UC SANTA BARBARA

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UCSB's Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement Program Named Among Nation's Top Academic Preparation Programs

For the second consecutive year, UC Santa Barbara's mentorship program for elementary, high school, and college students interested in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics has been recognized by the Bayer Foundation as one of the top academic development programs in the country.

UCSB's highly successful Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) program serves over 800 students from 15 schools in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties, 80 percent of whom go to college.

It is part of the University of California's statewide MESA program, which was recently included in the Bayer Foundation's compendium of 21 "Best Practice K-12 Education Programs."

The annual guide is prepared for industry leaders interested in establishing educational partnerships in science and technology.

It highlights "exemplary" programs that educate girls and minority students in related fields.

MESA college graduates help fill the need for highly qualified technical professionals.

"We are proud once again to have been recognized by the Bayer Foundation as one of the nation's most effective programs in helping elementary and high school students participate and achieve in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics," said UCSB Chancellor Henry T. Yang.

"UC Santa Barbara has a strong commitment to preparing students for leadership in these fields, and MESA is an important part of that commitment."

Overall, MESA serves more than 20,000 K-12, community college, and four-year college students each year.

The program prepares students academically so they graduate with baccalaureate degrees in math-related disciplines.

A total of 70 percent of MESA high school graduates pursue college degrees.

In comparison, 48 percent of all California high school graduates go to college.

UCSB is among the top university destinations for MESA high school graduates.

"The vast majority of MESA students go to college, mainly in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields," said Phyllis Brady, acting director of the MESA schools and engineering programs at UCSB.

"Our corporate supporters recognize our students as being highly capable, well-trained, and committed.

What makes the program unique and highly successful is that it is interconnected.

Students can start in MESA in middle school and continue through high school and four years of college."

MESA serves educationally disadvantaged students and is open to all first-generation college bound students.

Many students are also from low-income backgrounds.

The program includes academic counseling, classroom support, and hands-on projects.

Industrial partners provide financial assistance for campus workshops and science and engineering competitions, scholarships, and internships.

MESA has been recognized as an outstanding public program by Innovations in American Government, a project of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and the Ford Foundation.

MESA has also received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring.

The Bayer USA Foundation supports programs "that enhance the quality of life, provide unique and enriching opportunities that connect diverse groups and ensure preparedness for tomorrow's leaders –– thereby, resulting in sustainable partnerships that continually improve communities in which Bayer employees live and work."

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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.