Michael Datte
Associate Engineer

Michael Datte’s diverse organizational background, demonstrated leadership ability and comprehensive understanding of university procedures have helped to improve building maintenance operations and advance campus sustainability efforts.

During Mike’s 35-year career with the university, he has worked in facilities as a Building Maintenance Worker, electrician, in the field and as a supervisor, and managed the San Diego Supercomputer Center. In the 1990’s, Mike enthusiastically embraced quality management principles; outside his regular schedule, he routinely worked with teams within Facilities Management to improve organizational effectiveness. Mike has continued to apply these principles throughout his career to identify opportunities for improvement.

Since 2009, Mike has served as an Associate Engineer representing Facilities Management on the Building Advisory Committees for the Health Sciences Biomedical Research Facility II and the Altman Clinical & Translational Research Institute throughout the planning and construction process. His efforts have greatly improved the working relationship between Facilities Management and Facilities Design & Construction by increasing awareness about the challenges associated with maintaining new buildings once construction is completed. Mike’s recommendations regarding material selections and maintenance requirements will significantly reduce energy, equipment, and labor costs and improve lifecycle costs of building systems for these two facilities. Mike also assisted with proofing and confirming project plans to ensure Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) accreditation for these buildings.

Mike has played an instrumental role in the installation of more than 2 megawatts of electricity-generating solar panels across campus. Campus projects totaling more than $3 million include rooftop installations at the Basic Science Building Library, Central Utility Plant, Leichtag Building, Mayer Hall, and San Diego Supercomputer Center. These solar panels have reduced campus carbon dioxide emissions by more than 3,500 metric tons per year and will ultimately save the university approximately $500,000 in purchased utility costs annually. Mike’s contributions bring our campus closer to achieving our goal of climate neutral by 2025.

Mike has also managed $4.2 million in off-campus solar installations which include Bachman Parking Structure, SIO storage building, Nimitz Marine Facility, and Trade St. To install a ground-mounted system at Elliott Field, Mike worked closely with Natural Reserves System staff, facilitating sensitive environmental issues to ensure that government regulations for wetlands were met.

Mike’s commitment to supporting education goes beyond campus boundaries. Since 2007, Mike has been an active member of the Buena Vista Museum of Natural History in Bakersfield, which focuses on the educational aspects of geology, anthropology, and paleontology. He supports this nonprofit organization by organizing sharktooth digging events and recruiting new members to share his passion for fossils.

No matter what unexpected problems may arise during construction projects, Mike seeks creative solutions that balance the needs of all parties involved. His positive attitude and ability to facilitate group consensus have made him an asset to the university. and an ideal candidate for Exemplary Staff Employee of the Year.