

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California



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Cal Poly Multicultural Engineering Program Honors Diverse Group of High Achievers

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Members of Cal Poly's Multicultural Engineering Program (MEP) who received scholarships for the 2011-12 school year were honored at a recent MEP banquet, where more than \$125,000 in scholarships were awarded.

"Engineering is the foundation of a sustainable, humanitarian world, and you are our future leaders," Debra Larson, dean of the College of Engineering, told the students. "The way to find



innovative solutions and create new designs is to get all kinds of different ideas put forward. And there's no better way to do that than to have diverse people with diverse backgrounds working together."

Cristal Vasquez received scholarships from Chevron and Raytheon and is one of Cal Poly's 2011-12 Student Scholars in the California State University Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation program.

"MEP has not only been a source for scholarships and internships," Vasquez said, "it has given me a multitude of opportunities to develop leadership and outreach skills."

Vasquez, who graduates in June, plans to pursue a doctorate in mechanical engineering. While at Cal Poly, she developed an interest in the field of thermal engineering, which was strengthened by internships at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and NASA Glenn Research Center in Ohio. She was also encouraged by a number of professors, particularly Chris Pascual, who is noted for his expertise in thermal sciences.

Computer engineering students Aaron Martinez and Mishal Shah said MEP was "always there" for them. Both have been hired by Macys.com in San Francisco.

"MEP's networking events, career fairs, etiquette dinners and resume workshops gave a big boost to my professional and personal development," Martinez said. "And it also gave me opportunities to give back." Martinez volunteered for middle and high school

programs that motivate students to pursue engineering, science and technology, and served as a judge in their regional competitions.

The scholarship awards were funded by Chevron, Fluor, Raytheon, Xerox, David Cantu, MEP, MESA National Science Foundation, and the Paisanos Cal Poly San Luis Obispo Alumni group.

Additional companies recognized for their support of MEP events, activities and services included Boeing, Cisco, Eaton, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Lockheed Martin, the National Science Foundation, Northrop Grumman, PG&E, Target and USS POSCO Industries.

For more information about MEP, visit https://mep.calpoly.edu.

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