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‘Monster’ Entrepreneur to Deliver Keynote Address May 7 at Second Annual Cal Poly Entrepreneurial Leadership Awards

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly alumnus Noel Lee, ‘Head Monster’ and founder of Monster Cable Products, Inc., will be the keynote speaker at Cal Poly’s second annual Entrepreneurial Leadership Awards (ELA 2004) Friday evening, May 7, at the Fairways at Dairy Creek in San Luis Obispo.

The award reception begins at 5 p.m. Lee’s address begins at 5:45 p.m. and will be followed by a ceremony announcing the 2004 winners of the Orfalea College of Business Entrepreneurial Leadership Awards. The annual awards program recognizes exceptional entrepreneurial leaders who are Cal Poly graduates or residents of San Luis Obispo County, explained business Professor William Pendergast, awards program advisor and coordinator. The event is open to the public. Tickets are $10 and can be reserved in advance by contacting Pendergast at wpenderg@calpoly.edu.

Following Lee’s remarks, the 2004 Entrepreneurial Leadership Awards will be presented. Finalists for ELA 2004 Awards in industry categories include: Wine Industry: Tobin James, Tobin James Cellars; Austin Hope, Treana Winery. Restaurants and Catering: Larry Kowalski, LP Kowalski; Giuseppe DiFronzo, Giuseppe’s Cucina Italiana; Robin Covey, Robin’s, Novo, French Bakery; Alex Madonna, Madonna Inn. High Tech: Ronald Haynes, FzioMed; Judy Ledford, Renewable Energy Concepts; Bryan Sarlitt, TechXpress; Randy Flamm, IQMS Software. Building and Real Estate Development: Dave Beck, XL Construction; Randy Paul, Obispo Pacific; Don Walters, Walter Brothers Construction.


In addition, awards may be made in special categories: Emerging Entrepreneur (25 years and under), Socially Responsible Entrepreneur,
Community Involvement, and Lifetime Achievement.

About Noel Lee

Lee earned his bachelor's degree from Cal Poly's College of Engineering in 1970. After graduating, he worked as a laser-fusion design engineer at Lawrence-Livermore Laboratory and was an audiophile and professional drummer with a band called Asian Wood. This led to his discovery that wires of different construction produced a higher quality audio performance than the lamp wire in common use. He founded Monster Cable in his San Francisco garage in 1979.

Since then, Monster Cable has created a new industry of high-performance speaker cable components and today is the world's leading manufacturer of high-performance connections for audio, video, home theater, computer and car stereo components and professional musical instruments, Pendergast said. The company holds over 127 U.S. and international patents, offers more than 3,000 products that are sold in more than 80 countries worldwide, Pendergast said.

Lee's leadership has earned numerous accolades. He has received the 14th annual Ernst & Young Northern California Entrepreneur of the Year Award, the Distinguished Corporate Executive Award from the Asian Business League of San Francisco, the Small Business Owner of the Year Award from the San Francisco Small Business Network, and the Dealerscope Consumer Electronics Marketplace magazine's Hall of Fame Award.

The Los Angeles Unified School District presented Lee, a strong supporter of education, with a Humanitarian Award for his generous contribution to their Employment Preparation Program. In 2003, Lee was a first recipient of Cal Poly's Entrepreneurial Leadership Award (ELA). Lee has been profiled in Success Magazine, HFN, Forbes, and World Trade.

About the Entrepreneurial Leadership Awards

Cal Poly's Orfalea College of Business organizes the Entrepreneurial Leadership Awards to recognize successful entrepreneurs and provide students an opportunity to meet entrepreneurs and study and research entrepreneurship. Students solicit nominations from the community and present written and oral profiles on entrepreneurs to an independent panel of judges. Awards are based on founding or reorienting a company, innovation, growth, sustainability, community involvement and social responsibility. Students organize the awards event.

Sponsors for the 2004 awards ceremony include Mid-State Bank, Barbich Longcrier Hooper and King, Central Coast Bank, the Orfalea College of Business, The Tribune, and Cal Poly's Associated Students Inc.
For more details, visit the Entrepreneurial Leadership Awards Web site at www.criterion.net/ela.