

## **\$1.5 Million Gift From Robert And Natalie Englekirk To Support Structural Engineering Research And Education Research Priorities**

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Denine Hagen

The University of California, San Diego announced today a gift of \$1.5 million from structural engineering industry leader Robert E. Englekirk and his wife Natalie to support research and fellowships and scholarships at the UCSD Jacobs School of Engineering.

Robert Englekirk is the founder of the Englekirk Companies, which has been responsible for the structural design of more than \$100 billion worth of construction projects including two Los Angeles landmarks: the billion-dollar Getty Center and the Hollywood and Highland entertainment and shopping complex with its centerpiece Kodak Theatre. Englekirk was also the structural engineer for San Diego's Emerald Plaza Center and Horton Plaza shopping complex.

The Englekirks' commitment is primarily directed toward work at UCSD's new structural research center located on Pomerado Road and I-15, eight miles east of UCSD's La Jolla campus. Their gift leverages nearly \$17 million in federal and state support for three new testing facilities including the world's first outdoor shake table, the country's largest soil-structure interaction facility, and the world's first blast simulator for studying the effects of bomb blasts and testing technologies to harden structures against terrorist bomb attacks. In recognition of their gift, the campus has named the center the Robert and Natalie Englekirk Structural Engineering Center (Englekirk Center).

"It has always been Natalie's and my intention to give back and we have been looking for the right opportunity," said Englekirk. "We chose to support UCSD and the Jacobs School of Engineering because they have made structural engineering a priority. UCSD is deeply committed to educating the next generation of structural engineering leaders and to promoting meaningful research."

"We are so honored to receive this generous gift from Robert and Natalie Englekirk that will certainly play an invaluable role in structural engineering research at UCSD," said Chancellor Marye Anne Fox. "Additionally, it means a great deal to receive a gift from one of our own professors and speaks volumes to the excellence of this institution."

The Englekirk Center is an expansion of the Charles Lee Powell Structural Research Laboratories at UCSD, which are known world-wide for large-scale seismic safety tests of buildings and bridges.

In addition to his personal contribution, Robert Englekirk has engaged 45 companies and organizations among southern California's building industry to participate on an advisory board and to contribute over \$1 million to support research at UCSD's Englekirk Center.

"Our board members feel a professional obligation to the people of Southern California to make the buildings we construct as safe as possible. This is the first time our industry has had an opportunity to participate in applied research that will have a real impact on the practice of structural engineering," said Englekirk. "We are convinced

that through full-scale experimental testing, we can improve our design methodologies, and as a consequence produce safer and more economical buildings."

One of the first industry-supported projects at the Englekirk Center will be a full-scale seven-story concrete building which will be constructed on the outdoor shake table. The building will be subjected to ground motions simulating recorded earthquakes and will be put through a range of tests over the next several months. The goal is to improve on the analytical models used to guide design of medium-rise residential buildings such as hotels and apartments. Testing is planned to commence with a demonstration during the April 7 dedication of the Englekirk Center.

"This generous gift from Bob and Natalie Englekirk will allow us to attract some of the very brightest structural engineering students to UCSD and will further strengthen our position as one of the world's leading structural research centers," said Frieder Seible, dean of the Jacobs School and founding chair of the UCSD Structural Engineering Department.

Robert Englekirk is an adjunct professor of structural engineering at UCSD and serves on the Jacobs School Dean's Council of Advisors. Since retiring from the day to day running of his companies in 2001, Englekirk has spent much of his time teaching and writing. He is the author of several seminal works in structural design and earthquake-resistant engineering.

The Englekirks' gift contributes to the \$1 billion fund-raising goal of The Campaign for UCSD: *Imagine What's Next*. Campaign priorities include supporting students and faculty through scholarships, fellowships and endowed chairs; creating and expanding academic programs; funding research endeavors and health sciences advancements; and providing innovation funds and unrestricted support. To date, UCSD has raised \$704.1 million; the campaign is scheduled to conclude in June 2007.

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