On Monday, August 19, 2013, at the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Pan American Academy of Engineering – PAAE (the Academy), held in conjunction with the 2013 General Assembly of the Pan American Federation of Engineering Societies – UPADI, the Board of Directors of the Academy approved the creation of the Pan American Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship – PAIIE (the Institute)

Eng. Pablo Realpozo, Dr. Reginald Vachon, Dr. Robert Kersten, and Dr. Jorge Vanegas, all members of the Academy, presented the objective, context, the vision, and a proposed operational plan for the Institute, respectively, within the Focus Session of the meeting.

The Institute will be closely aligned with the three main goals of the Engineering for the Americas (EftA) initiative of the Organization of American States (OAS), which seeks to: (1) enhance engineering education; (2) develop internationally recognized accreditation systems; and (3) create job opportunities.

This initiative has a symbiotic relationship innovation and entrepreneurship, which creates two opportunities within the context of engineering. The first is to incorporate fundamentals of innovation and entrepreneurship within the education of engineers at all levels, from undergraduate education to professional continuing education. The second is to enhance and strengthen existing businesses, or to create, incubate, accelerate, and start up new businesses, while concurrently, conceiving, developing, validating, deploying, and implementing new engineering products, processes, services, unique experiences, and business models, as well as developing the enablers, obstacle-removers, and barrier-breakers to make them a reality.

The Institute will provide a respected, neutral, inclusive, and integrative mechanism across the continent for (1) establishing and maintaining strategic partnerships with selected top universities, research centers, and private and public sector organizations; (2) for identifying and engaging a pool of selected content developers, composed of practitioners from industry, and faculty from academia, who are knowledgeable and have experience in innovation and entrepreneurship; and (3) for identifying and engaging a pool of selected instructors for the delivery, with the highest levels of quality and value, of programs, courses, educational modules, workshops, and lectures, to highly recommended and qualified participants, with both the will and the aptitude to contribute actively to the advancement of the economy of their respective countries.
The Institute Executive Board is chaired by Eng. Pablo Realpozo, President of the Academy and members of the Board are Dr. Jorge Vanegas, Dr. Robert Kersten and Dr. Reginald Vachon. An Advisory Board of industry, government and education leaders will be established in the near future.

Dr. Robert Kersten was elected as the Founder Director of the Institute, reporting directly to Eng. Pablo Realpozo del Castillo, President of the Academy. He will lead the Institute during its initial phase of implementation, with an external focus, especially ensuring the alignment of the Institute's activities with the activities of UPADI and the OAS.

Dr. Jorge Vanegas was elected as the Interim Executive Associate Director. As Technical Director of the Academy, he will facilitate and expedite the creation and the launch of initial operations of the Institute, with an internal focus, especially ensuring the alignment of the Institute's activities with the vision, mission, and work plan for the Academy. Finally, Texas A&M University, through the College of Architecture in which Dr. Vanegas serves as Dean, was selected as the initial institutional host of the Institute, to provide infrastructure and logistic support to the Institute's activities.

Three concurrent tasks will be the initial focus of the Institute activities: (1) development of a proposed organizational and governance structure; (2) identification of strategic partnerships, general program content and program delivery mechanisms, and long-term funding mechanisms; and (3) establishment of a Steering Committee to provide oversight to the full scope of operations of the Institute, composed of a select group of distinguished members of the Academy, and of respected individuals from other public and private sector organizations across the continent, who will need to be identified, nominated, and approved by the President and the Board of Directors of the Academy.

An invitation is open to all Pan American Engineers for participating in this initiative for the benefit of our countries.

For more information please contact The Academy

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