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**CONCRETE INDUSTRY MANAGEMENT (CIM) STUDENTS AT
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO GIVE BACK TO THEIR
COMMUNITY WITH “BLITZ BUILD”**

Silver Spring, Md. (March 11, 2010) – The Concrete Industry Management (CIM) program – a business intensive curriculum that awards students with a four-year Bachelor of Science degree in Concrete Industry Management – recently assisted a local domestic violence shelter near the California State University (CSU), Chico campus building two houses in nine days. The CSU students gave up their vacation time to help Catalyst Domestic Violence Services – a nonprofit organization committed to serving the needs of all domestic violence victims and their children.

The mission of Catalyst is to prevent and reduce the incidence of domestic violence in Butte County by intervening in the cycle of violence through crisis intervention services and community education. Catalyst provides temporary living facilities for victims of domestic violence. Chico State took on the name Blitz Build for this project, because of the short time they had to complete the construction. After initial site preparation and concrete work early in December, construction of the houses began on Jan. 16 and was completed on Jan. 24.

The two 840-square-foot transitional housing units are located adjacent to the new Catalyst Housing Facility on Ivy Street. The future residents of these homes will have the opportunity to rebuild their lives during an 18-month period. Hundreds of people will inhabit these houses and reap the benefits.

The CIM students worked along with the Construction Management students at CSU and assisted with the concrete portion of the project which included foundations, slabs-on-grade, sidewalks and driveways. "Many of our students worked on the entire project," said Tanya Wattenburg Komas, CIM Program Director. "A tremendous amount of planning was undertaken by students, advisors, and community volunteers, and the outcome was fantastic. The concrete work showcases an aesthetically pleasing acid stain appearance, while providing an environmentally friendly application." Chico State CIM patrons donated nearly all of the materials and equipment for the concrete.

A focus of the design and construction of the houses was on gaining LEED certification. To that end, the decision was made to decoratively finish the concrete slabs rather than cover them with floor coverings such as tile or carpet. This meant that special considerations had to be taken into account during the entire construction process to ensure that the slabs were protected from stains and scratches. As it was, pouring the slabs was delayed nearly a month due to unforeseen permitting issues. When concrete work did commence, temperatures had dropped below freezing so that measures to protect the curing concrete from freezing had to be undertaken, including blankets and thick layers of straw.

Although difficult to deal with, the situation did provide students from all involved departments on the Chico campus with a great learning opportunity. With a greatly condensed schedule due to the delay, CIM students, with the help of industry experts, were able to complete initial grinding of the slab prior to the start of construction but the planned staining and sealing was not possible due to rain. Without a sealer to protect the slab, construction proceeded with the concrete floors protected simply by special environmentally friendly protection blankets.

After seven days of construction, the houses were substantially complete. CIM students arrived at 10 p.m. as the second construction crew of the day was leaving. They worked through the night to finish the floors, including applying two coats of a new lithium-based, pigmented densifier in modeled brown and black, three burnishing passes using successively finer pads, and two coats of a lithium-based sealer, each followed by burnishing to achieve the final modeled, dense, polished surface. The student

construction crews arrived the next morning and over the next two days installed baseboards and finished the last details. On Saturday morning, furniture arrived and the keys to the houses were ceremonially handed over to Catalyst leaders that afternoon at a celebration barbeque.

Despite the touch-and-go schedule and torrential rain for most of the time, the houses were completed one day ahead of schedule and were awarded LEED Gold Certification. Christina Pantera, a senior at CSU and a leader on the site during the building process commented, “There are things I think you can learn in the classroom, but really this project has gotten tons of people together and it’s neat to see it all come together.”

This project will continue next winter break and the CIM students are proposing to include more concrete and concrete products in the two structures that are being planned for the next phase.

The CIM Program

Recognizing the need for people with enhanced technical, communication and management skills, the CIM program was developed in 1996. The individuals graduating from this program will have the skill set necessary to meet the growing demands of the progressively changing concrete industry of the 21st century. It is a business intensive program, providing solid management skills that can be used in any industry, but has been developed specifically for the concrete industry. The program gives students many advantages including entering the concrete work force with exposure to the industry early in their careers, unlike others coming in with generic business degrees.

The goal of the program is to produce broadly educated, articulate graduates grounded in basic business management, who are knowledgeable of concrete technology and techniques and are able to manage people and systems as well as promote products or services related to the concrete industry. It entails a broad range of courses, from English and history to science and mathematics. A series of required business courses such as finance, marketing, management and business law are also taken throughout the length of the program. The concrete-specific courses teach the fundamentals of concrete, properties and testing, concrete construction and more. All of these courses provide much more than what is simply in the text – they emphasize problem solving,

quality assurance and customer satisfaction. They utilize practical case studies and an internship to make sure the student obtains real-world experience essential to starting a successful career. Additional opportunities for growth include on-campus socials and other organized events providing industry networking and professional development.

About CIM

Receiving tremendous support from the concrete industry, the CIM program was the first of its kind in United States – a four-year Bachelor of Science degree in Concrete Industry Management. The need for such a program was recognized in 1994 and was put into action by the concrete industry. The end-result was a partnership between the concrete industry and Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) to develop the CIM program, implementing it with its first two students in 1996. Available at MTSU, Arizona State University, California State University, Chico, the New Jersey Institute of Technology, and Texas State University, the program has been successful for both the industry and the graduates. To learn more about the program, visit www.concretedegree.com.

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