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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Students, Donors, Department Join Forces to Upgrade Cal Poly Metallography Lab

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- A key laboratory used for detailed materials analysis in Cal Poly's Materials Engineering Department has been completely upgraded through the joint efforts of industry, students, the department and an alumna.

The refurbished lab was newly christened the USS POSCO/Materials Engineering Student Metallography Lab last week, named for its major benefactors.

The Pittsburg (Calif.) division of steel manufacturer USS POSCO Industries gave \$27,000 for the project, and another \$27,000 came from student academic fees dedicated by materials engineering students in the classes of 2004 through 2009. The Materials Engineering Department contributed \$25,000, while alumna Elisabeth Grayson Zahm from the materials engineering class of 1990 and Steve Zahm donated \$5,000. Leco Corp. of St. Joseph, Mich., gave a discount of \$20,000 on equipment for the facility.

"This lab is a testament to the strong partnership between Cal Poly, our generous industry friends, and our wonderful students," said department Chair Linda Vanasupa. "It shows what you can do, even when budgets are tight, when your constituents work together and when you have terrific staff members like our technician Bill Avery, who put hours and weekends into this project."

Assistant Professor David Niebuhr said the metallography lab is "core" to any materials engineering program.

"All levels of students use the equipment, from second-quarter freshmen through fifth-year seniors," Niebuhr said. "An application might include analyzing an aerospace component made of a titanium alloy. The component can be sectioned, mounted and polished to a mirror-like finish. Students can then observe the microstructure using optical or electron microscopy to determine strength, exact chemical composition and a host of other properties."

USS POSCO Division Manager Kelly McMahon said his company's ongoing support for Cal Poly's materials engineering program stemmed from the students and graduates.

"After working with Cal Poly students for many years," McMahon said, "we've become very fond of them. Over and over, they've proved to be the type of engineer that just gets the job done."

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