Every year, hundreds of Orfalea College of Business alumni, friends and corporate partners give back to the college to ensure Learn by Doing continues to thrive. Of the $2.5 million raised during the 2015-16 fiscal year, small donations and matching gifts from the Cal Poly Fund added up to a record-setting $250,000.

Generous contributions to the Orfalea Dean’s Excellence Fund have already been put to good use to support the college’s efforts to help every student feel career-ready well before graduation. Get to know the key programs that your contributions have supported in 2016.

Launching Industry Tours for Students
Each quarter, the Orfalea College of Business helps its student clubs take trips to industry hubs in the Bay Area and Southern California. These trips acquaint students with potential employers and allow them to connect with leading alumni in the industry.

Cal Poly’s Financial Management Association (FMA) has taken three trips in the past year to tour firms like PIMCO, Goldman Sachs, Bernstein Global Wealth Managers, and Prudential Real Estate Investors. FMA President Jackson Kuhn says that he and several finance students leveraged insights from the tours during important interviews for their first jobs.

Hiring a Career Readiness Advisor
The Orfalea College of Business welcomed its new career readiness advisor, Chelsea Kidwell, to campus this year. As the first advisor of her kind at Cal Poly, Kidwell creates new professional development programs specific to business disciplines, including resume writing workshops, internship panels, and one-on-one career advising.

Kidwell is at the helm of BUS 206: Business Professionalism and Career Readiness, a new course she designed that helps sophomore students explore their goals, refine their communications skills, and make a personal career development plan.

Welcoming Executives in Residence
In 2016, the Orfalea College of Business brought more than 40 executives to campus for a full day of class lectures, student roundtables, meetings with faculty, and tours of Cal Poly’s innovative learning spaces.

Alumni like Meredith Schmidt, executive vice president of Salesforce, and Chris Penner, vice president of BOX, shared how they have built upon their Cal Poly education in the professional world.