

CONSTRUCTION INNOVATOR

CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT | COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN | FALL 2025

WORLD
CLASS
MUSTANGS

CM CLASS OF 2025



CAL POLY

FROM CLASSROOM TO CONSTRUCTION

Shaping Tomorrow's Construction Leaders Today

© Department Head Jeong Woo helps to install solar panels during a Skip the Grid trip to Chinle, AZ.

I am excited to share with you the second issue of Construction Innovator in 2025 because we simply could not keep these inspiring stories to ourselves any longer. A big thanks goes to our editorial team for their hard work in bringing this issue to life.

Inside you will find stories that celebrate the very best of our Learn by Doing tradition. Our seniors designed and built a pergola at Thousand Hills Pet Resort, while another team developed Cal Poly's first student-created mobile app. I am thrilled to launch this app as it will streamline communication with our students, alumni and industry partners.

We are also proud to spotlight our industry partners, whose support makes so much possible. From internships on the Cal Poly Student Housing Project to student-led research and the VEST Hackathon at the WIC Symposium, these collaborations provide real-world experiences that prepare our students to lead.

You will also read about newly updated classrooms and meet the new faculty who have joined us to educate the next generation of construction leaders. I hope you can take the time to welcome them when you visit campus.

On a personal note, this year marks the 20th anniversary of my teaching career. Looking back, the most rewarding part has been watching my students take on leadership roles across the construction industry. None of this journey would have been possible without the support of so many along the way, and I am excited to continue shaping future leaders together.

This magazine is our way of sharing these successes with you because you are an essential part of our story. Thank you for cheering on our students, supporting our faculty and reminding us every day that the future of construction is in very good hands.

Jeong Woo
JEONG WOO, PH.D. | DEPARTMENT HEAD

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ON THE COVER

An intimate, CM-focused spring graduation at the Simpson Strong-Tie Materials Demonstration Lab brought students, family and friends together to celebrate the Class of 2025.

BACK COVER & THIS PAGE

On the back cover Jack Byrne (CM, '25), a #SkiptheGrid team member in Chinle, AZ, where students installed 40 solar-powered lighting and refrigeration systems (pictured on right) to provide insulin storage, food preservation and study light.



ON SITE LEARN BY DOING



STUDENTS GAIN HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE ON DORM PROJECT

Students in the College of Architecture and Environmental Design (CAED) are being invited to roll up their sleeves and work on the expansive Cal Poly Student Housing Program (CPSHP) as interns or drone pilots for the Whiting-Turner Contracting Company (W-T). These students, including nine Cal Poly alumni, have been working with the W-T project team. The multi-project design-build program will be ongoing until 2032, adding 4,200 student beds and renovating six existing red brick residence halls. The new construction phase includes nine new buildings on a 12-acre site comprised of the existing K-1, K-2 and R-1 parking lots and the existing North Mountain housing site.

Ⓢ Thomas Symer (CE, student, left) and Ben Simpson (CE, '24, right) set up Whiting-Turner survey equipment to verify anchor-bolt locations to within 1/8"

The internships epitomize Cal Poly's Learn by Doing philosophy, providing students with practical hands-on experience on a major construction project. In addition to full-time summer internships, part-time positions are available during the school year with flexible schedules to accommodate classes and other academic commitments. Since inception of the internship program, 16 Cal Poly interns have participated on this project. Given its long-term nature, internship involvement will change depending on the phase of the work at the time. However, all interns are assigned to specific roles and responsibilities, becoming integral members of the W-T field engineer and project engineer teams and reporting directly to their W-T supervisors.

Construction Management (CM) student Naomi Lee, now in her senior year, spent two months interning on the CPSHP. Working on both the façade and modular fabrication workstreams, she supported the procurement of the exterior envelope systems, which included attending meetings with various stakeholders, assisting project managers with creating contracts and reviewing the plans to delineate trade work. Tavio D'Archangelo, vice president at W-T remarked, "Naomi demonstrated strong initiative and quickly adapted to project needs, contributing valuable support in maintaining a clean RFI log, and up-to-date submittal registry. Her attention to detail and eagerness to learn made a positive impact on the building envelope workstream team's overall efficiency and project execution." Naomi also observed other workstreams, which gave her insight into the level of collaboration involved across the entire project. She noted that the innovative nature of the modular construction design presented challenges that called for constant precise attention to detail and communication between all personnel. Referring to her W-T co-workers, Lee said everyone was extremely helpful and supportive. She added, "you can truly feel that they care about everyone involved with the project; they do nothing short of their best every day they come to work."

Internships offer a pathway to full-time employment with W-T, a Maryland-based company with more than 60 locations throughout the country. More than 70 Cal Poly alumni are full-time W-T employees, many in upper management positions. D'Archangelo explained, "Our internship program is a perfect opportunity for students to get to know Whiting-Turner, how we work, and if the company culture, project type and locations are the right fit for them. In fact, the majority of our full-time employees, including myself, were once Whiting-

Turner interns." Interns are selected through a collaborative, multi-step recruiting process, not by a corporate human resources department. He added: "Some of the attributes we look for in an intern are ambition and the ability to multi-task as well as being a continuous learner, team oriented, and responsible." Recruitment of interns typically starts with an information session, meeting at a career fair or online inquiry, followed by interviews with the W-T project team. The W-T project team also invited a team of Cal Poly drone pilots and faculty to conduct regular aerial scans for the project. Robin Kim, a W-T virtual design and construction engineer described their collaboration: "The Cal Poly Digital Twin Team's aerial photos were used to communicate progress of our team's work,

“YOU CAN TRULY FEEL THAT THEY CARE ABOUT EVERYONE INVOLVED WITH THE PROJECT; THEY DO NOTHING SHORT OF THEIR BEST EVERY DAY THEY COME TO WORK.”

— Naomi Lee, CM Senior, Whiting-Turner Intern



Ⓢ Naomi Lee (CM senior) and fellow intern Tigerell Hodge during co-op work on the Cal Poly Student Housing Project, assisting with façade and modular fabrication tasks.

coordinate site logistics and conditions and also measure excavation volumes, elevations and distances.”

Graduate Ashton Gandrup (CM, ‘25) was a key player on the Digital Twin Project from the beginning of the 2024-25 academic year, just as demolition, grading and underground sitework began. Under the supervision of lecturer Bryan Knakiewicz, Gandrup collected, analyzed and uploaded vital data from his drone scans of every building on campus. Kim added, “Ashton and his team’s accurate capture and processing of this data provided a well utilized tool. They became experts at navigating our aerial photo platform and provided responsive feedback based on the needs of our project team.

Describing his experience, Gandrup said, “Flying the drone for this historic housing project truly embodied Cal Poly’s Learn by Doing motto. Nearly everything I did was self-taught, as there wasn’t an established framework to follow ... and no precedent at this scale within the department.” His work was extensive, beginning with securing Low Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability authorization for FAA airspace clearance. He reached out to local surveyors for benchmark data and to Whiting-Turner when new control points were needed after site demo work removed the originals. Over the course of the year, Gandrup mastered multiple systems, including Skydio and DJI drones as well as DroneDeploy, a software platform with powerful tools for aerial data collection and analysis. As the construction site changed constantly, Gandrup had to prepare multiple back-up options for his ground control operations. Throughout the year, he collaborated with W-T personnel and subcontractors, all while pursuing his academic work. Gandrup expressed his gratitude to CM alum Lucas Van Dam (CM, ‘24) for his assistance with Skydio; to Miguel Coronado (CS, ‘26) who assisted throughout the project and helped troubleshoot issues as they learned together; and to Cal Poly’s CM Department for the opportunity to obtain a Remote Pilot Certificate and lead the drone capture on this historic project. ■

LEARNING, UPGRADED

NEW TECHNOLOGY ENERGIZES CLASSROOM LEARNING

This fall, many construction management (CM) students will experience a dazzling array of new technology, elevated learning experiences and new interactive capabilities that encourage collaboration and simulate actual job-site conditions, according to CM Department Head Jeong Woo.

