



STATEWIDE OFFICE

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Students Thank Industry for Support

MESA students from San Diego State University, Southwestern and San Diego City Colleges gathered to thank San Diego Gas and Electric for its sponsorship and support.

Eleven MESA students hosted a luncheon for three SDG&E representatives on November 4 at the San Diego State College of Engineering.

SDG&E's contribution allowed those students to build leadership skills during a special conference for engineering and computer science majors. The Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) Student Leadership Conference Student Leadership Conference was held October 6 – 8 in Oakland.

San Diego Gas and Electric Company (SDG&E) sponsored 12 students from the San Diego area including eight from San Diego State. SDG&E's \$10,000 contribution also funded two students each from the San Diego City and Southwestern College MESA programs.

During the luncheon, the students presented SDG&E with a certificate of appreciation and students received certificates for completing the conference. In attendance were SDG&E's Community Relations Manager Warren Ruis, Staffing Advisor Tamika White and Senior Staffing Advisor Lisa Zelkind.

"I was motivated because of the motivation I found in the students. I was only initially supposed to be there for two hours, but I stayed the entire time," White said of the conference during the luncheon. "It motivated me as a professional to see their enthusiasm to learn."

The conference offered extensive professional and leadership development through direct interaction with industry mentors and speakers. The hand-picked MESA students, engineering or computer science majors, are from 25 universities and community colleges across the state.

Brad Weinstein and Sherwin Yari of SDG&E held workshops about the energy industry and encouraged students with continuing their educational journeys. Yari, an associate engineer and MESA alum, shared how MESA helped him while a student at San Diego State University.

Other sponsors include Pacific Gas & Electric Company, Sacramento Municipal Utilities District, Southern California Gas Company and Vanir Construction Management, Inc. Other contributors include East Bay Municipal Utilities District, the Oakland Athletics and Pixar.

MESA is one of the largest programs in the state to support educationally disadvantaged students so they can graduate from college with science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) degrees.

“We know that California’s economy needs more STEM workers to stay competitive,” said MESA Executive Director Oscar F. Porter. “These students provide the solution to industry’s need for well-trained professionals.

“They were selected to attend the conference because these students have strong leadership skills. This event gives them a chance to interact extensively with STEM professionals currently working in the field,” said Porter.

Student attendees represent the following campuses: CSU Chico, CSU East Bay, CSU Fresno, CSU Long Beach, CSU Los Angeles, CSU Sacramento, San Diego State University, San Francisco State University, San Jose State University, Sonoma State University, UC Riverside, UC Santa Barbara, UC Santa Cruz, American River College (Sacramento), Butte College (Oroville), Cañada College (Redwood City), City College of San Francisco, Cosumnes River College (Sacramento), Los Medanos College (Pittsburg), Mission College (Santa Clara), Napa Valley College, Sacramento City College, San Diego City College, San Joaquin Delta College, Skyline College (San Bruno), Southwestern College, Yuba College (Marysville).

MESA, an academic preparation program that each year serves about 20,000 California pre-college, community college and university students who are educationally disadvantaged, is an awarding winning program with a model that works. Seventy percent of MESA high school graduates statewide went directly to college after graduation compared to 48 percent of all California graduates. Sixty percent of MESA students go on to math, science or engineering majors.

San Diego Gas and Electric, (SDG&E) is a regulated public utility that provides safe and reliable energy service to 3.5 million consumers through 1.4 million electric meters and more than 850,000 natural gas meters in San Diego and southern Orange counties. The utility’s area spans 4,100 square miles. SDG&E is committed to creating ways to help our customers save energy and money every day.

For more information about MESA, visit <http://mesa.ucop.edu/home.html>.

For more information about SDG&E, visit <http://www.sdge.com/index/>