well-rounded, creative problem solvers and foster 21st-century skills. “Sony is proud to support and encourage student innovators with KOOV Academy,” said Michiko Araki, vice president of marketing and new business at Sony Electronics. “Our teachers and students are of utmost importance, and we will continue to prepare them well to drive innovation—they are where it all begins.”

Sony Electronics is a leader in electronics for the consumer and professional markets with its headquarters in Scripps Ranch San Diego.

In 2018, Sony launched KOOV, its first education hardware product. Sony has been focused on the global education business line and launched its KOOV, its first EdTech hardware product in 2018. An all-in-one coding, robotics and design kit, KOOV combines digital coding with physical building to teach the next generation of innovators. Initially launched in Japan and China, the team is now expanding into the U.S. market, starting in San Diego.

Over the last three years, Sony has been focused on the global education business line and launched its KOOV, its first EdTech hardware product in 2018. An all-in-one coding, robotics and design kit, KOOV combines digital coding with physical building to teach the next generation of innovators. Initially launched in Japan and China, the team is now expanding into the U.S. market, starting in San Diego.

Partnering with UC San Diego
In partnership with UC San Diego, Sony will select a handful of educators who are interested in teaching KOOV Robotics in the classroom. The STEAM program helps them design lesson plans, offer trainings, and provide classroom support for the kickoff of their programs.

“UC San Diego is committed to promoting diversity in STEAM fields. KOOV Academy will help us reach and excite our diverse student population with fun hands-on activities through project-based approaches,” said Carolyn Hofstetter, chair of the engineering studies department at UC San Diego. “We hope to engage more students in integrated STREAM (Science, Technology, Robotics, Engineering, Arts and Math) learning. KOOV is a perfect robotics learning tool that can attract many students in STREAM learning.”

“We are excited about this opportunity to make computer science education accessible for more kids, schools and communities. We appreciate Sony’s partnership in this important endeavor,” she added.

Donating Kits
A KOOV kit contains blocks, motors and sensors kids can put together to create robots and small machines they can program. It can make classes a lot more fun and ignite kids’ interest in science, technology, engineering, art and math (STEAM) subjects.

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Go to Expand Beyond San Diego
As of now, it’s too soon to state whether Sony’s education business unit will become as significant as its other verticals. Looking forward, Sony’s executives are betting the investment will be important for attracting future employees, helping underserved students, as well as improving the technology ecosystem altogether.

“This is about future careers — UC San Diego is a critical partner and a pillar in the community,” said Cheryl Goodman, head of corporate communications and corporate social responsibility at Sony Electronics. “We’re making sure not only that Sony has a healthy pipeline to choose from but also that our peers in technology do too. UC San Diego will be a big part of this solution for us.”

After a successful rollout in San Diego, the goal is to increase access to its KOOV kits into other regions as well as expand nationwide.

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**People on the Move**

**HIRINGS, PROMOTIONS, BOARD MEMBERS AND SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS IN SAN DIEGO**

**CONSTRUCTION**

New Hire

DPR Construction welcomes Gordon Oakley as a healthcare executive. With more than 26 years of service with the State of California’s Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, Oakley will play an integral role in DPR Construction’s healthcare construction and OSH-IPD processes.

Gordon Oakley

**CONSTRUCTION**

New Hire

Innovative builder, Suffolk, has hired Kari Novak as Vice President of Project Development in San Diego to help strengthen the firm’s positioning in the rapidly growing higher-education sector. In her role, Ms. Novak will be responsible for leading growth strategies, business acquisition, project development, project oversight and client relationship management. She previously led the project teams that constructed UC San Diego’s North Torrey Pines Living & Learning Neighborhood, San Diego State University’s Husaynac residence hall and its Engineering & Interdisciplinary Sciences building.

Kari Novak

**ENGINEERING, ARCHITECTURE AND CONSTRUCTION**

New Hires

Burns & McDonnell, a 100% employee-owned engineering, architecture and construction firm, hires Felipe Chuang as a senior project manager. Felipe will lead project construction teams to deliver a variety of critical infrastructure projects for aviation, manufacturing, life sciences and utility clients across California. He has more than 20 years of experience, working on projects that include the Los Angeles International Airport, universities, federal facilities and more. Felipe is a certified professional by the Design-Build Institute of America (DBIA).

Felipe Chuang

**SMITHGROUP**

Promotion

SmithGroup, one of the nation’s leading integrated design firms, has elevated interior designer Megan Skalen, CID, to serve as Workplace studio leader at its San Diego office. In her new role, she will continue to work with San Diego and Los Angeles leadership to expand the firm’s workplace and mixed-use expertise and strengthen the firm’s growing presence in the greater San Diego area. Megan has focused the last decade of her career on developing design solutions for owner, developer and end-user clients, with an emphasis on creatively adapting real estate assets into forward-thinking business environments.

Megan Skalen