News Release

College of Engineering Plans Opening of Lockheed Martin Mechanical Engineering Lab

When Ahsan Choudhuri Ph.D., Professor of Mechanical Engineering, began his position as Chair of the Department in 2010, he knew that to build the department a revamp of laboratories was needed. He also knew that with the cuts higher education is experiencing the resources needed were not going to be available from the state of Texas. Fortunately Dr. Choudhuri had the benefit of a relationship with Lockheed Martin that Dean Richard Schoephoerster had been building since he arrived in 2007.

Lockheed Martin, a Fortune 100 global security company with over 126,000 employees worldwide, has actively recruited engineers from the College of Engineering for years and recognized the quality of the graduates. These new engineers also reflected the changing demographics Lockheed Martin was seeing in the U.S. The problem is there just are not enough of them.

Concerned about a workforce largely close to retirement and a dearth of young engineers to replace them, Frank Cappuccio, now retired Lockheed Martin Executive VP, working with the Dean and faculty from the College of Engineering began a strategy aimed at integrating progressive companies into the education and research mission of the College of Engineering. Mr. Cappuccio recognized technology based companies need to play an active role in the attraction and education of young people to engineering if the U.S. was to maintain its innovation edge. The result is a partnership plan between the College of Engineering and Lockheed Martin to attract, inspire, educate and graduate more students interested in technology based careers.

As part of this multi-faceted plan, Lockheed Martin is contributing $600,000 to develop and equip the “Lockheed Martin Mechanical Engineering Lab”. The lab features state of the art learning stations for student engineers to experiment, test and evaluate the engineering concepts covered in their undergraduate courses. In addition to the equipment Lockheed Martin worked with Dr. Choudhuri to develop an inspirational environment with the installation of displays and models from the company’s portfolio of current and future products. Dr. Choudhuri said, “This laboratory demonstrates the impact progressive companies can have in attracting and educating an engineering workforce reflective of the 21st century demographics.” He notes “the Lockheed Martin Mechanical Engineering Laboratory is a foundation facility for a research enterprise that takes us to Tier-One.”

It is Lockheed Martin’s hope that when other similarly inclined companies, foundations and organizations visit the new lab they too will become integral partners in developing a technical workforce with a 21st century demographic profile.
On Wednesday, November 16 at 11 A.M. the College of Engineering will host a Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the new Lockheed Martin Mechanical Engineering Lab. The event will begin in the Lobby of the College of Engineering.

Media and the public are invited to attend the opening, visit the Lockheed Martin Mechanical Engineering Lab and see the new learning stations in use.

For more information contact Ingrid Wright at iiaguirre@utep.edu  Phone: 915-747-5971 engineering.utep.edu