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### **Cal Poly Solar Decathlon House Taking Shape, Powered by Industry & Alumni Donations**

SAN LUIS OBISPO - Cal Poly's entry in the international 2005 Solar Decathlon competition, the only entry from California, is now taking shape thanks to major support from industry partners donating money, energy-efficient materials and solar-friendly systems.

When the house is finished, Cal Poly's Solar Decathlon student team will transport it to the National Mall in Washington, D.C., to compete with 17 other universities Oct. 7-16. The energy-efficiency competition is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

Thanks to university partners, alumni, parents and friends, Cal Poly students have raised more than \$300,000 of the \$500,000 needed take the team and their entry to Washington D.C. To help the team raise the rest, contact architecture Professor Rob Peña, Cal Poly College of Architecture and Environmental Design, at (805) 756-5207 or [rpena@calpoly.edu](mailto:rpena@calpoly.edu).

Construction on Cal Poly's Solar Decathlon entry is taking place now on a campus softball practice field. The all-solar house sits on a steel chassis donated by Zieman Manufacturing. The Cal Poly student crew has already laid down floor insulation from CPI: Construction Polymers International, added structural insulated panels from AFP R-Control, and installed exterior and interior cladding panels by Trespa of North America.

According to Peña, the team's faculty advisor, many of the materials and finished surfaces in the Cal Poly entry were selected by the students to provide energy conservation benefits and to serve as examples of sustainable uses of natural resources. "As tomorrow's building industry professionals, the students are learning first hand how to design innovative systems that synergize the power of the sun," he said.

Solar energy will power the major appliances, lighting and hot-water system in the 650-square-foot Cal Poly house, as well as an electric vehicle. To avoid a reliance on hardwood forest products, the team chose bamboo flooring from Smith and Fong, along with solid-surface countertops by Richlite.

The home will have architectural hardware and doors by Häfele America, plumbing supplies by Ferguson Enterprises, and a wide range of products from Home Depot. Highly efficient fixtures are being provided by several cutting-edge lighting firms including, Alkco, Bruck, io, Lithonia, Peerless, and Shaper.

Visitors to the house will see state-of-the-art major appliances designed to conserve energy including, a combination ASKO washer/dryer from Water, Inc., and KitchenAid appliances soon to be released to consumers by Whirlpool.

Throughout the development of this project students have been working on the installation of the dwelling's power generating systems. The house is powered by BP Solar photovoltaic panels that will be attached to a roof-rack mounting system by Pro Solar. The sun's energy will pass from the panels to storage in the Trojan batteries then on to the Xantrex inverters before powering the house.

Also added are solar-thermal roof panels donated by Heliodyne. Crucial to this process were donations of a heat pump, air-handling unit and energy-recovery ventilator by US Air Conditioning Distributors Corp. and Grundfos water pumps. A GEM electric vehicle, donated by the U.S. Department of Energy, will transport the students around the nation's capital as part of the required contest activities.

In addition to the many in-kind donations so far, two major cash donations have greatly helped the Cal Poly Solar Decathlon Team. Alumnus C. Nicholas Watry, a licensed architect and structural engineer, has donated funding. A long-time supporter of student projects, Watry is the George Hasslein Endowed Chair for Interdisciplinary Studies in Environmental Design.

The Lewis Foundation, established by philanthropist Adam J. Lewis, has also contributed funds to the project. The foundation awards grants to nonprofit organizations and individuals involved in environmental responsibility, green space issues and research.

Local technical and consultative assistance has come from San Luis Mechanical, REC Solar, Thoma Electric, and IBEW Local Electrician's Union No. 639, among others.

For more information about the 2005 Solar Decathlon, see [http://www.eere.energy.gov/solar\\_decathlon/](http://www.eere.energy.gov/solar_decathlon/).

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*Editors please note: A high-resolution color jpg of the partially-built house is available from Teresa Hendrix in Cal Poly Public Affairs, [thendrix@calpoly.edu](mailto:thendrix@calpoly.edu).*

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