The two classrooms, in the Construction Innovation Center’s (CIC) Pankow Builders Room (186-B303) and Clark Construction Group Room (186-B304), were significantly updated over the summer. They are named for each company’s initial generous donation during the CIC’s construction in 2008.

This year’s further support from the Charles Pankow Foundation and Clark Construction Group significantly enhances students’ hands-on learning opportunities.

New features include the 133-inch diagonal screen with a ceiling-mounted projector that provides high-quality, large-scale visual content for every student; a comprehensive virtual conferencing system for seamless remote collaboration; wireless audiovisual connectivity; updated electrical infrastructure with power poles at student desks; and new modernized furniture.

“The updated equipment will encourage deeper engagement during lectures and provide opportunities for remote guest presentations and virtual project tours,” Woo said.

Charles IacuanIELlo, senior project manager at Pankow Builders, added, “We appreciate this opportunity to continue fostering a robust connection with Cal Poly and look

forward to seeing the enhanced learning experiences and opportunities this upgraded facility will provide.”

In addition, a moveable teacher station enables instructors to navigate freely around the room and engage directly with students. The entire system is managed by a user-friendly touchscreen control panel.

These classrooms now have "bring your own device" capability and a wireless device display with Apple TV and Miracast so students and faculty can seamlessly share content from their personal devices, providing further collaboration and allowing for multi-screen presentations. An assisted listening system makes the classroom fully accessible.

Other enhancements include a document camera for displaying physical materials and a mobile TV cart that allows for simultaneous multiscreen displays of complex project elements such as contract drawings, logistics, scheduling and cost analysis.

Cal Poly's College of Architecture and Environmental Design has a longstanding history of mutually beneficial partnerships with the construction industry.

With shared goals of developing innovative practices and cultivating strong leadership for the future, this collaboration provides students with practical real-world experience that exemplifies the university’s Learn by Doing philosophy.

Pankow Builders and Clark Construction regularly sponsor student teams at the Associated Schools of Construction (ASC) competitions, with impressive results. Cal Poly’s Mixed-Use Team, sponsored by Pankow, took first place in February at the Region 6 and 7 competition in Reno, Nevada. The Pre-Construction Team, sponsored by Clark Construction, earned second place at the ASC Region 3 Competition in Downer’s Grove, Illinois, last fall.

To prepare, the team had met with high-rise building experts in Clark’s Chicago office and with preconstruction leaders from Clark’s Downtown Los Angeles office. Dom Lombardi, project controls executive at Clark Construction, said, “It is humbling and rewarding to engage with the CM Department, and (we) look forward to many more years of collaboration.”

“I am deeply grateful for the ongoing partnership between the department and these two industry leaders, all of which helps prepare students for the demands of today’s — and tomorrow’s — construction industry,” Woo said.

Woo is continuing to seek similar sponsored upgrades in additional CIC classrooms. ■

CAL POLY HOSTS ASC CONFERENCE 2026

LEARNING AND CELEBRATING TOGETHER

Cal Poly's Construction Management (CM) Department will showcase its beautiful Central Coast location, state-of-the-art facilities and innovative curriculum when it hosts the Associated Schools of Construction (ASC) International Conference, April 15-17, 2026.

The conference will be held at the ocean-facing Cliffs Hotel in Pismo Beach, with pre-conference workshops on the Cal Poly campus. The theme will be Learn by Doing Together. Off-site excursions, including hiking, wine tasting, sight-seeing and golf, will round out the weekend for attendees and their guests.

The annual ASC Conference draws the most influential leaders in construction education from across the U.S. and internationally.

"This is a great opportunity to highlight our program and show international leaders in construction education how the Construction Management Department embodies Cal Poly's Learn by Doing philosophy," said conference chair and CM associate professor Joe Cleary, who also serves as director of the California Center for Construction Education (CCCE).

"Many of the leading practitioners in California's construction industry who support Cal Poly through the Construction Management Advisory Council (CMAC) will be joining us to share their valuable insights on the industry."

Events at Cal Poly will highlight examples of the innovative practices used in several on-campus projects, including the John Madden Football Center and the new Cal Poly Student Housing Project. There will also be faculty workshops focusing on women in construction and artificial intelligence (AI) in construction. Programming will include industry training sessions on emerging trends in the construction industry, as well as presentations on modular/prefab construction and AI.

In addition to the impressive lineup of keynote speakers, seasoned presenters and informative workshops, a banquet and golf outing are also

☀ Perched above the Pacific, The Cliffs' terrace and pool offer ASC 2026 attendees stunning sunsets, ocean views, and relaxed coastal hospitality.

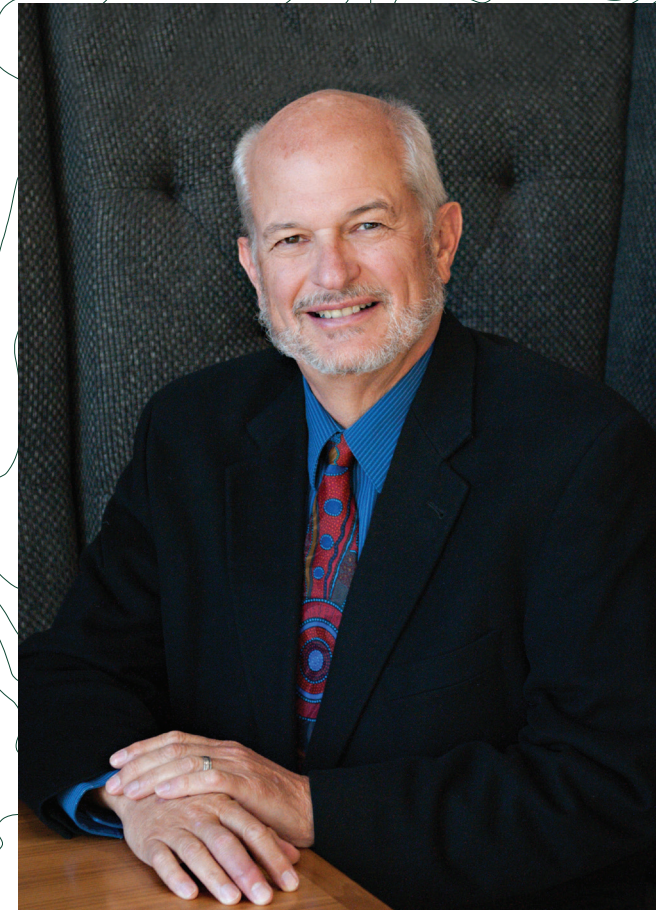
planned, as well as an awards ceremony and happy hour at The Cliffs. Attendees will also be free to experience San Luis Obispo's Thursday night farmers market, locally boasted as one of the biggest — and happiest — in California.

The size and scope of the conference offers opportunities for the CM Department to show off its impressive student body. Students will be encouraged to participate as helpers, hosts and ambassadors and will have a unique opportunity to engage and interact with the leaders of construction education and many representatives from the industry.

Cal Poly last hosted the ASC Conference — deemed a resounding success — at the same location in 2013.

"The conference was a very lively event with a lot of energy," recalled Jenay Reynolds-Sibbach, CM Department administrative coordinator and ASC 2013/ASC 2026 Planning Committee member. "Faculty were excited about the Building Information Modeling (BIM) movement, and guests were equally excited about the opportunity to enjoy a world-class sunset and a glass of wine from The Cliffs' terrace. Even the significant others had a Central Coast adventure, touring Hearst Castle and visiting local wineries. The department put a lot of effort into the event, and it says something that people are still remembering it fondly over a decade later. We hope to offer our guests another memorable conference."

