

CENTRAL TO THE FUTURE

NEW BUILDING TO REVITALIZE CAMPUS CORE

BY LEAH KOLT
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ILLUSTRATIONS BY CAL POLY ALUMNI DOUG AUSTIN
(ARCH '71) AND DAVE STELLAR (ARCH '82), BOTH OF
AUSTIN VEUM ROBBINS PARTNERS IN SAN DIEGO

WHERE DO YOU GO after you've raised \$264 million in the largest fund-raising campaign ever conducted by a public master's university in the United States?

This was the dilemma faced by President Warren J. Baker in 2004, at the conclusion of Cal Poly's Centennial Campaign.

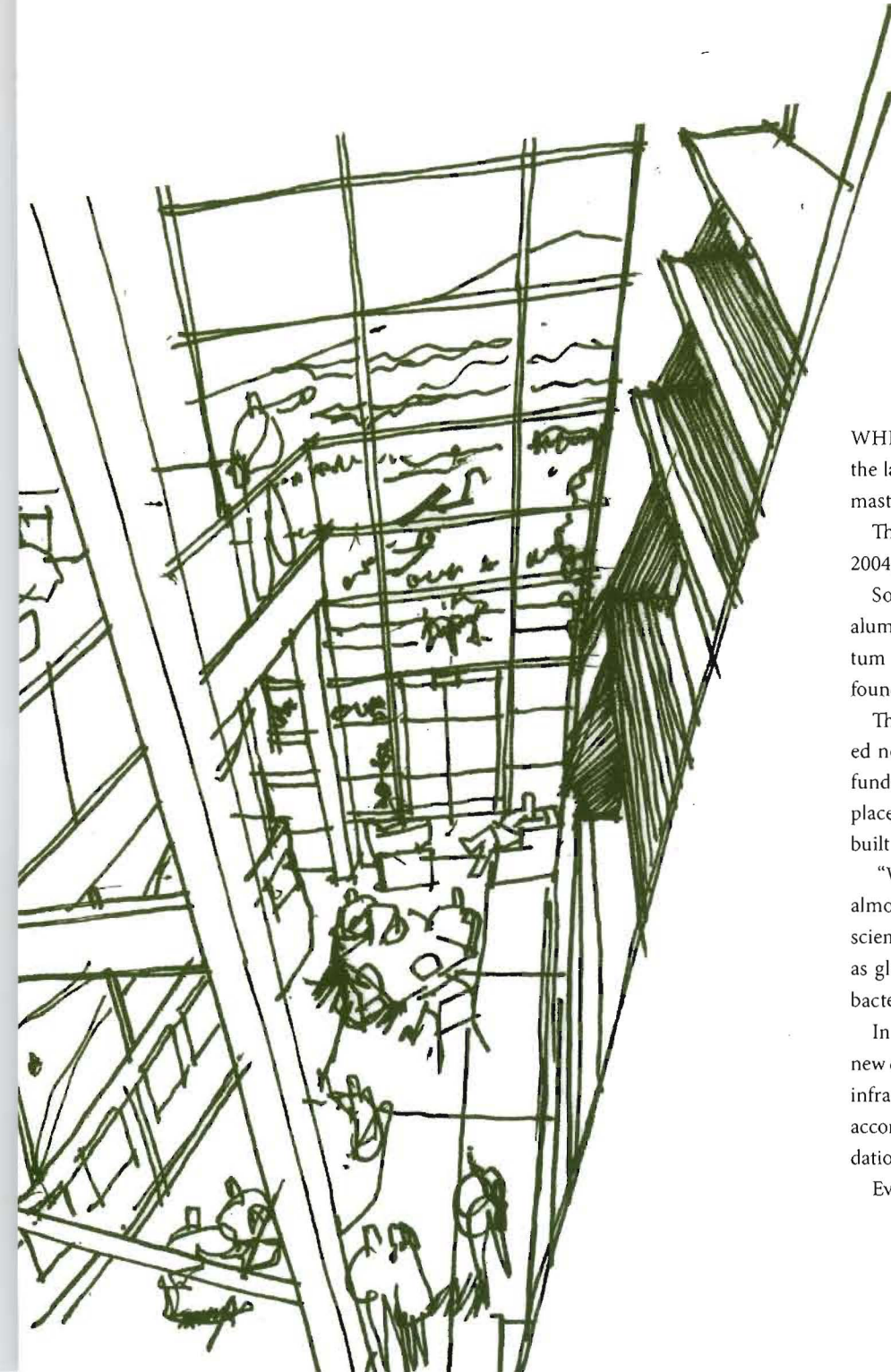
So he appealed to some of the university's most successful alumni and supporters to join him in continuing the momentum generated by the campaign, inviting them to serve as founding board members of a new philanthropic foundation.

