

## Elementary School Students Visit DPTC



The Cal Poly Learn by Doing Lab (LBDL) played host to a weeklong hands-on science camp for 20 rising 5th and 6th grade students from Pacheco Elementary School, and helped train future teachers emerging from Cal Poly. The goal of the summer camp was to give kids, mostly potential first generation college students, an opportunity to explore both science and college. Kids spent their mornings engaged with inquiry based physical science activities ranging from atoms and molecules to electricity and magnetism. They spent their early afternoons developing and testing independent research questions which they ultimately presented to their parents and peers in a scientific poster session. During the latter part of the afternoons, students were given an opportunity to explore the Cal Poly campus and see what life on a college campus was like. Students toured the campus, visited the dorms and saw real college classrooms. However, the highlight of the week of campus excursions was a visit to the Dairy Products Technology Center and Dr. Rafael Jimenez. At the DPTC students tied their understanding of phases of matter (the science content focus for the day) to the science of Dairy Foods. Students made their very own butter from Cal Poly Cream while learning about milk on a whole new level and "studied" phase transitions while sampling some of Cal Poly's own ice cream. Many kids remarked that this was their



favorite excursion of the week. It is these exciting (and tasty) ties to the real world that help students grow not only as scientist and potential college students, but as critical thinkers.

The LBDL summer camp was offered free of charge to all kids. It was supported by contributions from across the Cal Poly Campus and the greater San Luis Obispo region. This included generous support from Pacheco Elementary School, the Cal Poly College of Science and Mathematics, the Cal Poly Office of the President and the Cal Poly Division of Student Affairs. During the academic year, the LBDL hosts to approximately 2800 visiting elementary and middle school students, providing more than 5000 hours of rich hands-on inquiry-based science and engineering content in a college setting.

