a religious organization and wanted us to learn to read and do basic math. I needed advanced courses in mathematics and science if I was going to continue to college and achieve my dream."

Later Tim says he recognized that individual teachers and classmates did a great deal to help him succeed, adding that they taught special courses for him, probably staying just one lesson ahead of the unfamiliar subject matter.

Junior college was next on his path. Encouraged by his brother who had already moved to California, Tim applied to Cal Poly. "We had no money, and my brother said I could receive an incredible education in California practically free."

While Cal Poly was far from any home he had ever known, Tim found many immigrants from China and around the world in his classes. "We all saw the opportunities offered by America, and by California. It was a wonderful time."

Since joining Burkett & Wong in 1975 as a junior engineer, Tim has served as president and managing principal. "We have had good people," Tim modestly explains his success.

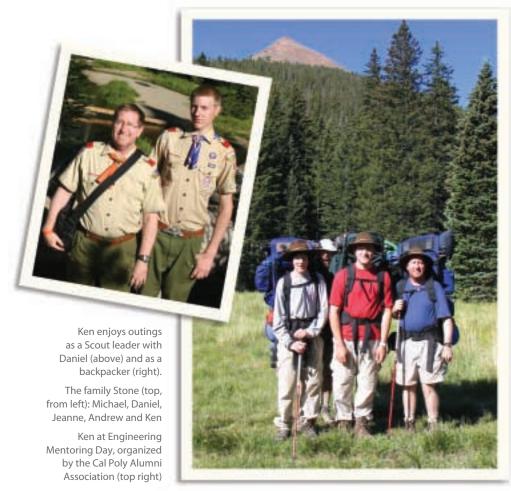
In addition to award-winning projects with the firm, Tim was named the Asian Business Association of San Diego's Business Person of the Year in 2002 and Asian Entrepreneur of the Year in 2003, both a credit to his lifelong work ethic and teambuilding approach.

Tim has come full circle. He has returned to China several times, as an invited guest and individually with each of his three sons.

## Family First

To Ken Stone, that means his wife, his three sons and his beloved alma mater







en Stone (B.Arch '80) graduated from Cal Poly 30 years ago, but in a sense, he never really left.

For the first 10 years, the Irvine, Calif., resident's connection to the university was mainly through recruiting Cal Poly graduates to work for The Austin Company, a preeminent design-build firm where Ken has worked since graduation.

Over the last 20 years, though, Ken's involvement mushroomed to include serving on Cal Poly's Alumni Association board of directors, twice as president. He currently serves as president of the California State University Alumni Council, representing all 23 campuses to the board of trustees and Chancellor's office, and has recently joined the Cal Poly Foundation board of directors.

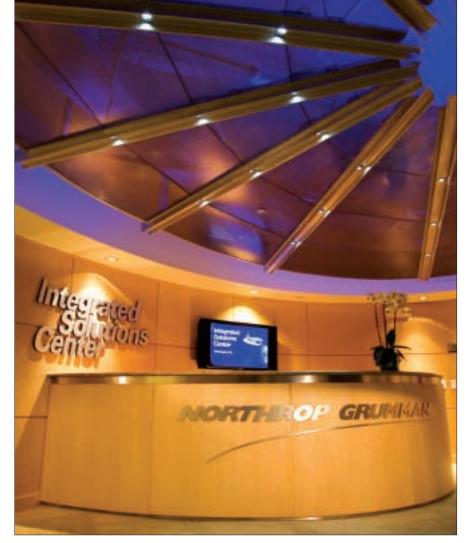
He jokes that it all began when he was "tricked" into service at the local alumni chapter level.

"I was invited to an alumni dinner in Orange County and somehow got involved in helping put it together," he says.

In preparation for the event, the chapter met regularly. "I guess I missed the meeting when they appointed me chapter president," he laughs. "The local chapters are connected to the university's Alumni Association, and before long, I was elected an officer and then president. I guess the moral in this is: 'Don't miss a meeting."