The entire CM Department is proud to be hosting this much-anticipated event for a second time and looks forward to the many opportunities it will offer to Learn by Doing together, collaborate and forge future progress in the industry. ■

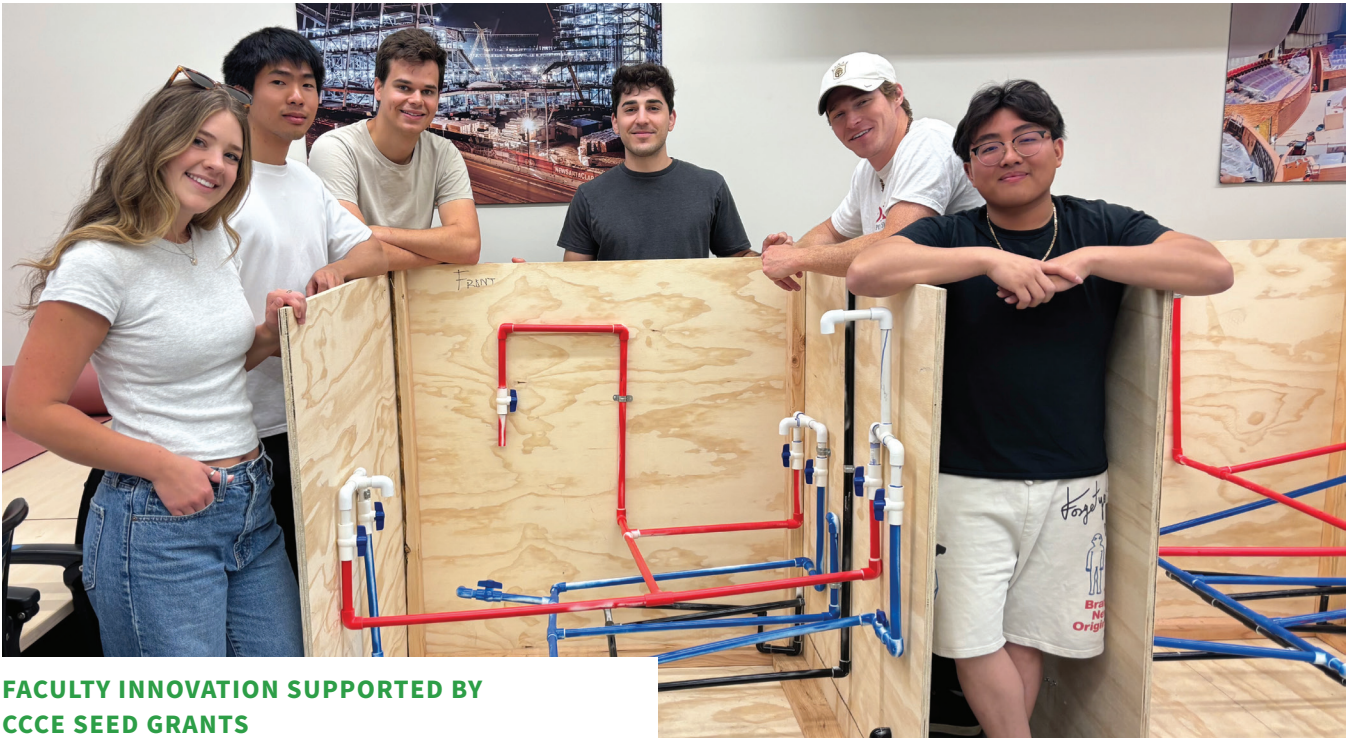


ASC 2026 SALUTES AL HAUCK'S DECADES OF SERVICE

Former CM department head Al Hauck, a longtime leader in construction education known for his commitment to curriculum development and student mentorship, is set to receive the ASC Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his decades of service to the field. This national honor celebrates Hauck's sustained impact on the profession and his enduring support of students and faculty.

HOW CCCE IS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF CONSTRUCTION

Highlights from a Year of Engagement Between Alumni, Faculty, Students and Industry



FACULTY INNOVATION SUPPORTED BY CCCE SEED GRANTS

This year, CCCE proudly supported faculty innovation through its seed grant program, funding three impactful projects that enhance hands-on learning and student engagement. CM lecturer Eric Brinkman initiated a feasibility study for a permanent construction systems display, designed with faculty input and architecture student collaboration to enhance Learn by Doing through real-world material and system examples. CM assistant professor Shantanu Kumar created a hands-on plumbing exercise for students in CM 411: Specialty Contracting Construction Management, where students built 4’x4’x4’ mock-ups simulating water and waste systems, gaining experience in plan reading, quantity takeoffs and fabrication. Finally, CM associate professor Stacy Kolegraff initiated the virtual Dare to Lead Learning Circle to build leadership skills and peer support for early-career CM professionals, with a nine-session series that was set to begin in August 2025.

CM Assistant Professor Shantanu Kumar (not pictured) oversees students building 4’x4’x4’ plumbing mock-ups for CM 411, a CCCE seed-grant supported hands-on exercise.

Together, these faculty-led projects exemplify CCCE’s commitment to advancing Cal Poly’s hands-on, industry-relevant curriculum. ■

CMAC WELCOMES NEW PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY

The California Center for Construction Education (CCCE), the nonprofit arm of Cal Poly’s Construction Management Department, continues to thrive in its mission to support industry relations, outreach and recruitment.

At the spring 2025 meeting of the Construction Management Advisory Council (CMAC), members elected alumnus Jeff Messana (CM, ’04) as secretary. A founding member of the original Construction Advisory Council that created CMAC

in 2014, Messana brings a deep history of engagement with the department. He has co-chaired the Young Alumni and Development and Facilities committees, and remains active as a guest lecturer, team supporter and advocate for curriculum growth. “The program gave a lot to me and gave me the ability to do what I do, and I want to give back,” Messana said. His long-standing commitment to Cal Poly makes him well-suited to help guide CMAC’s future direction.

As alumnus Brad Denney concludes his impactful term as CMAC president (2023-25), the CM Department extends its gratitude for his outstanding leadership while welcoming alumna Karri Novak (CE, ’93) into the role. Novak is also a founding CMAC member. Her industry insight and dedication to the department make her well-positioned to lead CMAC into its next chapter. ■

SUMMER MIXERS FOSTER CONNECTION AND CELEBRATE STUDENTS

This summer, CMAC hosted three regional mixers, sponsored by Largo Concrete, McCarthy Building Companies and McGuire and Hester. These events offered great opportunities for alumni, students and industry partners to connect, learn more about CMAC and explore ways to get involved with CCCE initiatives.

A highlight of two of the mixers was the celebration of the 2025 cohort of the Carpenters Apprenticeship Program. This unique partnership places CM students in hands-on roles on active job sites, enhancing their field experience and technical skillset. This summer, 24 students were placed across 16 companies through the program. The mixers provided a meaningful way to recognize the students’ efforts and the ongoing collaboration between the CM Department and the industry. ■

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2024–25 RECRUITMENT SEASON

Recruitment and outreach were stronger than ever this year. One standout event was AEC (Architecture, Engineering, Construction) Technology Day, hosted on April 6 by the CMAC Construction Technology in Education (CTEC) Committee. Sponsored by VEC construction company. This event featured eight industry speakers and drew approximately 40 students and faculty eager to engage with the latest in construction technology.

The fall 2024 and winter 2025 career fairs also saw record participation. The fall event in October welcomed 180 companies and over 500 students across two days, while the winter fair in January featured 73 companies and attracted more than 250 students. Encouragingly, 100% of participating employers expressed interest in returning for future career fairs.

In addition to the career fairs, the department hosted over 100 industry-led information sessions throughout the year, providing students with valuable opportunities to explore potential internship and full-time roles, gain insight into company cultures and make informed decisions about their next career steps. ■



CMAC summer mixers united alumni, students, and industry partners to celebrate the 2025 Carpenters Apprenticeship cohort and to build partnerships moving forward.



Jeff Messana (CM, ’04) with CMAC leadership at the spring 2025 meeting, including outgoing president Brad Denney (CM, ’98) and incoming president Karri Novak (CE, ’93).

