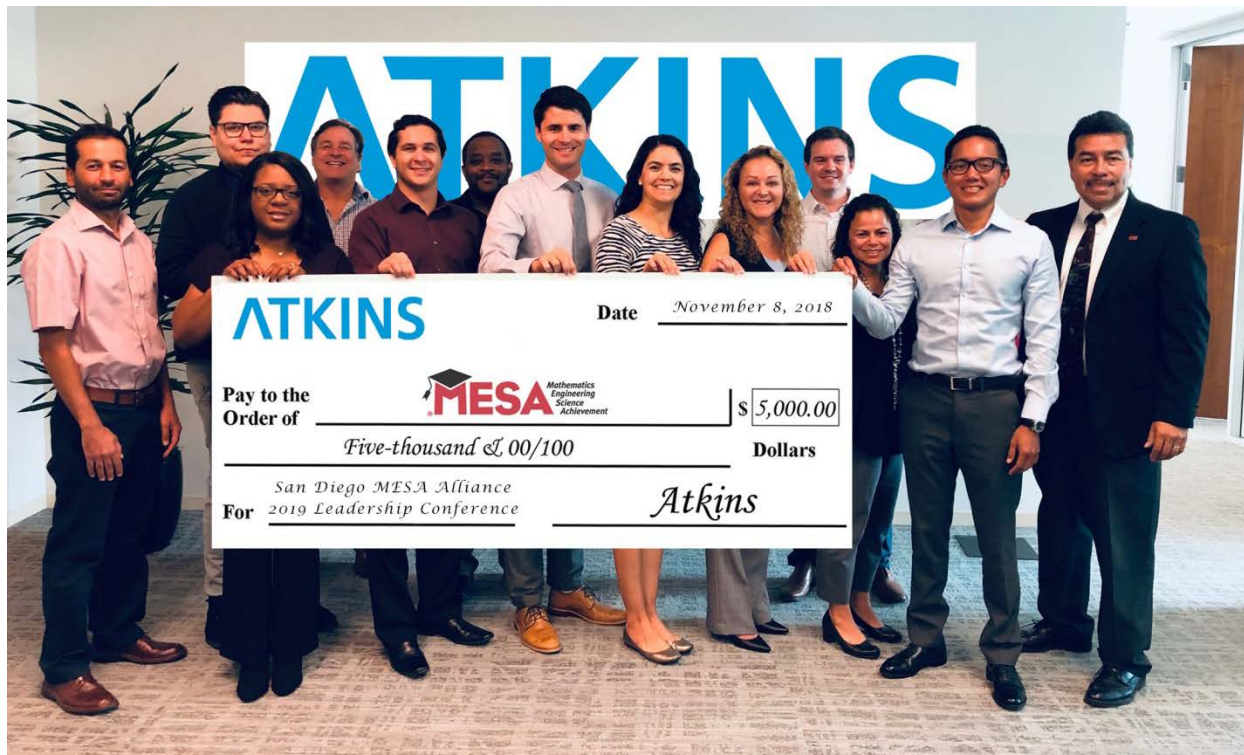


## Atkins Foundation Awards \$5,000 to San Diego MESA Alliance for Student Leadership



November 8, 2018

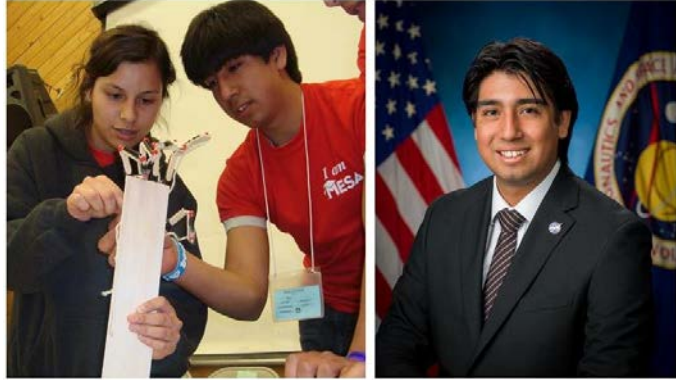
The [Atkins Foundation](#) awarded \$5,000 to the [San Diego MESA Alliance](#) to sponsor the 2019 MESA (Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement) Student Leadership Conference. The one-day conference will be held at San Diego State University (SDSU) in March for 100 MESA pre-college, community college and university students.

Serving traditionally underrepresented students, the San Diego MESA Alliance works to develop the next generation of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) scholars and leaders, and it relies on the support of industry partners to provide industry exposure and professional development opportunities for students. With the generous support of the Atkins Foundation, the 2019 MESA Student Leadership Conference will be designed to enhance the “soft skills” of participating students, including leadership, communication and team working skills.

The 2019 conference is the 16<sup>th</sup> annual MESA leadership event sponsored by the Atkins Foundation. The conference is a signature event for the San Diego MESA Alliance with participation by students from all educational levels, including MESA students from SDSU, San Diego City College, Southwestern College and high school seniors from San Diego and Imperial Valley.

*Continued*

While commuting daily from Tijuana to attend San Diego City College, Sergio Sandoval attended the 2012 leadership event. Sandoval recalls the event as his first experience working with other college engineering students, adding, “It was so meaningful to me because it showed me that there were others eager to become the leaders of the future just



as much as me. But most importantly, it made me feel confident because I realized that we were not there to compete, but to help each other succeed.” Sandoval successfully transferred to the Georgia Institute of Technology, where he earned his Bachelor’s degree in Aerospace Engineering in Fall 2017. He is an Aerospace Engineer with NASA’s Johnson Space Center in Houston, and he recently began his graduate study at SDSU, with the goal of earning a Ph.D. degree in aerospace engineering.

Serving over 2,000 students annually in San Diego & Imperial counties across all educational levels, the San Diego MESA Alliance is a statewide model for intersegmental collaboration. The Alliance is also part of the [MESA statewide](#) network of programs throughout California. Through its record of successfully assisting educationally disadvantaged students to excel and graduate in math, engineering and science majors, MESA has become nationally recognized for innovative and effective academic development. More information about the San Diego MESA Alliance is available at [alliance.sdccmesa.com](http://alliance.sdccmesa.com).

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