FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Engineering Alum Gives 'Project-Based Learning' at Cal Poly a Boost

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Alumnus Frank E. "Bud" Pilling fondly remembers the nights and Saturdays he put in working on various engineering projects at Cal Poly. By making a recent $50,000 gift toward a total pledge of $250,000, Pilling and his wife, Lauri, have helped to ensure that future Cal Poly engineering students will have the same opportunity to undertake "hands-on" learning.

The Pillings have established the Bud and Lauri Pilling Endowed Fellowship for Senior Projects. The endowment will provide $2,000 in 2004 -- and up to $11,250 per year when fully funded -- to support students working on individual or group senior projects. The gift continues a Pilling legacy to the College of Engineering, which includes a $1 million gift in 1993. In 1994, Cal Poly named its Computer Science Building the "Frank E. Pilling Building" in recognition of his generosity and support.

The Pillings' most recent gift is part of Cal Poly's Centennial Campaign, a $225 million, four-year fund-raising effort launched on the university's 100th anniversary in 2001. For its part, the College of Engineering has set a Centennial Campaign goal of $55 to $60 million; the Pilling donation raises the college campaign total to more than $45 million.

Pilling, a 1950 mechanical engineering graduate, attended Cal Poly on the GI Bill. After graduating, he rose through the corporate ranks, primarily at Borg-Warner, to become president of the company's Automotive Group.

"I have a special place in my heart for Cal Poly," Pilling said. "In my senior year, I was in a manufacturing processes class with about 10 other guys and a great instructor. We were paired up in different projects, and we spent not only classroom time but also nights and Saturdays on these projects."
"Francis Whiting, our instructor, kept in touch with us through the years. I hope other students can have as good an experience," Pilling said.

College of Engineering Dean Peter Y. Lee noted that the Pilling endowment strengthens "project-based learning" at Cal Poly.

"What sets the College of Engineering apart," Lee said, "is its design-and project-based engineering paradigm. An imperative of the Centennial Campaign is to preserve and enhance our hands-on program by increasing the level of endowed support for student projects and by creating an unparalleled environment of laboratories and learning facilities.

The Pilling Senior Projects Endowment goes hand in hand with the $5 million gift we received in 2001 from Paul Bonderson (EE '75) to build the Paul and Sandy Bonderson Student Projects Center," Lee said. "Together, these gifts will help ensure the excellence of our engineering education and enable us to meet the challenges of the 21st century. We are deeply grateful to Bud and Lauri Pilling for their visionary gift."

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(NOTE TO EDITORS: An electronic image of Frank Pilling is attached.)