CAL POLY’S FIRST STUDENT-BUILT APP

CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCES CAL POLY’S FIRST STUDENT-DEVELOPED MOBILE APP

An interdisciplinary team of Cal Poly undergraduates has produced the university’s first-ever student-developed mobile app, designed to enhance networking and communication among construction management (CM) students, faculty and industry members.

Recent computer science graduates Scott Pramuk ('25) and James Lamkin ('25) have been working on the Cal Poly Construction Management App for almost two years. Sierra Barnes (GRC, '24) signed on as the app’s first user experience designer. After she graduated, GRC major Sophia Koruga took over and revamped the app for better accessibility and to ensure it met Web Content Accessibility Guideline standards.

“I used Figma to design the layout and create the app frames,” Koruga explained. “James and Scott worked on the back end, bringing the designs to life through code.”

They did it using Flutter, an open-source user-interface software development kit. “Flutter saved us time by allowing us to create cross-platform mobile applications that compile natively to iOS and Android, so we don’t need to juggle two code bases for each operating system,” Lamkin said.

The brainchild of CM Department Head Jeong Woo, the app’s key features include an event calendar, notifications, student/faculty/company directory and job board.

“It’s a one-stop spot for CM majors to check on career fair companies, view potential internships and clubs, and much more,” Koruga said. “Students can stay up to date with career building and academic opportunities, recruiters can find potential interns and faculty can share opportunities for students.”

While Lamkin has coded various projects in a range of scenarios, this was his first time creating a full-stack application. “It was amazing to get real-life app development experience,” he said.

The designs are almost done, and Pramuk and Lamkin are finishing the coding process.

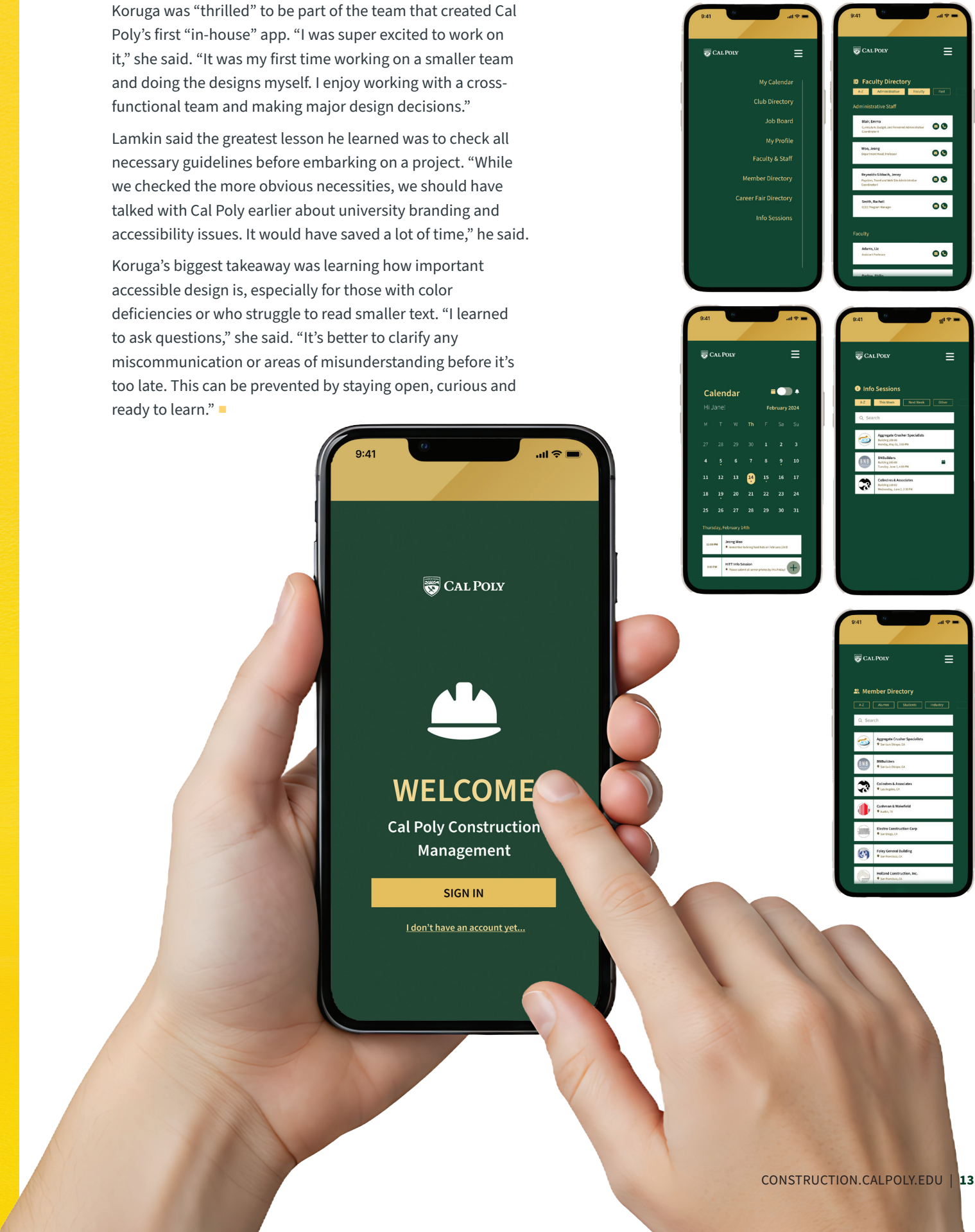
This Learn by Doing project challenged students in new ways. “Every experience I had on this app was a new one for me,” Lamkin said. “There was a great deal to learn about frontend development and making sure the tools and resources we used were cheap, efficient and effective.”



Koruga was “thrilled” to be part of the team that created Cal Poly’s first “in-house” app. “I was super excited to work on it,” she said. “It was my first time working on a smaller team and doing the designs myself. I enjoy working with a cross-functional team and making major design decisions.”

Lamkin said the greatest lesson he learned was to check all necessary guidelines before embarking on a project. “While we checked the more obvious necessities, we should have talked with Cal Poly earlier about university branding and accessibility issues. It would have saved a lot of time,” he said.

Koruga’s biggest takeaway was learning how important accessible design is, especially for those with color deficiencies or who struggle to read smaller text. “I learned to ask questions,” she said. “It’s better to clarify any miscommunication or areas of misunderstanding before it’s too late. This can be prevented by staying open, curious and ready to learn.” ■



INVESTING IN MUSTANGS

Donations and scholarships directly enable Cal Poly students to Learn by Doing.

This year the Construction Management (CM) Department’s Awards Ceremony and Spring Banquet took place May 30. The event was held at the Center of Effort Winery in Arroyo Grande, California. The highlight of the evening was the annual announcement of next year’s scholarship award winners. Over \$70,000 was handed out, including one full-ride \$25,000 scholarship provided by Allen and Nancy Minton.

Established in 2007, the goal of the Allen and Nancy Minton scholarship is to fully support one construction management major for an entire academic year. This includes tuition, books and housing, which Cal Poly estimates to be \$25,000 this academic year. To date, 18 CM majors have benefitted from this scholarship.

“The generosity you have shown has impacted students for many years, and I am very thankful to have been this year’s recipient,” CM major Joey Massey told the Mintons.

The CM Department and its students are grateful for Allen and Nancy Minton ‘s generosity. Anyone who happens to be in the Bay Area can stop by and say hello at the Minton Door Co. (<http://www.mintondoor.com>). ■

\$70K+
IN AWARDS AT
2025 SPRING BANQUET

☞ CM Department Head, Jeong Woo, with CM Student, Joey Massey, recipient of the Allen and Nancy Minton \$25,000 full-ride scholarship, at the department’s spring awards banquet.



THANK YOU 2024-25 SPONSORS

2024-25 Scholarship Recipients and Donors

Scholarships are listed in alphabetical order by donor.

