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University News & Information

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Cal Poly Engineering Announces New Director of the Multicultural Engineering Program

SAN LUIS OBISPO – José Millán, the newly appointed director of Cal Poly's Multicultural Engineering Program (MEP), brings 20 years of experience working with low-income and educationally disadvantaged students.

As an academic supervisor since 2002 for the Education Opportunity Program, part of the university's Student Academic Services unit, Millán provided counseling for state-defined, disadvantaged students from their admission through graduation.

Prior to joining Cal Poly, he provided services to local middle and high students as program coordinator for Upward Bound; worked as a program officer and guidance counselor for the Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) Schools Program; and counseled at-risk students as an outreach consultant in the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District.

In his new position as MEP director, Millán aims to boost participation and retention of under-represented groups in engineering "by linking the pre-college and university programs."

"University students can serve as positive role models for pre-college students, encouraging them to excel in their academics and increase their desire to pursue a post-secondary education," he said. At the pre-college level, Millán hopes to help "provide the adequate support to MESA Advisors/Teachers, so that they can spark the 'STEM' (science, technology, engineering, math) interest of program participants."

The focus of Cal Poly MEP, which serves 300 students on campus, is on students and youth whose potential is high but whose economic and/or social circumstances hinder their ability to compete and succeed in college. The program provides study and support groups, tutoring and professional enrichment, designed to help students land desirable jobs in engineering fields.

The MEP director also administers the MESA Schools Program, which is dedicated to ensuring that local area

low-income middle school and high school students have the skills and opportunity to succeed in the sciences at the college level. Additionally, Millán will serve as faculty adviser to campus chapters of the Black Engineers and Scientists, the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society.

MEP, which provides scholarships as well as tutoring and mentoring, boasts a nearly 90 percent first-year student retention rate and has successfully made an impact on the lives of thousands of students, from the middle school level to college.

“What excites me about this new position,” Millan said, “is seeing first-hand how our students benefit from our programs.”

Millán received his master of arts degree in education from Cal Poly in 2006, with a specialization in counseling and guidance. He also earned his bachelor’s degree in industrial technology, with a concentration in productions management from Cal Poly.

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