MESA®
Math · Engineering · Science
Achievement

SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE

What is MESA?

Our history, our mission, what we do, and the Summer 2026 Research Internship

Fall 2026

Where MESA came from

More than 55 years of opening doors to STEM in California.

1960s

A question at Berkeley

Educators study why so few students of color enroll in engineering.

1970

MESA is founded

25 students at Oakland Technical High School.

1973

University level

An engineering program for university students starts at CSU Northridge.

1993

Community colleges

After a 1991 pilot at three colleges, the statewide program is established.

2025

55 years

MESA marks 55 years of STEM student success.

MESA today

Across MESA

8 states

run MESA programs across the country

25,000+

California students served each year, middle school through university

102 of 115

California community colleges host a MESA program

At Mesa College

132

MESA Scholars this fall

30

students transferred last Spring to UC, CSU, and private universities

Our mission

Help first-generation and underrepresented students excel in math and science, transfer, and earn STEM degrees.

Succeed in calculus-based math and science courses

Transfer to a four-year university in a STEM major

Go on to a career in math, engineering, or science

Who we serve

Community college students working toward a STEM degree, who often have the fewest built-in supports.

MESA Scholars at Mesa College meet all four criteria.

Calculus-based STEM major

Planning to transfer to a four-year university

Need-based financial aid

Qualifies for need-based aid

First-generation

First in their family to attend college

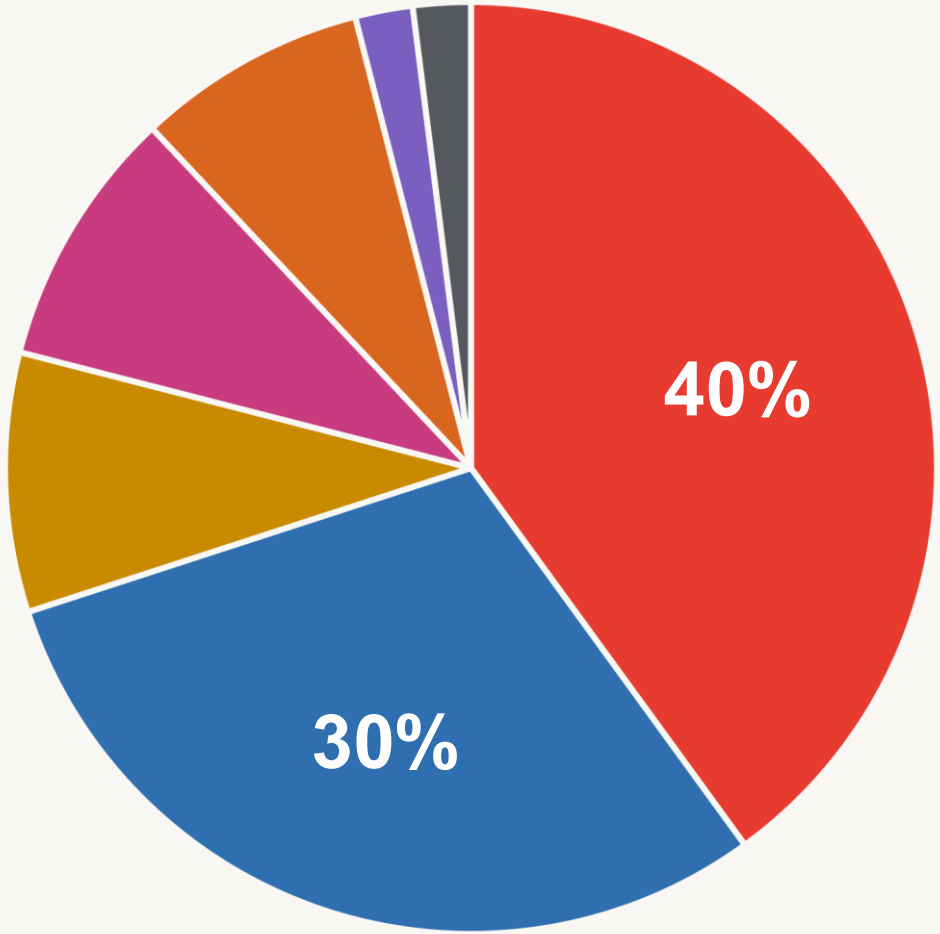
First bachelor’s degree

Working toward their first four-year degree

Our Scholars’ majors

Share of MESA Scholars by major

Engineering	40%
Biology	30%
Computer science	9%
Chemistry	9%
Math	8%
Physics	2%
Undecided, but STEM	2%



Four pillars of support

What MESA offers all year to our scholars:

Academic prep

Peer tutoring, study skills workshops, and academic and personal development.