- ALLEN AND NANCY MINTON**
\$25,000 – Joey Massey
- ASPE CHAPTER 55**
\$2,000 each – Ryan Delalio, Emily Edmondson, Omar Mejia-Meraz, Brian Morales Gijon, Alonso Velazquez
- BEAVERS HEAVY CONSTRUCTION**
\$9,000 each – Brian Morales, Luis Contreras-Valencia
- BLAIR TULLOCH MEMORIAL**
\$5,000 – Ryan Delalio
- CMAC**
\$1,500 each – Alyson Buchholz, Ishwari Patel
- DON CHAPIN COMPANY**
\$1,800 each – Sasha Miller, Vincent Matesso, Alonso Velazquez
- KRIS CELLO**
\$1,600 – Emily Edmondson
- MONTOYA FAMILY**
\$2,000 – Luis Contreras Valencia
- VINNELL FOUNDATION**
\$3,000 – Emily Edmondson
- WILLIAM H BROWN**
\$600- Alyson Buchholz
- WILLIAM COSKO JAMES HEARN**
\$2,000 each – Reece Bruschi, Levi Goodman, Dylan Taylor



Cal Poly teams dominated the 2024-25 competition season with top finishes at regional, national and international events. These results showcase the depth of talent, rigorous preparation and the Learn by Doing collaboration that define Cal Poly’s program.

THREE TEAMS, THREE PLACEMENTS AT
ASC REGION 3 COMPETITION

At the Associated Schools of Construction (ASC) Region 3 Competition held in Downer’s Grove, Illinois, Oct. 18-21, 2024, Cal Poly teams placed first in the Concrete, second in the Preconstruction and third in the Electrical categories. Department Head Jeong Woo remarked, “These students perfectly demonstrated the power of Learn by Doing TOGETHER!” CM senior Max Dennison credited her team’s pre-competition preparation for their success in the Preconstruction category.

SIX AWARD-WINNING TEAMS AT
ASC REGION 6/7 COMPETITION

Cal Poly teams earned five first-place awards in the Reno, Nevada, competition held in February. The winning teams were Commercial, Concrete, Mechanical Team No. 2, Preconstruction and Mixed Use. The Virtual Design and Construction team earned a hard-won second place. ARCE student Kyle Honsik Concrete Team co-captain with Jack Ritchie, said, “Spending time together in practice meetings ... is critical to our preparation ... and to meeting the extreme attention to detail and technical knowledge required to solve the problem.”

DESIGN/BUILD FINISHES THIRD
IN DUBLIN, IRELAND.

At the ASC Region 8 International Student Competition in Dublin, Ireland, last November, the Design/Build Team took third place among 15 universities from Europe, the UK and the U.S. Three Cal Poly students and three from the Czech Technical University tackled their assigned task: enhancing the

design and function of a student accommodation development in the heart of Dublin. “The biggest challenge was adjusting our work to European standards,” explained CM senior Eiley Eichten. “We had to estimate in euros and understand how European labor productivity and wage rates compare to the United States. Bringing home a podium finish was incredibly rewarding.”

AN HONORABLE MENTION AT
MCAA COMPETITION IN TEXAS

Cal Poly placed in the final four in the Mechanical Contractors Association of America (MCAA) competition held in Austin, Texas, in March. Four Cal Poly students competed against 27 other teams, earning trophies and a \$2,500 check. “It has been an amazing journey to see all our hard work pay off in an extremely competitive scholastic environment,” said recent graduate Spencer Gardner (CM, ’25). He added that working with students with the same drive as his made it a standout experience.

SECOND PLACE IN AIC’S ETHICS COMPETITION

The AIC (American Institute of Constructors) Ethics Competition requires a written submission followed by an oral presentation on Zoom. Participants evaluate a construction ethics dilemma and argue the appropriate response. CM senior Marianne Bishai explained, “When faced with a difficult scenario in construction, we tend to look for a legal requirement that dictates the correct action. This competition required deeper critical thinking and a more nuanced understanding of professional responsibility.” Bishai credits her Cal Poly classes and teammates Anthony Roensch, Grace Hetland and Joey Massey for their success. ■



☺ MCAA competition team and advisors at the awards ceremony: Jake Simkins, Dean Cavanna, Jeong Woo, Nick Catherall, Joe Cleary, Shantanu Kumar, Spencer Gardener, Aiden Howard (holding trophy), Maxwell Helfman, Michaela McCormack, Marianne Bishai, Andy Walton, Misael Gonzalez and Ishwari Patel.

CAL POLY TEAMS
TRIUMPH IN
COMPETITIONS AGAIN

PODIUM PROVEN MUSTANGS

ASC REGION 6 AND 7

Reno, NV (2025)

1ST PLACE

COMMERCIAL:

Hannah Benner (CM), Augustino Cirino (CM),
Ryan DeLalio (CM), Emily Edmondson (CM),
Misael Gonzalez (CM), Sean Ross (CM),
*Justine Steichenberger (CM), *Amy Vaughn (CM)

CONCRETE SOLUTIONS:

Lily Brown (CM), Alec Gibbs (ARCE), Kyle Honsik
(ARCE), Joey Massey (CM), Jack Ritchie (CM),
Tyler Stump (CM), *Elise Blomquist (CM),
*Sofia Esperanza Cuevas (CM)

MECHANICAL TEAM #2:

Elijah Burt (CM), Nick Catherall (CM), Dean Cavanna (CM),
Alejandro Gonzalez (CM), Finnbar Kelly (CM),
Ishwari Patel (CM), *Landon Jackson (CM)

MIXED USE:

Camryn Berger (CM), Marianne Bishai (CM),
Eiley Eichten (CM), Josh Higginson (CM),
Cole Lewis (CM), Tyler Meehleis (CM),
*Tate Ballard (CM), *Aidan Nelson (CM)

PRECONSTRUCTION:

Max Dennison (CM), Reed Kellar (CM),
Lucas Llodra (CM), Casey Nuti (CM),
Luke Sutherland (CM), Jacqueline Yeung (CM/Theater),
*Maggie Papaharisi (CM), *Naomi Lee (CM)

2ND PLACE

VIRTUAL DESIGN IN CONSTRUCTION TEAM:

Emilio Cervantes (CM), Zach Hall (CM),
Dylan Hom (CM), Jason Lee (CE), Madison Truesdale (CE),
Sonya Wijoyo (CM), *Reese Schueller (CM),
*Mariana Sanchez Heisecke (ARCH)

AIC (AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF CONSTRUCTORS) ETHICS COMPETITION

Virtual (2025)

2ND PLACE

Marianne Bishai (CM), Grace Hetland (CM),
Joey Massey (CM), Anthony Roensch (CM)

ASC REGION 8

Dublin Ireland (2024)

3RD PLACE

DESIGN/BUILD:

Jacob Defreeuw (CM), Eiley Eichten (CM),
Anthony Roensch (CM)

ASC REGION 3

Downer's Grove, IL (2024)

1ST PLACE

CONCRETE:

Lily Brown (CM), Alec Gibbs (ARCE),
Kyle Honsik (ARCE), Joey Massey (CM),
Jack Ritchie (CM), Tyler Stump (CM)

2ND PLACE

PRECONSTRUCTION:

Max Dennison (CM), Reed Kellar (CM), Lucas
Llodra (CM), Casey Nuti (CM), Luke Sutherland (CM),
Jacqueline Yeung (CM/Theater)

3RD PLACE

ELECTRICAL:

Marie Johnson (CM), Ashley Linthicum (CM),
Ben Narciso (CM), Owen Schoenherr (CM),
Xanthus Silverstein (CM), Henry Tan (CM)

MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (MCAA)

Austin, TX (2025)

3RD PLACE

Marianne Bishai (CM), Spencer Gardener (CM),
Misael Gonzalez (CM), Maxwell Helfman (CM)

** signifies team alternate*

FACULTY NEWS

Two Tenure-Track Professors Join the CM Faculty



Kevin Bennett joins the CM faculty with more than 30 years of experience spanning industry, academia and leadership in student development. He has a doctorate in design, construction and planning, was on the faculty at Kennesaw State University and has held academic positions in Florida and Alabama. He served as a faculty advisor with the Student Business Association helping students develop connections within the industry and encouraging leadership roles. He has also coached National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) student teams for their national competitions. With his broad expertise in construction management, sustainable building practices and higher education instruction, Bennett's focus is now on integrating real-world industry experience with academic teaching, fostering student leadership and advancing sustainable design through curriculum development. Cal Poly's Learn by Doing philosophy aligns perfectly with his hands-on methodology. "The university's strong industry partnerships and emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration make it an ideal environment to inspire and empower the next generation of construction professionals," Bennett said. ■

☺ Kevin Bennett, tenure-track faculty, brings 30+ years' experience and a focus on sustainable design and student leadership.