It's no wonder that the CAED named Ken its 2005 Honored Alumnus, the highest honor the Alumni Association bestows on alumni.

Not wanting to be outdone, Ken's wife, Jeanne, a College of Liberal Arts alumna, is "doing her own thing" as chair of the Parent Program Advisory Council. For



The Austin Company's work includes projects nationwide for Northrop Grumman (left), Meredith Broadcasting (below), and Schurz Communications (bottom).





years she supported Ken in his volunteer efforts for Cal Poly, but recently decided to branch out on her own.

And if all that isn't enough, the couple's three sons will soon also be Cal Poly grads.

Michael, the eldest, is a fifth-year architecture student and expects to graduate in June 2011.

Andrew was a senior civil engineering student when he decided to change his major to natural resources management. To help the transition, he is taking classes at Cuesta College and will transfer back to

Cal Poly next fall to begin studies in his new major.

The youngest, Daniel, is in his second year as an architectural engineering major.

It was a natural choice for the boys to pick Cal Poly. "They grew up on campus," Ken says, "drinking the Cal Poly water."

Ken has emerged a leader in both his volunteer work and his professional career. As vice president and director of sales and marketing for The Austin Company, he is part of the corporate team working with business development staff in offices across

the country and worldwide with Kajima Corp., Austin's parent company.

Austin is recognized by the Design-Build Institute of America as the initiator of design-build in the U.S. Projects at Ken's Orange County office range from television broadcasting and entertainment facilities to manufacturing facilities for aerospace and aviation giants Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon and NASA.

Dedicated in all he does, Ken keeps his family his highest priority. Michael describes him as a modern Renaissance man, somehow "able to dip into a variety of different roles and succeed in each, be it handyman, board or council member, Boy Scout leader, soccer coach, company vice president, or dad."

Ken is passionate about life – his family, his job and especially his volunteer work. "I'm the beneficiary of things people have done before me – in California and at Cal Poly. I want to pay it forward for future generations."

### A Tradition to Build On

### Jim Grant's passions are his work and giving back to benefit future builders

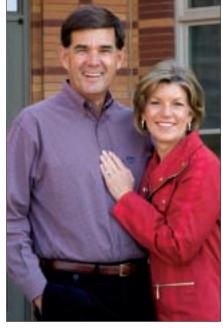
im Grant (ConE '80) is a builder.
Just like his father and grandfather before him.

While growing up, he spent many summers working on job sites near his hometown of Glendora in Southern California. So when he was ready to go to college in 1975, Jim knew two things for certain: He wanted to study construction engineering at a college with a strong reputation, and he wanted to escape the suffocating smog that so often blanketed the Los Angeles sky.

He was excited to be accepted into an impacted major in the College of Architecture and Environmental Design and eager to head up the coast to San Luis Obispo.

He thought he was prepared. "But at Cal Poly, I learned how to learn. I learned how to find answers. Cal Poly taught me the value of planning and time management, and it has served me well."

So well in fact that Jim – this year's CAED Honored Alumnus – and his wife, Kim, made a generous gift to sponsor the J.E. Grant General Contractors Jobsite Management Laboratory. Located in the recently completed Construction Innovations Center, the 2,000-square-foot state-of-the-art lab is designed to give fourth-year students an immersive expe-



Jim and Kim Grant
Jim's company recently broke ground on a children's residence in Encinitas (below).

rience that focuses on construction jobsite organization and management.

"I have had a rewarding career," Jim says, "and Cal Poly was certainly the springboard for that. I had some field experience, but Cal Poly offered the hands-on experiences that completed the package."

"The Construction Management Department never had a permanent home on campus," Jim says. "It needed a place of its own. Kim and I wanted to provide this new lab to facilitate the interdisciplinary education for which the CAED is nationally recognized."