The new board members for the Cal Poly Foundation wasted no time in designating as their top priority the raising of funds for a new Center for Science and Mathematics, to replace the campus's aging "spider" complex, a science facility built some 50 years ago.

"With new challenges to our society's way of life emerging almost daily, the Foundation Board members recognize that science is the best hope for finding solutions to such problems as global warming, energy shortages and antibiotic-resistant bacteria," Baker explained.

In addition, the Board was motivated by the belief that the new center will revitalize the campus core, as well as provide the infrastructure for planned growth in the polytechnic majors, according to **Gary Bloom** (CSC '82), who serves as the Foundation Board chair.

Every student on campus will take classes in this new building,



“Students come to Cal Poly already knowing they want to be a scientist or engineer. So Cal Poly doesn’t have to inspire them to major in these fields so much as to provide the learn-by-doing environment where they can fulfill their creativity through experimentation, lab work, senior projects and other hands-on activities.”

BURT RUTAN ('65) CAL POLY AEROSPACE GRADUATE

Developer of SpaceShipOne, the world's first privately built aircraft to reach space and winner of the \$10-million Ansari X PRIZE



where 75 percent of the teaching done will be for students from colleges other than the College of Science and Mathematics, including 25 percent of the engineering curriculum, he said.

Visualizing students collaborating with each other and with faculty in a state-of-the-art facility excites Phil Bailey, dean of the College of Science and Mathematics. “A defining landmark at the nexus of the academic, residential and recreational areas of campus, the center will use only one-third of the current architectural footprint,” he said.

Such spatial economies will allow the building to be surrounded by a new park-like area. These exterior vistas will combine with interior spaces to create an inviting environment for study, reflection and exploration, he added.

The passage of a \$102-million general obligation bond by California taxpayers last November paved the way for the planning and design phase of the new center. “The state is funding a large percent of the bricks and mortar, but it is the public-private partnership that will create the margin of excellence,” said Sandra Ogren, vice president for advancement.

More than \$15 million in private funding has been donated so far, almost \$3 million of that raised by the Board, with a number

of the Board members themselves pledging major gifts. “It’s remarkable how the Board members have personally reached out to prospective donors, and a number of them have been generous with their financial support, too,” Ogren added.

Their enthusiasm is infectious. Local architect/investor and Cal Poly grad **Rob Rossi (BAR '75)** has also pledged a major gift. “Private support will help make the center a national model of undergraduate education, incorporating futuristic learning technologies with research opportunities to stimulate collaboration and interdisciplinary work,” he said.

For example, studio classrooms will efficiently pair lecture and lab activities to enable students and faculty to combine hands-on activities with intellectual analysis, using classrooms that integrate networking, digital and audio-visual technologies.

Student computers will interface with the latest scientific equipment and will be networked to facilitate communication among students, faculty and lab instructors.

Privately funded research facilities will provide undergraduates with access to additional instruments, software and materials and expertise – benefits usually reserved for graduate students. □

For more information on opportunities to give to the center, please contact Special Gifts Director Anne Harris at 805-756-7468 or aharris@calpoly.edu. Or go online to www.givetocsm.calpoly.edu.