☺ Jason Miller, new tenure-track faculty, with his wife, Carly, and daughters Elizabeth (9) and Rose (6).



The Construction Management (CM) Department welcomes to the faculty Jason Miller, who comes most recently from an assistant professorship in the CM program at Sacramento State University. A decorated veteran with a Purple Heart from his tour in Iraq, Miller is an alumnus of Cuesta College and Sacramento State University and has an MBA and DBA from California Baptist University. Prior to completing his post-graduate degrees, Miller worked for Swinerton for six years, Sundt for two years, and Alston for two years before shifting his focus to education. He is passionate about developing future generations of CM leaders and continues to research and implement the best strategies for doing so. Miller has long admired Cal Poly's support for its faculty, its Learn by Doing credo and for producing outstanding graduates, especially in the construction field. He is excited about joining the CM team and, having loved his time on the Central Coast while attending Cuesta College, to once again call San Luis Obispo home. ■

ALUMNI IN ACTION

From Adaptive-Reuse Projects to New Partnership Roles, Cal Poly Graduates are Shaping the Built Environment

ADAPTIVE-REUSE LEADER

Michael (Mike) Bartlett (ConE, '79) received his B.S. in construction engineering in 1979 and worked for architects, general contractors and the East Bay development firm Reynolds & Brown until 1990. In 1991 he founded Horizon Partners, which has led several notable conversion projects in San Francisco, Oakland and Tacoma, Washington. Horizon is currently renovating the 10-story 1423 Pacific Ave property in Tacoma for the second time; first converted from retail and storage uses to offices in 1998, it will now become 75 large luxury apartments with 10,000 square feet of commercial space. In Tacoma's historic Willamette Manufacturing Complex, a 220,000-square-foot multi-building site with mostly brick and heavy-timber structures, two floors of the original six-story main building are being converted into 17 maker spaces ranging from 1,000 to 2,500 square feet. Both projects are scheduled for completion in early 2026.



INDUSTRY VETERAN

Scott Pickford (CM, '85) (right) worked in the Bay Area and San Luis Obispo County after graduating from Cal Poly, then spent 25 years on the East Coast in Philadelphia, Baltimore and northern Maryland. His career spanned large and small construction companies across a wide spectrum of projects, including justice, military, industrial, healthcare and commercial. When he returned to the Central Coast, he co-founded a consulting company with fellow alumna **Marcia Walther (CM, '85)**. Reflecting on his 40-year career, Pickford remarked, "It's the people that make or break a project." His advice to today's graduates is to stay open-minded and receptive to others' ideas while remaining mindful about where responsibility ends. He also cautions, "Always remember, every document, every email, every meeting is part of a contract. Read your contract; there is always one." ■



RISING PARTNER

Connor Cody (CM, '19) (left) recently became a partner at the Bay Area firm Cody Vermette Group Commercial Builders. He interned there every summer while attending Cal Poly and was hired as a project engineer after graduating. Cody enthusiastically credits Cal Poly's Learn by Doing credo for all the hands-on experience he acquired, most memorably building a mini-house in the Residential Construction course and testing concrete strengths in the Concrete Lab. He recalls the sense of community and collaboration within the CM Department, saying, "The fact that our instructors brought current, real-world experience into the classroom made a huge impact." Cody especially enjoyed participating in the Associated Schools of Construction (ASC) Competitions; his Pre-Construction team earned first place in Chicago and Reno. He noted, "These high-pressure, fast-paced events deepened my understanding of the bidding process, interpreting addendums and managing deadlines — skills I now apply daily in my professional career." ■





HACK-A-THON TACKLES EQUITY, SAFETY FOR WOMEN

STACY KOLEGRAFF ADDS RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM TO HACK-A-THON EVENT

In the male-dominated construction industry, Whiting-Turner Professor of Construction Safety, Stacy Kolegraff, is breaking boundaries to help keep women in construction safe. That effort includes the V.E.S.T. (Verifying Everyone's Safety Together) Hack-a-Thon, which aims to reduce gender-based hazards in construction. This year, in conjunction with the fourth hack-a-thon, Kolegraff instituted the first Women in Construction Research Symposium to connect industry members with students.

Equipping, educating and engaging with participants was the event's theme. The equip portion looked at safety gear and making sure women had properly fitting gear for the work they perform.

“

WITH WOMEN MAKING UP 13% OF THE INDUSTRY ... SAFETY SHOULD BE EQUITABLE; WOMEN ARE DISPROPORTIONATELY AFFECTED BY ILL-FITTING PPE.

— Stacy Kolegraff, Whiting-Turner Professor of Construction Safety (CM, '02)

”

The education sessions covered research and shared experiences so attendees could take something back to work and make improvements.

The engage section was intended to help women find other women in the industry. “With women making up 13% of the industry, it may sometimes feel like you are on an island by yourself,” Kolegraff said. “By engaging with others, you can develop a support system so you don't feel like you're the only one having these experiences.”

Speakers presented on critical research and trends impacting women in the architecture, engineering and construction fields. Workshops and discussions were held on leadership, mentorship, retention, training and outreach.

With help from colleagues and several students, Kolegraff presents the annual two-day hack-a-thons to address safety issues affecting women in construction.

“Personal protective equipment (PPE) — from hard hats to high-visibility vests and gloves — was not designed for women,” Kolegraff explained. “These ill-fitting items create additional challenges and distractions. Safety should be equitable. Women are disproportionately affected by PPE.”

This year, participants took on improving the safety harness and personal fall arrest systems. “Brian Fink, who works for Rudolph & Sletten, gave a demo and training on how the harness is supposed to work and what happens if it doesn't,” Kolegraff said.

Participants came up with three designs: one was similar to a full-body cradle and two looked at trauma strap deployment and how straps might be adjusted and improved.

Regular straps are made of 1.5-inch-wide nylon. “Groups looked at making them wider to distribute the load better in a fall event,” Kolegraff said. “In the other harness redesign, the straps can be formed into a large U shape, allowing the person to put their feet into the straps to alleviate pressure in the groin area.”

Summing it up, Kolegraff said, “We want people to get to the end of their day safely. If they're not wearing gear, or are not trained in how to wear it, they could get injured — sometimes fatally.

“It's a gender-based hazard,” Kolegraff continued. “It's an industry that is already dangerous. If we want to increase diversity, we need to address issues of inequity — make them feel wanted. I want a vest and PPE that fits me. That doesn't always happen. When it does, I feel that I belong — that the company has considered me as an individual and not just a number.”

Companies want to keep their workers safe. “This is a small way to create equity, and it is easily actionable,” Kolegraff said. “It's easy to provide equal safety for all. Making it safe for one group benefits everyone.”

Next year's hack-a-thon is planned for mid-April 2026. For details, go to <https://vesthackathon.org/>. ■

☎ Three completed harness prototypes on display at the V.E.S.T. Hack-a-Thon, developed to improve fit and comfort for women in construction.

☎ Jose L. Reyes, Regional Safety Manager, Rudolph and Sletten, demonstrates a fall harness while WIC president, Jordan Badgley (CM) is lifted and suspended to test comfort and fit.



