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STEM education

## Crafting the next maker generation

### UC Berkeley's new design lab connects students, private sector

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Tech companies in the Bay Area may soon have the chance to design the next wave of the maker movement.

UC Berkeley's College of Engineering is giving Bay Area companies the chance to mentor and mold the newest talent coming out of the UC system.

In August, the engineering school opened the headquarters for the new Jacobs Institute for Design Innovation in the 24,000-square-foot Jacobs Hall. The haven for "makers" and "tinkerers" has five design studios and was created to give artists and engineers from all over Berkeley's campus a space to collaborate and innovate. The hall is equipped with shop and hand tools, A/V equipment, laser cutters and rapid prototyping equipment including a 3-D printer.

The classes the institute offers center around design and real-world application: a class called "Challenge Labs" has students work in simulated startups to create products that would further a social cause. Another class explores the process of turning 3-D designs into inexpensive parts intended for rapid production. The building's opening comes as the entire University of California system puts an



UC Berkeley's new design lab.

increased emphasis on entrepreneurship and business partnerships.

“The ethos of entrepreneurship runs through this,” said David Dornfeld, a professor of mechanical engineering at UC Berkeley and the faculty director of the Jacobs Institute. He spoke of the “insurgent groups of innovators” on Berkeley’s campus, and how the Jacobs Institute “will give them another tool to build out some of those visions or those dreams.”

Jacobs Hall has a price tag of just under \$25 million. The largest donation to its capital campaign, of \$20 million, was made by Paul Jacobs, executive chairman of Qualcomm Inc. and president of the Paul and Stacy Jacobs Foundation. During a 2013 speech at the Clinton Global Initiative America meeting, Jacobs said the institute would help provide “the integrated set of skills students will need to create our future.”

Jacobs’ largesse dovetails with the vision laid out in 2014 by University of California President Janet Napolitano, who has noted the success of the UC system’s entrepreneurial talent, including the \$5 billion in venture capital that went to 181 UC startups between 2005 and 2013.

Companies including San Rafael-based Autodesk, National Instruments and General Motors have also contributed to the Jacobs Institute capital campaign.

Bay Area companies will have the chance to send their staff to mentor students. The companies who participate, Dornfeld said, “can have some input at the table determining what we should be talking about.”

Peter Hoseman, an associate professor at UC Berkeley teaching one of the first classes at the Jacobs Institute this fall, believes it will be attractive to companies seeking talent. “Particularly in Silicon Valley or the Bay Area, where everything happens at such a fast pace, design and innovation obviously are a driving factor,” he said.

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