On Campus

Engineering School to Create 20 New Endowed Professorships

Winter 2010-11



Sculpture by Constantin Meunier.

The Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science has imminent plans to create 20 new endowed professorships, nearly doubling the school's current total of 23 endowed faculty positions. Engineering dean Feniosky Peña-Mora made the announcement on October 21.

Ten of the new endowments, valued collectively at $30 million, are being funded by gifts from engineering alumni and their families. These gifts were inspired by a matching program created by a large donation from University Trustee Armen Avanessians '83SEAS and his wife, Janette.

In addition to the 10 professorships being funded through the Avanessianses' matching program, the engineering school is establishing another 10 endowed professorships using separate funds.

According to Peña-Mora, many of the professorships will be held by newly recruited faculty; others will be given to current Columbia professors in recognition of their outstanding research and teaching. The first recipients will be announced in early 2011.

Peña-Mora says the endowed positions will enable the school to significantly increase the overall size of its faculty. (The engineering school, like many Columbia programs, has long been constrained in its growth by a lack of laboratory and office space. But starting this winter, many engineering professors are moving into the Northwest Corner Building, Columbia's new interdisciplinary science center at the corner of Broadway and 120th Street.)

"We undertook this expansion of our faculty on an incredibly ambitious timeline, during one of the most challenging economic periods in recent years, making our accomplishment all the more remarkable," says Peña-Mora. "I would like to thank, from the bottom of my heart, our steadfast alumni and supporters for their confidence that a large investment in Columbia's outstanding engineering faculty was truly an investment in the future of the school."



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