

\$5 million boost for UCSC engineering



Mantey

New school will bear name of key donor Jack Baskin

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SAN JOSE — Recollecting the sacrifice of his poor Russian immigrant parents who ensured his education, Santa Cruz philanthropist Jack Baskin said he was overjoyed to help establish the UC Santa Cruz School of Engineering.

An aeronautical engineer by training and a retired successful housing developer who has generously donated his energy and money to numerous community projects, Baskin is the largest benefactor UC Santa Cruz has seen.

UCSC Chancellor M.R.C. Greenwood announced the Jack Baskin School Of

Engineering for the first time Friday at a Silicon Valley penthouse banquet and press affair, where she thanked him for his latest gift — a cool \$5 million.

The school, which languished from lack of funding for more than two decades, will begin formally accepting stu-



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Jack Baskin, center, donated \$5 million to help get the UC Santa Cruz School of Engineering off the ground.

UCSC
1990-1991

dents for the fall semester. The school will incorporate about 450 computer science and computer engineering students already at the university and new electrical engineering and applied engineering mathematics departments.

Ultimately, plans call for the school to grow to about 90 faculty, 500 graduate students and 1,200 undergraduates.

Baskin said he's wanted to do it for years. "What I'm doing in some sense is paying back the community, the university and the country for what they did for me," he said. "... It's something I feel I'm paying back."

Greenwood described Baskin as a compassionate "self-made" man who stood out for his philanthropy because he was willing to give to the university despite never personally benefiting from it as a student. "Jack Baskin is an example of the type of immigrants that made this country," Greenwood said.

The new school will not increase the university's overall enrollment plans and will provide much graduate instruction to Silicon Valley students at its extension facilities located there and at San Jose State University.

While competing with other nearby institutions, UCSC is trying to complement existing programs at other institutions, Greenwood said. Noting the vocal support of the school by SJSU President Robert Caret, who also spoke at the press conference, Greenwood said there's always been a lot more cooperation among schools than they get credit for.

The engineering school will eventually include additional emphasis in areas such as software engineering, engineering management and molecular biotechnology.

"This will mean a future for students they would otherwise not have," said Greenwood. The chancellor said she hoped to use the money to establish a \$20 million endowment. It will, however, take a while for the school to prove itself and build confidence of other donors, she said.

In addition to Baskin's \$5 million and a promise of \$2 million in state funding, UC Regent David S. Lee, chief executive officer of CMC Industries in Santa Clara, pledged \$100,000 to start a scholarship fund.

At the press conference, crowded with politicians, heads of Santa Cruz and Silicon Valley companies, and educators, Baskin recollected his mother's regret at not having an education and said his father, a watchmaker, had made sure he had a trade to fall back upon.

Although his father eventually earned a high school diploma by attending night school, Baskin said he was the only one in his extended family to attend college. College was \$24 a semester and Baskin worked to help his family pay tuition at the University of Colorado and New York University. He eventually became a successful housing developer in Los Angeles, in an era when putting up as many as four houses a day was commonplace. He built schools and other buildings as well, moving to the Peninsula in 1967, where he lived until moving to Santa Cruz in the early '70s.

Since then he has prodded many projects along with financial gifts that helped the university's Long

Marine Lab, the Elena Baskin Child Care Center, the Cultural Council, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, the Cabrillo Music Festival, the Santa Cruz County Symphony and many other projects.

Baskin and Patrick D. Mantey, chairman of the UC Santa Cruz Computer Engineering Department who will take over as founding dean of the new school, have long pushed behind the scenes to make the school a reality. Baskin gave \$1 million in 1986, creating the Jack Baskin Center for Computer Engineering and Information Sciences, which helped pay for costly research laboratories studying artificial intelligence, computer animation and image processing. He thought that would be the catalyst for the school, which has always been planned for the university. Economic problems, however, delayed the implementation of the proposal several times.

Baskin told them he wanted to see it happen in his lifetime and offered more financial backing.

Pieces fell into place — the upturn in the state economy that revitalized the Silicon Valley economy as well as strong support from then-UCSC Chancellor Karl Pister, UCSC Chancellor M.R.C. Greenwood and University of California President Richard Atkinson finally resurrected the project and pushed it through.

Baskin, 77, traced the latest turning point to two years ago, when he, Mantey and then-Chancellor Karl Pister were talking about the proposed school. "I started pushing because he (Pister) was leaving," Pister wrote a letter to the University of California president requesting final approval for a new school "... Karl got behind it and that really did it."