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Cal Poly's New Robotics and Automation Lab Prepares Students for World of Manufacturing

SAN LUIS OBISPO – A new robotics and automation lab in Cal Poly's Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering Department will help students gain hands-on exposure to cutting-edge systems and technology.

The Gene Haas Laboratory for Robotics and Automation, which opened in mid-September, is the result of a \$50,000 gift from the Gene Haas Foundation. The lab provides new hardware, software and precision tools for Cal Poly's already strong manufacturing engineering program. That gift also inspired an array of state-of-the-art technology donations from other industry leaders including Yaskawa America, Rockwell Automation, Keyence and Trust Automation.

"This collaborative giving from our industry partners has helped produce an outstanding automation and robotics lab," said Jose Macedo, department chair. "The Haas Lab creates another exciting, hands-on environment for students to fully engage in automated systems and technologies that are at the core of virtually all advanced manufacturing industries."

"Labs like this develop the high-talent workforce needed for advanced manufacturing" said College of Engineering Dean Debra Larson, "which is so vital to national prosperity – it's a great investment."

"We are delighted to see the entrepreneurial and multidisciplinary opportunities here," said Bill Tandrow, vice president of mechanical engineering for Haas. "We like to see a skilled level of thinking, and Cal Poly is quite successful in fostering those aptitudes."

"This lab provides a core building block for a lot of things," said John Payne, vice president of motion for Yaskawa, a leading manufacturer of motion control and robotics automation systems. "It's what we, as a company, want to see happening."

"Motion control is at the heart of many companies, and what students will find in this lab, they will see in the most sophisticated equipment in the world. Students will be able to learn the fundamentals as well as advanced operations," said Payne.

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