

California Polytechnic State University

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Cal Poly College of Engineering Dean Announces Retirement

SAN LUIS OBISPO - Peter Y. Lee, dean of Cal Poly's College of Engineering since 1987, announced Nov. 5 that he will retire at the end of summer quarter 2005, or upon the appointment of a new permanent dean.

"The college has come through many challenges during the course of my tenure over the last 17 years," he wrote in a memo to Cal Poly President Warren J. Baker. "Despite a serious erosion in state support and grave budget cuts, the college has survived and advanced in many ways. All in all, we are in good shape to face the challenges of the 21st century. Therefore, it has come time to hand over my stewardship."

The College of Engineering, with 4,850 students, is the largest college on the Cal Poly campus and the largest in the region west of the Rockies. It has been ranked by U.S. News and World Report as one of the best public, primarily undergraduate engineering schools in the nation.

Many financial challenges have been overcome thanks to the support of alumni, friends and industry partners who have contributed approximately \$100 million to three major fund raising campaigns, Lee said. And the college has advanced in many other ways.

Enrollment has grown by 20 percent in the past two decades, and applications have increased 80 percent, "ensuring the high quality of our student body," Lee added. Nearly 100 new faculty members have been recruited, and college programs have grown from nine to 12, along with the development of new master's degree programs in nearly every major. During his tenure, Lee has also overseen the development of new engineering facilities on campus - the Advanced Technology Laboratories, Engineering III and IV, Bonderson Student Projects Center and the Engineering Plaza - which are proceeding on track.

Lee earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from National Taiwan University and a master's degree and a Ph.D. in civil engineering from Tulane University. He is a registered professional engineer and has published numerous papers on geotechnical engineering and engineering education. He is recognized for his leadership role in reforming engineering education in the nation and the world through his involvement on boards of the National Research Council and the National Science Foundation.

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