Jim went to work for his father's company right after graduation. In 1988 he became president of the company, and in 1998 he and Kim, a Cal Poly alumna, formed J.E. Grant General Contractors. His commercial contracting business is known for building large retail shopping centers and stores for such national companies as Wal-Mart, Lowes Home Improvement and Staples, as well as Albertson's, Von's and Ralph's grocery stores.

In addition to retail projects, his company specializes in building religious facilities, private schools, automobile dealerships, and golf clubhouses and community centers in residential developments.

Jim likes what he does.

"What I do has purpose," he says. "I enjoy seeing a project from start to finish, especially the more personal projects like schools and churches. It is deeply satisfying to build a new facility that will impact the lives of students and families."

Jim's distinguished career spanning three decades and his many philanthropic endeavors were certainly part of the reason the CAED selected him as its 2010 Honored Alumnus. He says he's not quite sure how he was chosen.

"One day a letter arrived from Cal Poly," he says. "I figured it was something that could wait, so I put it aside for a few





J. E. Grant projects run the gamut, from The Links at Summerly Golf Club (above) ...

days. When I finally got around to reading it, I was taken aback.

"I look back, and I probably graduated with 600 people in my class, so to be recognized is very special and humbling."

Jim and Kim's 25-year-old daughter, Danielle, carried on the Cal Poly tradition, earning a broadcast journalism degree. She is now working for KREM 2 News, the CBS affiliate in Spokane, Wash., while studying for a degree in meteorology from Mississippi State University.

The Grants are grateful for many things, not the least of which is "being in a position to sponsor a cause, an event or a facility that we are passionate about," Jim says. One of those passions is a foster care group near Jim's home in Encinitas. After 10 years of planning, he is now ready to break ground on a large residential and educational campus for Casa de Amparo.

"It's been a great opportunity to provide our expertise and walk them through the process. The fruits of our labor, and that of many other volunteers and donors, will be seen when it's completed next year."

And so Jim continues the tradition ... of building and giving.





... to the Canyon Hills Marketplace in Canyon Lakes (above) and Crevier BMW in Santa Ana (left).



# **Open Spaces**

### Bruce Bolander's airy architectural designs invite the outside in

e didn't know it at the time, but when then 26-year-old Bruce Bolander (B.Arch '89) was laid off from his job at a Santa Monica firm, it was actually a stroke of luck.

It was in the early 1990s, during the last big building recession, he explains. "I was told on a Friday night, 'Don't come in Monday." The company simply didn't have any work.

At the time, Bruce wasn't married, and he lived in a rent-controlled apartment, so he didn't need much money. Without skipping a beat, he went from architect to artist, using his free time and creativity to make art furniture, or "one-off" furniture, meaning each piece is one-of-a-kind.

Using steel and found objects, Bruce created tables, chairs, lights and desks to be showcased in an upcoming exhibit. The show was a success, and he had enough work to keep him going. Eventually, over



the course of about five years, the furniture making evolved into larger projects.

"It went from people asking, 'Can you build me a dining table,' to 'Can you do the furniture for our office,' to finally one day a client asking me to design a house."



Architecture alumnus Bruce Bolander ventured into furniture design (right) before returning to an architecture career.

The diminutive Blair House (top) invites nature inside with its open floor plan and walls of windows. And so began a successful high-profile design career that keeps Bruce working on about a dozen projects at any given time. He says he has a good mix of residential and commercial projects and modestly describes his work as "modern." A more apt description might be sleek, sexy, sophisticated. Bruce prefers the use of open spaces, open plans and open vistas and chooses "materials that are more natural – concrete, steel, glass, wood."

"Many buildings – modern buildings – lose the human touch," he says. "They look overly finished, like a machine made them. I prefer work that looks handmade. I like to see the process and have the finishes be a bit raw. I don't make steel try to look like stucco. If I use plastic, as I do in many kitchen designs, it looks like plastic – not like granite."

