Cal Poly Gravure Day Attracts Top Industry Representatives

In a salute to the gravure printing process -- typically used for highest-quality and package printing -- Cal Poly's Graphic Communication Department recently held its 20th annual Gravure Day, with industry professionals giving talks, holding roundtable discussions, and meeting students and faculty members to discuss the latest printing technology.

A day before the event, graphic communication students toured Dopaco Inc. in Stockton to give them a closer look at the gravure industry and processes in an actual production setting.

Gayle Kugler, plant manager of Quad/Graphics in Lomira, Wisc., gave the keynote speech, titled "Publications: Where Are we Headed?" Her talk focused on the trends of shorter-length press runs and lighter-weight papers. Kugler pointed out that automation in prepress, press and finishing all influence how gravure remains competitive in publications. She also discussed Automatic Storage and Recovery Systems' role in improving material handling and efficiency in a printing plant.

Ruth Wagner, executive director of the Gravure Education Foundation, talked to students about the foundation's mission, programs, services, scholarships and technical writing opportunities. Her overview of the gravure industry, products and companies included information on career opportunities and the appropriate way to prepare for each. Wagner concluded with an outline of growth markets and technical trends in gravure.

Marty Jacobus, executive vice president of QuebecorWorld, Carol Barry, continuous improvement manager of R.R. Donnelley & Sons, and Kugler were part of a publication gravure panel, which provided information about their companies. The Cal Poly students asked numerous questions.
related to gravure markets and international markets.

"Students were very interested in labor and environmental issues in foreign countries," said Graphic Communication Professor Malcolm Keif, event organizer. "The questions were vigorous and thought-provoking. The panel offered the students and the faculty the opportunity to hear different perspectives on several issues. Together the speakers represented the largest gravure printers in the country, with combined sales of more than $12 billion a year."

After the panel, students talked with speakers during roundtable sessions. Each of the four speakers hosted a table, where students discussed such topics as successful management practices, career preparation, continuous improvement practices in gravure, and how the Gravure Education Foundation can help students.

"We wanted to provide as much interaction between students and speakers as possible," Keif said, "and the roundtables were successful in achieving this goal."

Harvey Levenson, department head of Cal Poly's Graphic Communication Department said, "Cal Poly is proud to have held 20 consecutive Gravure Days, the most of any university designated by the Gravure Education Foundation as a Gravure Resource Center. These annual events are testimony to Cal Poly's commitment to educating young men and women in the technical and management issues related to the gravure industry.

"Many of our graduates work in the industry, and we plan to continue preparing them for the of the future," Levenson said. "Professor Keif, who was recently hired to head-up the university's educational programs in gravure and related web-printing processes, has done an outstanding job of organizing this year's event."

Cal Poly's Graphic Communication Department is one of the largest programs of its kind in the United States. The department has concentrations in printing and imaging management, electronic publishing and imaging, and design reproduction technology. The department and its laboratories are heavily subsidized by industry through gifts, grants and endowments. As a Gravure Resource Center, the department also receives annual funding from the Gravure Education Foundation.

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(NOTE TO EDITORS: For electronic images of Gravure Day activities, please contact Jo Ann Lloyd at (805) 756-1511 or jlloyd@calpoly.edu. To receive future news releases via e-mail, please send Lloyd your e-mail address.)