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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Entrepreneurship Forum to Highlight Diverse Startup Teams Oct. 22 at Cal Poly

SAN LUIS OBISPO – The Cal Poly Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship (CIE) will host a forum on diverse startup teams from 4:45 to 7 p.m. Monday, Oct. 22, in the Performing Arts Center Pavilion on campus.

Panelists, alumni, community members and students will be on hand for an evening of discussion, student exhibits and networking.

The topic, “Engineers are From Mars, Business Types from Venus, and Who Knows What Planet Designers are From: Diverse Startup Teams,” will explore who and what it takes to bring a venture from idea to launch. Panelists will discuss the pitfalls and rewards of truly cross-disciplinary teams, as well as why diversity is championed in the startup environment.

“When companies only have one kind of person, they are not very resilient,” said forum speaker and RightScale engineer Roberto Monge. “They’ll all have similar weaknesses and strengths. Embracing diversity of viewpoints and talents is critical to building a company that is resilient.”

During the Pitches, Exhibits and Networking (PEN) portion of the forum, finalists of the third annual Ray Scherr Elevator Pitch Competition will pitch their ideas to attendees and judges in 90 seconds. Categories include Idea Cloud, for those with just a concept, and Launch Pad for founders with an existing business. Audience Choice and Freshman winners will also be chosen. The overall winner will receive a trip to Chicago for the 2012 National CEO Conference to compete in the CEO Elevator Pitch Finals with students from all over the U.S.

The October Forum is the first event of the 2012-13 Entrepreneurship Forum series, which unites the Cal Poly and San Luis Obispo entrepreneurship communities. It is free and open to the public. Guests can network with local and national industry leaders and innovators, meet student entrepreneurs, and learn more about CIE resources and services.

CIE is launching the Pioneer Pass this year. This annual pass is a voluntary method to financially support the Forums Series and gives pass holders expedited registration, access to special industry events, and more. Pioneer Pass holders help uphold the quality and longevity of CIE programming.

For more information and to register, please go to: cie.calpoly.edu/.

About the Cal Poly Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship

CIE opens a world of entrepreneurial opportunity to Cal Poly students and faculty members and promotes entrepreneurial activity, scholarship and dialogue across the university and throughout San Luis Obispo County.

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