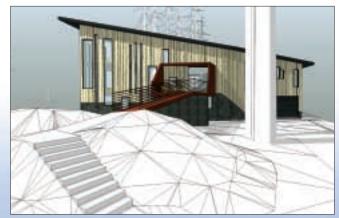
He takes the environment into consideration by building smaller houses. "There's no use having people build more than they need – more than they will use." In fact, one of his most talked-about projects is the Blair house, a 900-square-foot, one-bedroom house. "It's tiny, but the response has been pretty big," Bruce says.

Bruce also aims to "lessen his impact when building in the natural environment," striving to leave the environment in its natural state. "If I'm building a house on a hillside, I try to not do much grading. I don't want to carve out a big flat pad. It is a hillside; it needs a hillside house."

His work is mostly a pleasure, he says, especially interacting with clients. "I don't have many client battles."

Not so with the building departments, the Coastal Commission and so on. It takes two years to get a permit to build a single





The textural exterior of the Beauvoir house frames a light and airy interior (above).

A rendering of a project in Mammoth (left)

The Birusingh house (below) integrates into the landscape.

family residence, says Bruce. "Ten different agencies have to approve it, and some have conflicting interests. The Fire Department will say, 'Remove all native plants within 200 feet of the residence.' The Coastal Commission will say, 'Don't touch any native plants."

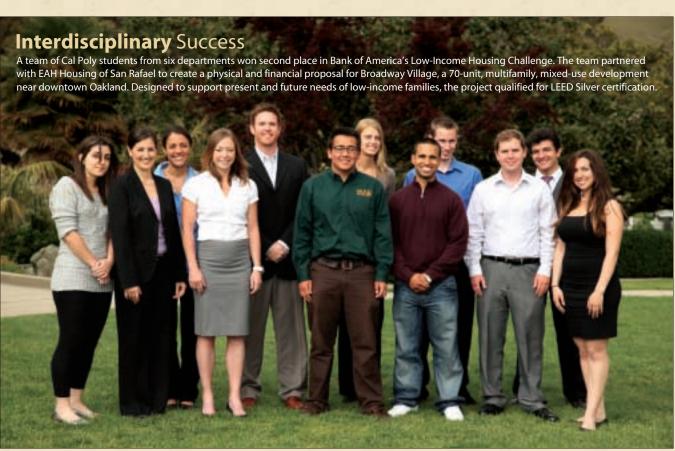
At 46, Bruce lives with his wife, Bonny, and four daughters on a five-acre parcel in Malibu. Although he loves what he's doing and feels fortunate to be making a living

at it, his most important aspiration is to "have a happy family and good relationships with my children for the rest of our lives. I value being an architect, but it's not my first priority.

"If I could be remembered for being a faithful, reliable guy, that would be great," Bruce says. "When I look at some of the great architects of past centuries, everything else in their lives was a mess. Balance. If I could manage that, it would be fantastic."





