

CU-Boulder, Lockheed team up to inspire next-generation engineers

By Drew Albee

For the Camera

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High-school students and undergrads looking forward to a life in engineering converged on the University of Colorado's Boulder campus Wednesday for a series of tours and a special mentoring event sponsored by Lockheed Martin.

Part of National Engineers Week, the inaugural CU-Boulder and Lockheed Martin Mentor Lunch aimed to inspire and motivate a future generation of engineers, while celebrating the contributions of today's engineering professionals and promoting engineering in general.

The event featured "speed mentoring" and tours of various engineering facilities on campus.

"Really, it's just a great opportunity — a wonderful enrichment and professional development opportunity for high school students and for our current students," said Amanda Parker, director of access and recruiting for CU's College of Engineering and Applied Science.



Dorian Ferrer, of Denver's South High School, looks over design drawings during a tour of the Idea Forge at the University of Colorado's Engineering Center on Wednesday. The tour was part of a National Engineers Week event put on with Lockheed Martin. See more photos at dailycamera.com. (Paul Aiken / Staff Photographer)

About 25 high school students from across the Front Range and from as far away as Illinois, all of whom already have been accepted to CU, participated in Wednesday's event, looking to learn more about their future college and what it has to offer.

"I hope to get a little more information on what the school has to offer facility-wise," said Emily Howard, a senior at Horizon High School in Thornton. "What labs they have, what you can do, what you can create, what resources you have, stuff like that."

"I'd like to see what the engineering system here at CU is like and how the buildings are," said Spencer Koelsh, a

senior at Fossil Ridge High School in Fort Collins. "Also, I get to talk with several engineers from Lockheed Martin."

The high school students joined several CU undergraduates to meet with engineers from Lockheed Martin during three 15-minute Q&A sessions.

During these mentoring sessions, students and engineers discussed what to expect from their potential engineering careers. Many of the mentoring engineers were more than happy to give their input and advice to the next generation.

"I'm hoping to maybe serve what my mentor did to me, to you guys — to help pay it back, and maybe turn on those switches for you guys," Andrew Tsoi, a software engineer at Lockheed Martin, said to the students during one of the sessions,

If the speed-mentoring sessions didn't turn switches for the students, organizers hoped that tours of various on-campus facilities would.

Engineering student volunteers led tours of the Integrated Teaching and Learning Laboratory, the Colorado Space Grant Consortium and the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences Idea Forge — a sizable, cross-disciplinary, collaborative workspace for students.

During the tours, volunteers also offered guidance to the future students.

"The cool thing about this building is it gives you all the tools you need to be successful," Kailee Cox, a junior mechanical engineering major, said of the Integrated Teaching and Learning Laboratory.

National Engineers Week, which runs through Friday, is intended to promote engineering and inspire students of all ages to pursue careers in engineering.

"We try to bring engineering to life, so these guys have an idea of what engineering offerings there are after high school into college," said Nick Cady, an engineering teacher at Centaurus High School in Lafayette who brought a group of students to the event. "And opportunities like this allow the kids to really interact with professionals in the field and see the university settings and what the university has to offer.

"So it's a day like this that can bring it to life — that's why we're here."



Lucas Calvert, a CU Aerospace Engineering student leads from left to right Quintanilla West, Jose Salgado, and Andrew Cavallero all from West Aurora High School near Chicago on a tour of the Idea Forge on the University of Colorado Boulder Campus Wednesday. A group of high school students were taking tours of the engineering facilities on the campus as part of a collaboration with Lockheed Martin as part of the 2016 National Engineers Week. For more photos go to www.dailycamera.com (Paul Aiken/ Staff Photographer) Feb 24 2016