

Cal Poly Pomona Reveals \$79M Student Center

Local firms behind project say undulating roof is unique

Earlier this month, a \$79 million student services building debuted on Cal Poly Pomona's campus. The 138,000-square-foot structure featuring a cantilevered roof of perforated aluminum draping over the sides, was designed by **CO Architects**, of Los Angeles' Miracle Mile district. **C.W. Driver Cos.**, a Pasadena construction firm celebrating its centennial year, was the prime construction contractor.

The three-story building was dedicated on Jan. 18; it consists of two wings and will house the university's financial aid office, admissions department, registrar's office and the president's office, among other administrative services for the university's 26,000 students. Most of these offices will be relocating in the next few months from an older administrative building, half of which will be permanently shuttered.

"This stunning facility epitomizes Cal Poly Pomona's standing as a student-focused university," President **Soraya Coley** said in an emailed statement.

The most unique feature is the building's undulating roof.

"Something like this has never been done before anywhere in the world," said **David Amundson**, project executive at C.W. Driver Cos.

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CONSTRUCTION APPRENTICES

A new class began at Los Angeles International Airport Jan. 22 to train local residents for construction-related jobs.

The job training is focused on skills needed by contractors working on the \$14 billion modernization program in and around the airport. The class has 34 people enrolled as of Jan. 17.

The HireLAX program is part of the project labor agreement that Los Angeles World



Roof Rolls: Cal Poly Pomona building designed by CO Architects and constructed by C.W. Driver Cos.

Airports – the city agency that runs LAX – and the **Los Angeles/Orange County Building Trades Council** hammered out several years ago and that governs all the capital improvement projects at the airport. The agreement requires contractors to hire at least 30 percent of their workforce for these projects from the local area. Pasadena-based engineering/infrastructure firm **Parsons Corp.** administers the program, which includes a series of eight-week training classes.

"The mission of HireLAX is to maximize the economic impact of the airport's multi-billion-dollar capital improvement program through the inclusion of local workers who are reflective of the diversity of Los Angeles, thereby increasing the supply of local skilled craft labor to meet the market demand," **Dan Sloan**, vice president of labor relations for Parsons, said in an emailed statement.

LAWA Chief Executive **Deborah Flint** said in her annual recap newsletter sent out earlier this month that 82 trainees have graduated from all the previous classes.

According to figures provided by LAWLA, a total of 55 graduates have been hired to date by nearly three dozen contractors working on LAX capital projects. City of Industry-based **Morrow-Meadows Corp.**, which provides construction services for telecommunications networks, led the way with six hires. **McCarthy Building Cos. Inc.**, of St. Louis, has hired five graduates, while Denver-based **PCL Construction Services Inc.** has hired four.

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FOOTHILL GOLD LINE UPDATE

The Foothill Gold Line Construction Au-

ENGINEERING, CONSTRUCTION & INFRASTRUCTURE

HOWARD FINE



thority is preparing to request new bids for its scaled-back rail project, but it's still not entirely certain just how far this next phase of the project will extend.

The project was initially budgeted for about \$1.5 billion for a 12-mile line from the current eastern terminus in Glendora to Montclair in San Bernardino County. But rising construction costs resulted in bids coming in substantially higher – about \$2.1 billion. So in November, the authority announced it was splitting the project into two phases: a fully funded 8-mile stretch from Glendora to La Verne and postponement of a second phase from La Verne to Montclair until further funding could be secured. A new bid request would be prepared for just the first phase.

But that first phase might now include one more station in Pomona, the authority's Chief Executive **Habib Balian** said in an email newsletter sent Jan. 18. Balian said the authority and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority recently identified \$133 million in cost reductions. Furthermore, he said, a committee of the county transportation agency board agreed on Jan. 17 to identify another \$97 million in additional funds or cost savings that would allow the building out of the first phase to Pomona.

When the revised bid requests finally do go out, two bid teams are currently in the running: a joint venture of Century City-based **AECOM** and Alameda-based **Stacy and Witbeck Inc.**, and a joint venture of Kiewit Corp. (a subsidiary of Omaha, Neb.-based **Peter Kiewit Sons Inc.**) and Pasadena-based Parsons Corp.

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Network Next Lands \$3.1 Million Seed Funding

Bitkraft leads round for startup looking to boost gaming internet speed

Network Next, a video game-focused software developer based in Santa Monica, emerged from stealth mode Jan. 23 to announce a \$3.1 million seed round led by Santa Monica and Germany-based **Bitkraft Esports Ventures**.

The raise brings the company's total funding to \$4.4 million.

Bitkraft finalized a \$125 million venture capital fund Jan. 16 after previously raising \$18.5 million in 2017 for e-sports incubation and investment.

Network Next believes its new high-speed network can revitalize the gaming industry. Game developers that partner with Network Next integrate its software into new or existing games, and it runs in the background to find the fastest way through internet service providers to get data from one server to the next, decreasing latency.

"We believe that game traffic should be prioritized above other internet traffic and could not be more thrilled to partner with investors who share that belief," said Chief Executive **Glenn Fiedler**. "With this new investment, we'll be able to grow our team and continue the development of our technology,

which will ensure that we can deliver on our vision."

Boston-based **Bain Capital Ventures** and London-based **Velo Partners** contributed to the funding round. So did San Diego-based game developer **Psyonix**, which also signed on as Network Next's first client.

"We were motivated to invest in Network Next because of Glenn's experience in the deep trenches of network code architecture and development in multiplayer games. Not only has he built a great team around him, but he has a thorough understanding of the challenges game developers face when it comes to the network side of their service operations," said Bitkraft Founding Partner **Jens Hilgers**. "Bitkraft believes that Network Next is solving a very real problem for developers of multiplayer games, and most critically, for anyone operating an esports game."

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PSC BIOTECH UPS SOFTWARE GAME

Pomona-based **PSC Biotech Corp.**, which makes software for biotech companies, announced an update to its document management software.

The Adaptive Compliance Engine, nicknamed ACE, helps life science companies manage projects, reports and file regulatory and internal records. ACE now offers applica-

tion programming interface (API) capabilities, which will allow use of the engine across all software platforms, increasing the tasks it can complete.

"The inclusion of a powerful API was a huge goal of ours in order for our clients to integrate ACE into their other best of breed life sciences enterprise IT applications," said Chief Executive **John Clapham**.



Clapham

PSC's ACE software can now fulfill manufacturing applications, supply chain management, product life cycle tracking, accounting and research tasks in

addition to its other duties.

Executive Director of Business Development **Robert Kum** said clients requested the addition of the application interface, adding PSC is "excited to announce this is now available."

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NEW FACES AT DRINKS

Drinks Holdings Inc., headquartered in Glendale, announced a suite of new hires Jan. 10, four months after it raised a Series B of \$15 million. The company runs an e-com-

SILICON BEACH REPORT

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merce platform for wine drinkers.

Joining the team is newly hired Chief Financial Officer **Kristopher Scott**, who previously worked as chief financial officer for Culver City-based **Topson Downs of California Inc.** for four years.

Peter Wolfert, Drinks' new chief technology officer, begins his tenure at the company after serving in the same role for **Shopper Exchange One Market**, a developer of software for retailers and brand partners.

Drinks hired **Kelly Martin** as chief compliance officer, a promotion from her previous role as vice president of compliance and regulatory affairs. Martin oversees the alcoholic beverage delivery firm's licensing, compliance with regulations and distribution. Before Drinks, Martin worked as the director of compliance for United Kingdom-based **Direct Wines Ltd.**

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