Transfer prep

Counseling, Ed Plans, UC TAG, and UC and CSU applications.

Career readiness

Guest speakers, industry tours, and research opportunities like our summer internship.

Community and wellness

Movie and game nights, stress management, and a network of STEM peers.

> **Our goal:** grow the strengths our students already bring, using Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth framework: aspirational, familial, social, navigational, linguistic, and resistant capital.

The MESA Center, MS 120

Our home base on campus: a place to study, get help, and find your people.

In the Center

- Study or relax
- Snacks
- Laptops
- Office hours and workshops

Free resources

- Calculator rentals
- Emergency lab coats and PPE
- Emergency school supplies
- Textbook library

Fall hours: Mon to Thu, 8am to 4pm · Fri, 9am to 1pm

5

MESA Mentors for free peer tutoring

Math (2)

Chemistry (2)

Physics (1)

Example of Student success workshops

Choosing a Transfer College

How to research schools, compare options, and plan for the fall application cycle.

Internships and Scholarships

Where to find opportunities and how to put together a strong application.

Guest Speakers and Panels

STEM professionals and transfer students share their paths and answer questions.

Time Management

A weekly time audit, study rhythms, exam prep, and key deadlines.

VARK Learning Styles

Find how you learn best and adjust your study approach for each course.

Science Communication

Writing a scientific review and giving a 10-minute science talk.

Summer 2026

MESA x BMS Summer Research Internship



Eight weeks in a research lab

Research Student Symposium, July 30, 2026

Cohort

8 MESA students, most of them first-time researchers

Placements

University labs, UCSD labs, each with a faculty or graduate-student mentor

Support

Weekly check-ins, presentation coaching, and mock Q&A sessions

Finale

Research symposium where every intern presented and took live questions

How the summer worked

Step 1

Match

Each intern is paired with a research mentor and lab.

Step 2

Research

Eight weeks of hands-on work on a real project.

Step 3

Prepare

Build a research presentation with templates and coaching.

Step 4

Present

Share results at the research symposium in July 2026.

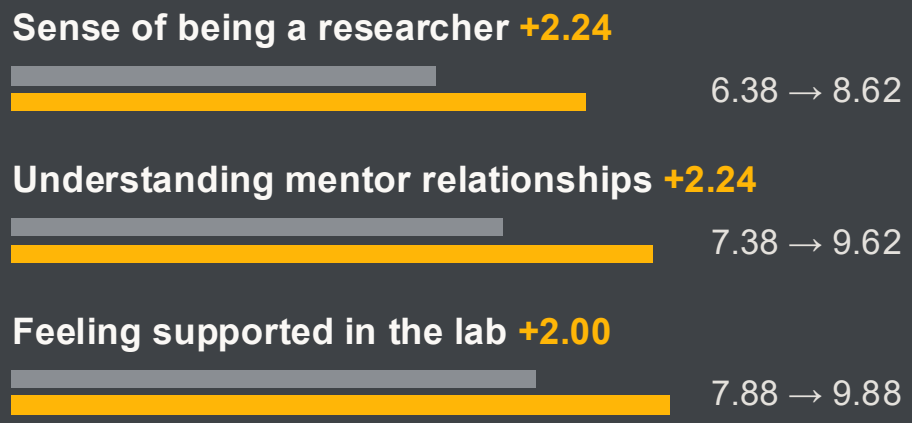
How interns grew in eight weeks:

All 8 interns rated themselves on the same 20 items before and after, on a 1 to 10 scale.

7.14 → 8.54

Average score before and after: a gain of **+1.40 points**. No item went down.

Largest gains (before → after)



> *"My mentor created a welcoming learning environment and trusted me with hands-on research, which helped me build both my technical skills and confidence in the lab."*
>
> Alexa Sanchez, Summer 2026 intern

SACNAS 2026 Conference

A national, multicultural STEM conference for college students through professionals.

2 **MESA Scholars attended with our program**

When	October 29 to 31, 2026
Where	Long Beach Convention Center, Long Beach, CA
What	Research presentations, keynotes, a career and graduate school expo, and mentoring





STEM Shadow Day

A full day shadowing professionals at San Diego-area STEM companies, hosted by SDSU MESA.

Who	MESA students from SDSU and seven regional community colleges, including Mesa College
Matching	Based on major and interests, with priority for active MESA members
Prep	A required meeting on professional etiquette and what to expect

15

Mesa College MESA Scholars selected to participate

Thursday, November 19, 2026