

CAL POLY

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To All LAES Students, Alumni, Friends and Supporters:

It is my great pleasure to inform you that yesterday, May 29, 2012, the Cal Poly Faculty Senate voted, by an overwhelming majority, to support our proposal to graduate from our Pilot phase and now become a permanent part of the Cal Poly curriculum. There were only two votes against our proposal--mostly for budgetary reasons--while every one of the remaining senators, representing every college and program on campus, voted for us.

We wish to thank everyone for all the support you have provided us over the years, and are looking forward to continuing to work with you all in the future.

This program has always been a great act of collaborative dreaming and design, therefore everyone who has helped get LAES up and kept it running--students, faculty and staff alike--have all been vital to our program's success. Even still, there are a few people who deserve special recognition for their work with LAES over these years.

We need to give special thanks to Dean Linda Halisky who has been a strong advocate for this program from the first day right up to the vote yesterday afternoon. This program was Linda's idea and she deserves a great deal of recognition as its founder. Also, we need to give a huge amount of thanks to Debra Valencia-Laver for all the work she has put into every step of this program, from our first days putting this together years ago, to all the detailed labor and endless amounts of time she put into our program review process this year, and to all the work she's performed on our student's behalf by working as a vital bridge between the LAES program and the rest of campus. In the early days, Fred DePiero was essential for creating the engineering portion of this program and in helping us navigate through the first rocky months of getting the first program proposal approved. The fact that LAES has always had such a deep respect for the importance of engineering, and has so effectively integrated engineering ideals all through our curriculum, is due to Fred's work with our program from its invention to the days and months when it was up and running for the first time.

Of course, the solid support we have received this year from Dean Debra Larson has now helped ensure that LAES will always have good, reliable footing in both colleges. Thanks too to our faculty advisory board members--Kathy Chen, James Keese, Elizabeth Lowhan, and Trygve Lundquist--who have helped with the revision work involved with shaping the LAES program into something that now fits so well into the Cal Poly mission.

Without all the work of our co-directors, Liz Schlemer, Alypius Chatziioanou, and Michael Haungs, the LAES program simply would not exist. Every one of them has been vital to the success of this program due the tireless work they've performed over the last five years working with the students, sitting in on hundreds of meetings, creating an endless stream of new program policies, and for all the creative effort they put into our projects, courses and advising.

And then, most importantly, the glue that has held us together for the last five years has been Karen Donaldson, busy working at the center of everything, keeping it moving, connecting all the dots, and ensuring that this small but complicated little program sticks together while she keeps it spinning like a top.

Finally, but the reason that LAES came into existence to begin with and the reason we're successful in any way, is the courage and tenacity of all the students who jumped onto this ship and decided to join us on this adventure. It has been an honor to work with you these last five years, and you should all feel proud to be part of Cal Poly history. Your work as students and as members of the LAES family has left a permanent mark on this institution. Because of your contributions to the heart of this project, the LAES program will now, as we move forward, continue creating something fresh and impressive that will benefit generations of future students.

Good work everyone. Congratulations to you all.

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Dr. David Gillette,
Director, Liberal Arts & Engineering Studies
Colleges of Liberal Arts & Engineering