BUILDING COMFORT FOR K9S

Students' Senior Project Builds Pergola at Thousand Hills Pet Resort



⌚ Jackson Landless (CM, '25, left) and Sam Peters (CM, '25, right) stand with the completed pergola at Thousand Hills Pet Resort.



⌚ Rebar reinforcement and forms in place, ready for concrete pour; completed footings provide a solid foundation for the pergola.

⌚ Students work on framing the pergola, installing columns and Simpson Strong-Tie connections during their senior project build.



San Luis Obispo's award-winning Thousand Hills Pet Resort now features a handsome pergola where dogs and their owners can wait comfortably before being checked into daycare, boarding and training programs, thanks to recent construction management (CM) graduates Sam Peters (CM, '25) and Jackson Landless (CM, '25).

For their senior project, Peters and Landless became general contractors, budget managers, schedulers, project managers, framers, roofers and painters to construct the pergola from scratch. They collaborated with architectural engineering student Kenzie Brown, who managed the structural calculations and design. CM assistant professor Liz Adams served as advisor and subject matter expert (SME).

The project received financial support from the CM Department and from the Son Care Foundation. Simpson Strong-Tie generously donated all the connection materials. Son Care Foundation, a not-for-profit entity established in 1994, offers mentorships that train and provide service

dogs for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) victims. The Foundation's New Life K9 and Alpha Academy programs are funded by Thousand Hills Pet Resort, Gentle Touch Training and Mission Cars, which all come under Son Care's umbrella.

Both Peters and Landless found the project to be equally challenging and rewarding. Reflecting on the experience, Landless said, "This truly showed me what Learning by Doing means. We combatted every issue, and in turn, we gave our best effort to provide Son Care Foundation with a very well-constructed pergola."

Peters added, "This brought my education full circle and made me excited to work in the industry. I recommend a project like this to all seniors; the learning experience is extremely valuable."

Both students expressed their gratitude to their entire team and to Thousand Hills Pet Resort for entrusting them with the project. ■

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

Honoring 14 Students with Outstanding Senior Awards

Every year, Cal Poly’s Construction Management (CM) Department recognizes students who have taken on additional roles beyond that of a typical undergraduate. These Outstanding Senior Award winners are honored for their hard work, dedication and commitment to excellence. While all Cal Poly CM students must complete challenging academic coursework, the award winners have demonstrated exceptional initiative and determination. The following recent graduates were honored at the CM Department’s annual Spring Banquet, held at the Center of Effort Winery in Arroyo Grande, California, on May 30. The banquet is an opportunity for faculty, staff and students to gather and celebrate scholarship winners, outstanding seniors and the end of the academic year with food and good cheer.



Service to the Department Award

SAMUEL MCCLINTOCK

HOMETOWN
Butler, Indiana

ADVICE TO FUTURE STUDENTS
Success comes from consistent hard work and building strong connections. Stay disciplined, manage your time well and don’t be afraid to ask questions or offer help. The relationships you build with those around you can open doors and play a key role in your success — no matter how you choose to define it.

WHAT WILL YOU MISS MOST ABOUT CAL POLY?
I will miss the community of students and faculty in the Construction Management Department.

EMPLOYMENT
Estimating Engineer with McGuire & Hester, Alameda, California



Heart of the Department Award

MARIANNE BISHAI

HOMETOWN
Los Angeles, California

FAVORITE CAL POLY MEMORY
I have met the most amazing group of women in my four years at Cal Poly. Meeting my best friends has truly been one of my life’s greatest blessings. My group of friends has become my family, and I cannot express how grateful I am for each of them. These friendships have brought me so much support, laughter and love that will last a lifetime. I cherish each one of them and feel so blessed to share this journey with them.

EMPLOYMENT
Project Engineer at W.E. O’Neil, Los Angeles, California



Heart of the Department Award

COLE LEWIS

HOMETOWN
Fremont, California

ADVICE TO FUTURE STUDENTS
Get involved with the CM Department as early as you can — whether it’s joining a competition team or getting involved in a club — it’s one of the best ways to meet your peers and to start learning and growing in the construction industry.

WHAT WILL YOU MISS MOST ABOUT CAL POLY?
I’ll miss being within walking distance to all my friends and taking advantage of all the great outdoor activities SLO has to offer!

EMPLOYMENT
Project Engineer with DPR Construction, Austin, Texas



Outstanding Senior Award

ASHTON GANDRUP

HOMETOWN
Santa Cruz, California

ADVICE TO FUTURE STUDENTS
Make yourself stand out; don't be a number. Know what you want and what drives you. For me, success means constant growth and working toward being among the top professionals in the industry. You have to get your hands dirty. Stop pushing paper and immerse yourself in the field. Go to tradeshow like CONEXPO. They're eye-opening. Be action-oriented and open to new opportunities; that's what delivers real results.

EMPLOYMENT
Entrepreneurial venture in heavy construction, Central Coast, California



Outstanding Senior Award

JACQUELINE YEUNG

HOMETOWN
Cupertino, California

POST GRADUATE PLANS AND GOALS
I'm traveling to Greece for a cruise and to Japan with family.

WHAT WILL YOU MISS MOST ABOUT CAL POLY?
I will surely miss the community constantly surrounding me in San Luis Obispo. Friends and mentors across different clubs and departments were always dependable and there for me throughout the years. I've made lifelong connections at Cal Poly, and fortunately, some will be in the Bay Area with me!

EMPLOYMENT
Project Engineer at McCarthy Building Companies, San Jose, California



Ken Brickwedel Instructional Student Assistant Award

CAMRYN BERGER

HOMETOWN
Sonoma Valley, California

FAVORITE CAL POLY MEMORY
Competing at Reno with my friends and classmates, specifically when my Mixed-Use Team competed to see which team could build the tallest structure with tape, pasta, marshmallows and string. This was one of my favorite memories because we were all laughing and having a great time despite being stressed about the fact that we were in the middle of our competition and still had hours of work ahead of us.

EMPLOYMENT
Project Engineer at Pankow Builders, San Francisco, California



Ken Brickwedel Instructional Student Assistant Award

EMILIO T. CERVANTES

HOMETOWN
Santa Barbara, California

ADVICE TO FUTURE STUDENTS
Take full advantage of the gift we've been given: education. It's a privilege to be part of the best construction management program in the U.S. Do your best not to take it for granted. Say 'yes' to every opportunity that comes your way, and be a sponge throughout your four years in the program. Push yourself beyond your comfort zone and discover what you're truly capable of. You'll be surprised how much is possible. Most importantly, help others along the way and enjoy the journey.

POST-GRAD PLANS
Pursuing M.S. in structural engineering at Stanford University



Project Manager of the Year Award

MASON CHAMBERLIN

HOMETOWN

Granby, Colorado

FAVORITE CAL POLY MEMORY

Reno prep day. I enjoyed the interface of receiving feedback from alumni and industry members about the team's mock problem while also networking. Then after a long day of presentations, we all celebrated together at Milestone.

WHAT WILL YOU MISS MOST ABOUT CAL POLY?

I am going to miss having such a great community within 10 minutes of each other.

EMPLOYMENT

Project Engineer at W.E. O'Neil, San Diego, California



Project Manager of the Year Award

LUCCA PRACILIO

HOMETOWN

Orange, California

ADVICE TO FUTURE STUDENTS

Dive in headfirst. Talk to that club representative about what they do and how you can get involved. Talk to that classmate that you sit next to for help on homework or just to be friendly. Immerse yourself in CM, it'll pay dividends.

WHAT WILL YOU MISS MOST ABOUT CAL POLY?

Having the beach and the lovely college town at my disposal. The possibilities are endless for things to do, people to meet and good times to be had.

EMPLOYMENT

Field Engineer at Blach Construction, Orange, California



Project Manager of the Year Award

ANTHONY ROENSCH

HOMETOWN

San Jose, California

POST GRADUATE PLANS AND GOALS

I'd love to continue to spend time with the friends I've made over the past few years at Cal Poly, and no matter where my career takes me, I'd love to continue to spend time with my fellow graduates.

