Campaigning for a New CAED Building

A campaign for a new building for the College of Architecture and Environmental Design (CAED) has generated several commitments, including $500,000 from a $1 million pledge by alumnus Rob Rossi (ARCH '75). The largely state-funded building is scheduled to be built within the next few years.

The pledge from Rossi, a San Luis Obispo architect and developer, is the largest cash commitment ever to the college. The donation earmarks $500,000 to help build and equip the new facility, $250,000 to fund grants to students who have a special need or show exceptional talent, and $100,000 to begin a program that would bring design professionals to campus and allow students to visit practitioners in the workplace.

Another $100,000 from the Rossi gift will help endow a professorship in honor of George Hasslein, the college’s founding dean who passed away in 2002, and $50,000 will support the Cal Poly Scholars program, which helps attract the nation’s top high school seniors.

In addition, Rossi’s pledge includes $15,000 to help finance a bronze sculpture of Hasslein, bringing the total gift to $1,015,000.

“Much of what I learned at Cal Poly goes above and beyond what can be measured by a grade-point average,” Rossi said. “Taking risks, working with a team, learning from mistakes and making the most of opportunities — those were among lessons I learned that have served me well, both professionally and personally.”

Additional funding for the proposed new structure has been pledged by Detroit-based Pulte Homes, one of the nation’s largest homebuilders, which has committed $250,000 to fund a laboratory in the new facility. The lab will be named the Pulte Homes Residential Construction Laboratory. Pulte Homes recognized and selected Cal Poly “because of the strength of the program and the hands-on approach that students experience in the Construction Management Department,” said John M. Drew, the company’s Orange County-based director of construction.

Another pledge for $80,000 by Morley Builders, the firm that built the new Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles, will be used to construct the new building’s main conference room. Four of Morley Builders’ vice presidents are Cal Poly graduates: Mark Montoyo (CM ’84), Charles Mutillo (CM ’86), Chris Forster (CM ’84), and Jeff Simonson (CM ’88).

“Our firm has benefited greatly from the talent and skill of quite a few Cal Poly graduates, and we’re honored to give back to the college by providing one of the lead gifts toward this new building campaign,” company President Mark Benjamin said.