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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## *Just in Time for Halloween: Cal Poly and Los Osos Middle School Students Create Other-Worldly Fundraiser, Oct. 25 and 26 Media Preview & Launch of "Prequel" App set for Oct. 24*

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Students from Cal Poly's Liberal Arts and Engineering Studies (LAES) program and from the architecture major have collaborated with students from Los Osos Middle School to create a fundraiser called "Area 55: Be Scared," to be held from 6 to 10 p.m. Oct. 25 and 26 at the school.

The students have created a scenario and environment in which attendees are seemingly transported to a parallel universe where Genetically Engineered Organisms (GEOs) have invaded the school. The GEOs were being transported from Vandenberg Air Force Base when high winds redirected the transport vehicles to the school. In the scenario, attendees and "surviving" students will have a chance to see what the GEOs are doing at the school, how Federal Safety Administration officials react, and whether the broader community is in danger.

The creation of "Area 55: Be Scared" allowed Los Osos Middle School and Cal Poly students to work creatively and collaboratively to solve complex problems at the intersections of science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics. The resulting transformation of the school is an example of how Cal Poly's commitment to Learn by Doing can motivate students of all ages.

Cal Poly architecture and LAES students participated in a month-long design-build process to create the focal component of the immersive and expressive environment. Cal Poly and Los Osos Middle School students are now working in teams to complete the 6,000-square-foot project, including design-build, sound and light, creative direction, documentation and media.

The violence-free event will include "no blood, no gore, just adrenaline and humor," said Los Osos Middle School teacher Greg Wilcox.

An additional student team led by Michael Haungs, associate professor in computer science and co-director of the Liberal Arts and Engineering Studies program, is designing an "Area 55: Be Scared" prequel experience through PolyXpress. PolyXpress is a smartphone app that allows users to create location-based, multimedia stories on mobile devices and to instantly share those stories worldwide. Launching on Thursday, Oct. 24, the "Area 55: Be Scared" prequel will be available through the PolyXpress

Player: <http://pxdev.cfapps.io/PolyXpress/Player/pePlayer.html>.

Los Osos Middle School is located at 1555 El Morro St. in Los Osos. Tickets for "Area 55: Be Scared" are available at the door. General admission is \$10; students are \$8; groups of four or more receive a discounted rate of \$7.50 per ticket. Individuals may

purchase a "two-fer" ticket: two entries for the same person for \$15 per ticket.

Proceeds benefit Los Osos Middle School and the Central Coast Makerspace at the school, where students can design, build, make and engage in all kinds of creative activities.

Media interested in previewing "Area 55: Be Scared" on Thursday, Oct. 24, should contact Greg Wilcox at 805-534-2835 or [GWilcox@slcusd.org](mailto:GWilcox@slcusd.org).

The event is supported by the California Parent Teacher Association, as well as Air Dimensional Design Inc., Home Depot, and other community partners and local businesses. Support for Cal Poly student participation has been provided by Los Osos Middle School, the Cal Poly Center for Expressive Technologies, funds from Thomas Fowler's Community Interdisciplinary Design Studio, and the Liberal Arts and Engineering Studies program.

For more information, contact Jane Lehr at 805-756-6442 or [jlehr@calpoly.edu](mailto:jlehr@calpoly.edu), or Greg Wilcox, 805-534-2835 or [GWilcox@slcusd.org](mailto:GWilcox@slcusd.org).

#### Links

- LOMS "Area 55: Be Scared" Event
- Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Area55BeScared>
- Los Osos Middle School: <http://loms.slcusd.org/>
- PolyXpress Player: <http://pxdev.cfapps.io/PolyXpress/Player/pePlayer.html>
- Cal Poly Architecture Department: <http://www.arch.calpoly.edu/>
- Cal Poly Liberal Arts and Engineering Studies Program: <http://laes.calpoly.edu/>
- College of Architecture and Environmental Design: <http://caed.calpoly.edu/>
- College of Liberal Arts: <http://cla.calpoly.edu>
- College of Engineering: <http://ceng.calpoly.edu/>
- Air Dimensional Design, Inc.: <http://www.airdd.com>

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