WHAT WILL YOU MISS MOST ABOUT CAL POLY?

I'll miss the local area, the community and most importantly, the people who I've been lucky enough to have minutes away from me for years. I'm in debt to the CM faculty and my peers for making me who I am today.

EMPLOYMENT

Project Engineer with McCarthy Building Companies, Bay Area, California



Most Valuable Player Award

MISAEEL GONZALEZ RAMIREZ

HOMETOWN

Rohnert Park, California

FAVORITE CAL POLY MEMORY

The incredible memories I've made both in and outside the construction management program. Through CM, I've built lifelong friendships and had the opportunity to travel across the country for competitions and conferences.

EMPLOYMENT

Project Engineer for self-perform concrete group of Plant Construction, San Francisco, California



Inclusive Excellence Award

DAYANA FLORES REYES

HOMETOWN
Oxnard, California

What Will You Miss Most About Cal Poly?
The community. I was actively trying to better my community, and I managed to do so by working at the Cal Poly Food Pantry and being part of the Hispanic-Serving Institution Task Force. I made valuable connections within and outside my major.

POST GRADUATE GOALS
I hope to go on the project manager side of construction and work my way up in a company.

EMPLOYMENT
Project Engineer at Balfour Beatty, Ventura, California



Inclusive Excellence Award

KARINA RUPLENAS

HOMETOWN
Santa Monica, California

FAVORITE CAL POLY MEMORY
The opportunity to form meaningful connections with such a diverse range of people. I’ve built friendships that I am confident will last well beyond graduation, developed close relationships with many of my professors and had the chance to network with various companies and industry professionals. I am leaving college with a much broader and richer circle than when I first arrived, and I have the Cal Poly community to thank for that.

EMPLOYMENT
Project Engineer at Turner Construction, San Diego, California



Outstanding Leadership Award

JACK RITCHIE

HOMETOWN
Bakersfield, California

FAVORITE CAL POLY MEMORY
Competing in Reno with my fellow ‘badass’ students and friends. Working hard as a team and beating other schools was such a rewarding and fun experience.

WHAT WILL YOU MISS MOST ABOUT CAL POLY?
I’ll definitely miss the funny, exciting and loyal friends I’ve made over the years.

EMPLOYMENT
Project Engineer for JM Construction, Paso Robles, California

2026 ACTIVITIES

- JAN. 29**
Semi-Annual CM Job Fair
Alex Madonna Expo Center, SLO, CA

JAN. 30
ASC Region 6&7 Mock Presentations
Cal Poly Campus, SLO, CA

FEB. 4 7
Associated Schools of Construction Competition
Sparks, Nevada

FEB. 5
CMAC Mixer at the Associated Schools of Construction Competition
Sparks, Nevada

FEB. 17-19
National Association of Home Builders Competition
Orlando, FL

APRIL 9-11
Cal Poly Open House
Cal Poly Campus, SLO, CA

JUNE 5
CMAC All Hands Meeting
Cal Poly Campus, SLO, CA

JUNE 5
Construction Management Senior Banquet & Scholarship Awards Ceremony
Location TBD

JUNE 6
Associated Students of Construction Management Golf Tournament
Location TBD

JUNE 13-14
Spring Commencement
Cal Poly Campus, SLO, CA

SUMMER 2026
Carpenters Apprentice Celebrations
NorCal and SoCal

AUG. 24
Classes Begin

FROM WORKSHOP TO DEAN

It is an honor to step into the role of dean of Cal Poly’s College of Architecture and Environmental Design (CAED). I am humbled and excited to join this extraordinary community, and I want to share a bit about my journey and deep connection to construction.

Although I earned degrees in architecture from the University of Cincinnati and Rice University, construction has always been at the heart of my personal and professional life. I grew up in a household of “making.” My father was a mechanical engineer and avid woodworker. I spent countless hours in fabrication shops and woodworking spaces, learning tools, techniques and above all, the joy of building.

Before college, I worked several summers in the trades, as a roofer and a framer, experiences that grounded me in the realities of construction and instilled a respect for the craft.

I have found my greatest satisfaction on construction sites. Through construction administration and collaboration with exceptional construction managers, I came to appreciate their depth of knowledge and practical wisdom. These conversations taught me as much about the built environment as my formal studies. Later, as an academic researcher, I carried that passion into full-scale making, pursuing research in biomaterials and advanced fabrication, collaborating with inspiring partners across making disciplines and learning from their expertise.

This lifelong passion makes me especially proud to join a college as dynamic as the CAED, where design, engineering and construction come together in a truly unique way in higher education. The Construction Management (CM) Department embodies this spirit of excellence. The program provides students not only with technical expertise but also with a profound appreciation for how materials and systems come together to shape the built environment.

CONSTRUCTION INNOVATOR STAFF

Submit comments at ireyno00@calpoly.edu. | **Project Coordinator:** Jenay Reynolds-Sibbach | **Content Manager:** Jeong Woo | **Photography:** Josef Kasperovich; courtesy photos | **Writing and Copy Editing:** Val Altesman & Jo Ann Lloyd | **Publication Design:** Rachell Smith



🕒 Marc Swackhamer, incoming dean of Cal Poly’s College of Architecture and Environmental Design, began his duties on Aug. 18. He pledges hands-on leadership, collaboration, and growth for CAED.

Now, in my first quarter as dean, I am energized by what I see in the CM Department. The program’s track record is remarkable, and its future is even brighter. Under the leadership of Department Head Jeong Woo, powered by the dedication of world-class faculty and staff, and inspired by the energy and talent of our students, we are well positioned to continue elevating the program’s impact and reputation on a national and global scale.

I am deeply grateful for the warm welcome I’ve received and for the opportunity to serve as dean of this incredible college. The strength of the CAED, and particularly the CM program, lies in its people. Together, we will build on this legacy of excellence and push forward into an exciting future.

MARC SWACKHAMER | DEAN COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN



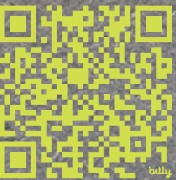
BUILDING A LEGACY

Donate to the Construction Management Fund for Excellence to build the next generation

Learning skills in the classroom is a great first step, but there’s a feeling of accomplishment when you’re able to take those skills out into the world. Cal Poly’s practice of Learn By Doing ensures that each student is prepared to make that leap and reach their goals.

Your monetary gift to the Cal Poly construction management (CM) program will help provide the latest equipment, support hands-on labs and offset the cost of student travel to jobsites. It will ensure that current and future students continue to learn and grow from the best CM program in the nation.

▲ **THE AMALFITANO FAMILY** decided to memorialize their Cal Poly and Construction Management legacy through a personalized plaque. This plaque in the CM Founder’s Plaza proudly displays the completion of bachelor’s degrees for both Isidoro (CM, ‘21) and Sofia (CM, ‘24).



DONATE NOW to the Construction Management Fund for Excellence by scanning the QR code or go to bit.ly/3BAV3JM.

To make a more personalized gift, like a plaque displayed in our Founder’s Plaza, please contact CM department Head Jeong Woo at jwoo21@calpoly.edu or 805 756 5493. We thank you for your support.



CAL POLY

Construction Management

COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE
AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

California Polytechnic State University
1 Grand Avenue
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407



\$15,000

IN FUNDS FOR SR. PROJECTS

Thanks to Construction Management Advisory Council (CMAC), \$15,000 supported five hands-on senior projects in 2024-25. Highlights include Skip the Grid, which installed 40 solar lighting and refrigeration systems in the Navajo Nation; the Cat Condos modular suite at Thousand Hills (Aeon Combs, Anders Ruud, Jacob Marano); tables and benches for City Farm SLO (Aiden Blackburn, Antonio Nunez); a greenhouse project with The Land Conservancy (Dylan Glass, Thomas Ashworth, Jesus Vazquez); and Josh Higginson presenting mass timber research at 61st Annual ASC International Conference in Calgary.