



News

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California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California



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Cal Poly to Host 600 Teens for Math, Science and Engineering Competition on April 9

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Cal Poly will host more than 600 middle and high school students from Central California as they test their math, science and engineering skills in hands-on competitions during MESA Day on April 9.

These Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) students were among the top-ranked from preliminary contests to qualify for the regional MESA Day at Cal Poly. Students served by local MESA centers at CSU Fresno, UC Santa Barbara and UC Santa Cruz will travel to Cal Poly for the regional competition.

MESA is an academic preparation program that serves more than 20,000 pre-college, community college and university students in California who are educationally disadvantaged. Seventy percent of schools served by MESA are among the lowest-performing in the state. Almost two-thirds of MESA high school graduates go on to college as math, engineering or science majors.

“About 14,000 California jobs requiring science or engineering degrees went unfilled in 2001, making award-winning programs such as MESA an imperative,” said Maria Manzano, director of the MESA program at Cal Poly.

Through MESA Day competitions, students engage in hands-on activities that expand their understanding of math, science and engineering concepts. Through a wide variety of competitions such as web design, wind energy machine development and bridge building, students explore paths that can lead to future careers in science, engineering or other technical fields. And holding MESA Day competitions on college campuses exposes students to college settings early in their education.

The top-ranked middle and high school students competing in the wind energy challenge will advance to the statewide championship May 14 at UC Santa Barbara. Winners from that event will represent California in a national competition June 23-26 in Washington state.

More than 200 Cal Poly volunteers will assist in the April 9 activities.

For more information about the event, contact Cal Poly MESA director Maria Manzano at 805-756-1434 or msmanzan@calpoly.edu. For more about MESA, visit www.mesa.ucop.edu.

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