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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cal Poly Receives $150,000 Gift for CESaME Program

SAN LUIS OBISPO
- Cal Poly’s Center for Excellence in Science & Mathematics Education (CESaME) recently received a $150,000 gift from S.D. Bechtel, Jr. in association with the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation.

Funds provided by this gift will be used by CESaME to support a new project designed to engage upper elementary school students and their teachers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The project will serve students who are under-represented in STEM careers.

Cal Poly faculty members and project co-directors Shirley Magnusson, Cotchett Professor of Science and Mathematics Teacher Education, and Silvia Liddicoat, Electrical Engineering Lecturer, will work with classroom teachers from the Santa Maria-Bonita school district to revise existing curricula to integrate engineering design experiences to support student learning in science and mathematics and to meet literacy standards. The project also provides professional development for the Santa Maria teachers in integrating STEM and literacy in the classroom.

"Mr. Bechtel's generous gift will enable our faculty to work closely with the local schools to bring new opportunities for teachers and their students to learn about science and engineering in the world and our everyday lives," said Bob Cichowski, director of the CESaME program. "The gift will enable us to bring Cal Poly's 'learn by doing' philosophy to the elementary school classroom and help CESaME open career possibilities in the world of technology to elementary school students."

"I have real concerns that the United States is losing ground in developing and retaining engineers. We need to catch young people while they are still naturally curious and let this play a part in their learning and in developing a love of math and science. In this way, they will have an opportunity to study and even possibly enter the field of engineering," said Stephen Bechtel. "I am pleased to provide funding for this program, as I believe it will help us determine how children learn best and how teachers can best teach these important and challenging subjects."

For more information about CESaME, contact Bob Cichowski at (805) 756-2859.

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