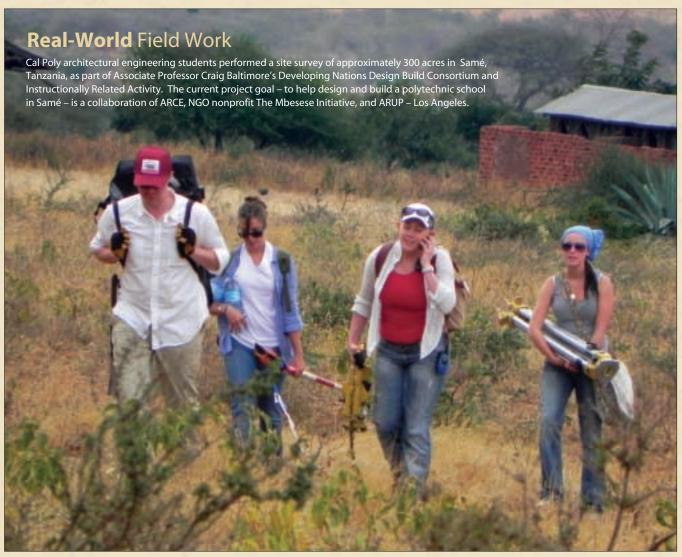


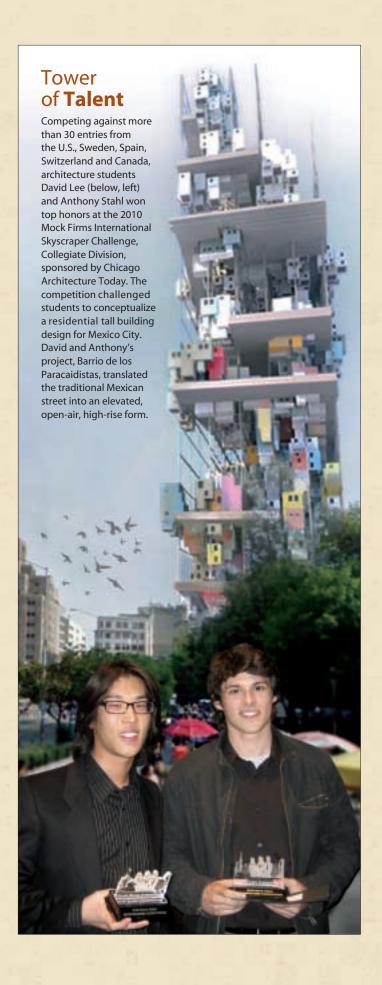














**ASHRAF HABIBULLAH**, founder and president of Berkeley-based Computers & Structures, Inc. (CSI) knows the importance of looking ahead and planning for the future.

With CSI's recent multi-year pledge to support a laboratory in the Architectural Engineering Department, CSI has made a critical commitment to enhance the future of Cal Poly students.

"We are pleased to sponsor the creation of a new computer lab in the college," Ashraf said. "We recognize that a modern, well-equipped lab will provide students with the resources they need to be creative, productive professionals."

But the gift actually gives students much more than shiny new computers. It opens the door to other possibilities, as well.

"It isn't just about the power of technology, we also want to instill in them a sense of pride in the work they do," Ashraf said.

The lab will be named the CSI Computer Laboratory in honor of CSI's support of the Architectural Engineering Department.

The naming program is a five-year financial commitment that creates a steady funding stream to the college and departments to upgrade lab and studio space as well as providing support for equipment and special student projects. Named labs and studios allow a closer connection between the company or individual sponsor and the students who use the space.

"Our students benefit from both the financial contribution and the face-to-face interaction," notes R. Thomas Jones, dean of the college. "When a donor feels a special connection to a group of students, everyone benefits."

The CAED offers a variety of ways for companies and individuals to support student learning. To learn about these opportunities, please contact:

#### **CAED ADVANCEMENT**

Linda Kristenson, Assistant Dean Building 5, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, CA 93407-0444

E-mail: lkristen@calpoly.edu

**Phone:** (805) 756-5138



College of Architecture and Environmental Design California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo, California 93407-0280





CAEDF President John Maple (left) and Paul Neel admire the award's inscription, which reads, "This medallion is given in recognition of George Hasslein's inspiration to generations of students in the interdisciplinary education of our professions serving the built environment."

CAED Dean Emeritus Paul Neel recently added yet another award to his impressive collection. He was honored with the inaugural George Hasslein Medal, awarded to a Cal Poly alumnus or benefactor who demonstrates the commitment to George's passion for interdisciplinary learning and teaching.

At the award ceremony, Paul was lauded as an extraordinary colleague and leader. "The only person who could have received this first award of the medal," said John Maple, the president of the CAED Foundation (CAEDF). "He has touched every aspect of this institution and then reached out into the community and across the country as an educator."

Paul served the CAED for nearly three decades, first as a professor of architecture, then director of the School of Architecture and Environmental Design, and finally as dean.

The CAED Foundation was founded in 1985 as a tribute to the leadership of the college's founding dean, George Hasslein, and to continue his legacy of student-focused, interdisciplinary studies.