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March 6 Forum at Cal Poly to Spotlight ‘Social Entrepreneurship and The Triple Bottom Line’

SAN LUIS OBISPO – The Cal Poly Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) will host its next Entrepreneurship Forum Event from 4:30 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 6, in Chumash Auditorium on campus.

The forum, “Social Entrepreneurship and the Triple Bottom Line,” will focus on entrepreneurs and companies who maintain profit, people and the planet as bottom-line goals. “Triple bottom line” companies pursue profit that allows them to serve their employees well and to help the communities in which they operate. In California, the evolution of the Benefit Corporation – a new type of corporation (often called a B-Corp) that uses the power of business to solve social and environmental problems.– makes it more practical than ever for entrepreneurs to uphold these values.

The event will kick off with Pitches, Exhibits and Networking (PEN), including a presentation from Cal Poly student groups with socially orientated products or goals. Participants will include:

- Quality of Life Laboratory (QL+), which involves students from multiple engineering disciplines working under the guidance of experienced faculty members to research and develop innovations to improve the quality of life of those who have served our country;
- Net Impact, a student business club focused on social ventures;
- Engineers without Borders, which supports community-driven development programs worldwide by collaborating with local partners to design and implement sustainable engineering projects while creating lifelong experiences and responsible leaders; and
- Monterey Institute of International Studies, a graduate that offers professional graduate degrees with an international focus.

Cal Poly alumnus David Karr (B.S., Business Administration, 1996) will follow the PEN with a keynote presentation on social entrepreneurship. Karr is the co-founder of Guayaki Yerba Mate, an organization working to make organic, fair-trade yerba mate tea the mainstream energy drink of choice and prove that a company can be profitable while operating sustainably. **In 2009, the company became the first Fair Trade Certified yerba mate company in the world.**

“Growing up, we always heard that ‘money does not grow on trees,’” Karr said. “Today, we are proving that money does grow on trees, and rainforest-grown yerba mate is the new green currency. It provides the people of the rainforest with income as well as the ability to steward their land.”

A panel discussion following the presentation will include Heather Van Dusen, senior associate at B Lab, a nonprofit that certifies and supports B Corps; Jon Monett, Cal Poly alumnus and founder of Quality of Life Plus; Kristen Yetter, Cal Poly alumnus and general manager of Promega Biosciences LLC.

The March Entrepreneurship Forum Event is part of a series hosted by the Cal Poly CIE in partnership with local organizations. The forums provide an opportunity to meet student entrepreneurs and learn about their projects, network with local and national innovators and industry leaders, and learn more about CIE's activities. The event is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served.

For more information and to register, go online to <http://cie.calpoly.edu/>. Additional entrepreneurship forums are planned in April and May.

About the Cal Poly Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship (CIE):

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

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