



STATEWIDE OFFICE

For Immediate Release
November 7, 2017

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Connecting SDSU Students with Industry to Launch STEM Careers

Twelve talented California State University San Diego students descended on downtown Los Angeles in a step towards becoming the diverse leaders of tomorrow's tech and engineering workforce.

MESA's Student Leadership Conference brings together hand-picked engineering and computer science students with industry professionals to develop the next generation of STEM leaders. Held at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel Oct. 27-28, this year's conference theme was *Illuminate. Motivate. Launch.*

The Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) program guides diverse students from underrepresented backgrounds into STEM careers.

Unlike job fairs or speaker-only conferences, MESA students got the unique opportunity to interact one-on-one and in small groups with company executives, engineers and recruiters. Many often leave the conference with internship offers that lead to full time employment. Students participated in mock interviews, communications, team building, emotional intelligence and financial literacy workshops.

"MESA's Student Leadership Conference provides an incredible opportunity for our community college and university students to gain invaluable career development skills and network with leading industry professionals to kick-start their STEM careers," said MESA Executive Director Thomas Ahn. "Our students represent the skills, passion and potential that our state desperately needs to enrich our workforce and strengthen our communities. MESA students are among California's most precious resources for diverse talent in the STEM fields."

Companies recognize the importance of engaging with and supporting our students — so much so they fully fund the conference with donations. These enlightened corporate partners understand these are not simply underserved and underrepresented students, they are an underutilized pool of talent that has been long overlooked. Companies simply cannot afford to ignore this talent pool.

This year's partners and sponsors included: **Edison International** and **Southern California Gas Company** as top sponsors and **Pacific Gas and Electric, Applied Materials, ecmc Foundation**

and **San Diego Gas and Electric**. Other participating companies were: **AT&T, Blast Motion, CHC Consulting, Disney, Northrup Grumman, Jet Propulsion Labs, Boeing, Oracle, Crane Aerospace** and **Wells Fargo**.

Student attendees are from the following campuses: UC Berkeley, UC Irvine, UC Los Angeles, UC Riverside, UC Santa Barbara, UC Santa Cruz, University of the Pacific, University of Southern California, CSU Chico, CSU Fresno, CSU Long Beach, CSU Los Angeles, CSU Sacramento, San Diego State University, San Francisco State University, San Jose State University, CSU Sonoma, Allan Hancock College, Bakersfield College, Butte College (Oroville), College of the Canyons (Santa Clarita), College of the Desert (College of the Sequoias (Visalia), Contra Costa College (San Pablo), Diablo Valley College (Pleasant Hill), El Camino College, Gavilan College (Gilroy), Hartnell College (Salinas), Los Medanos College (Pittsburg), Mission College (Santa Clara), Napa Valley College, Pasadena City College, Rio Hondo College, Sacramento City College, Santa Barbara City College, Ventura College.

Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) has a 47-year history of changing the face of science, technology and engineering by developing a new generation of STEM leaders. Now with a network of more than 250,000 alumni, MESA fuels diversity by propelling historically underrepresented students toward STEM degrees and professional careers.

Each year MESA serves over 25,000 students at the pre-college, community college and university levels across California. We bridge classroom learning with real-world applications, and employ rigorous academics, leadership preparation, a peer community and collaborative problem-solving training to produce highly-skilled college graduates who meet 21st century STEM workforce needs.

The White House, the Ford Foundation, and the Silicon Valley Education Foundation have all recognized MESA for its innovative and effective academic development model.

MESA high school students have a 92% college-going rate, as compared to the statewide average of 42%. MESA's UC acceptance rate: 70% (vs 60% for all CA students); Community college transfer rate into STEM majors: 97%; Graduates with STEM bachelor's degrees: average of 500 per year.

Find more information about the [conference](#). For more information about [MESA](#) or follow us @[MESASTEM](#).

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