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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cal Poly to Host Middle School Students for Building an Engineer Day

SAN LUIS OBISPO - Cal Poly's Society of Women Engineers will host local middle school students Nov. 22 for the annual Building an Engineer Day.

The free event gives youngsters hands-on laboratory experience in architectural engineering, aerospace engineering, biomedical engineering, civil engineering, computer science, materials engineering and mechanical engineering.

The annual event, started in 1998, aims to expose students to engineering and the career possibilities it presents. In particular, it aims to attract more girls and minority students to the discipline, though all middle school students are welcome to participate.

"We want to encourage all children," said Lesley Telford, vice president for community outreach for the Society of Women Engineers. "It has been shown that students, especially girls and minorities, lose interest in the math and science areas around fifth grade. We want to get them before they lose interest, so they can see that engineering is not just sitting and doing calculations all day and you get to have fun doing it."

The event is set to run from 9 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. at the Cal Poly Advanced Technologies Labs. Participants will receive free lunch and a free T-shirt.

New to the event this year is a parent information session, "How to Help Your Child Through High School," that offers advice on preparing middle school students for their studies in the future. The session will be a broad discussion of the process of helping children prepare for college. Organizers said Society of Women Engineers members will be able to answer questions if parents have children who are specifically interested in pursuing an education in engineering.

The event can accommodate about 220 students. As of early November, 160 already had signed up.

For more information or to register, log on to <http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/~swe/bae>. For questions, contact Kendra Rowley, the society's education coordinator, at baeday@gmail.com.

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