

UC SANTA BARBARA

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## **Astronaut Leroy Chiao, a UCSB Alumnus, to Speak From Space Station With Tri-County Students on MESA Day, March 5**

More than 1,000 middle and high school students from the Tri-Counties will gather in UC Santa Barbara's Campbell Hall on Saturday, March 5, to talk by satellite live with NASA astronaut Leroy Chiao, a UCSB alumnus who is commander of the International Space Station currently circling the globe.

The event, scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m. is part of the annual Science and Technology/Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) Day sponsored by UCSB.

Throughout the day, the visiting students will compete for awards in hands-on technology-based projects, tour campus labs and libraries, meet UCSB faculty and students, and participate in other activities.

The MESA program, established in 1970, is dedicated to increasing the number of educationally underserved students who earn degrees in math-based fields from four-year institutions.

It is a University of California program that operates in all segments of the state's educational system.

Chiao, a California native, received his Ph.D. in chemical engineering at UCSB in 1987 under the mentorship of Professor Robert Rinker, who will introduce Chiao to the MESA students on Saturday morning. Chiao became an astronaut in 1991 and was the first Chinese-American in space.

On his first space mission in 1994, Chiao took with him a UCSB flag.

He received a Distinguished Alumnus award from UCSB in 1995, and delivered the commencement address to engineering graduates at his alma mater the following year.

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## **About UC Santa Barbara**

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.