

March 12, 2007

### **MESA Day brings high school students to campus for engineering and math competitions**

By [Tim Stephens](#)

More than 300 middle and high school students from schools across Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties came to UCSC March 10 for a full day of engineering and math competitions at the Baskin School of Engineering.

The annual MESA Day Preliminary Competition, hosted by UCSC's Educational Partnership Center (EPC) and cosponsored by the engineering school, is part of the EPC's Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) Schools Program.

"This event marks the culmination of months of hard work and preparation by the students," said Bronwyn Moreno-Metal, director of the MESA Schools Program.

Participants in the MESA Schools Program work with teacher advisers to follow MESA-developed curricula that involve building hands-on projects, such as a model balsawood bridge, mousetrap car, and model bisected heart. The program is designed to reinforce the California State Math and Science Standards, and the competition gives students a chance to test their skills against their peers. Top winners advance to regional and, in some cases, national competitions.

In addition to the competitions, MESA Day provides an opportunity for students to meet and interact with volunteer judges--who are engineers, scientists, community leaders, and university faculty--and learn about their educations and career pathways. Students also attended a special Student Organizations and Resources Fair to learn more about the programs and resources available to support student success at UCSC, such as student-run organizations from the engineering school and the California State Summer School for Mathematics and Science (COSMOS).

The primary goal of the campus MESA program is to provide students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds with academic preparation in mathematics and science and to raise their awareness of college and career opportunities in those fields. MESA Day provides added motivation for students' college aspirations and encourages student success in mathematics- and science-based fields and careers.



**MESA Program students prepare their project for the "Trebuchet Challenge" competition as part of MESA Day at the engineering school.**

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