



# MESA InSight

A newsletter publication of the MESA Program of Solano Community College



**FALL  
2012**

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**MESA Counseling Hours for Fall 2012**

**Mon** 12:30- 3:00pm  
**Tues** 3:00- 5:30pm  
**Wed** 3:00- 6:00pm  
**Thurs** 9:30-11:30am

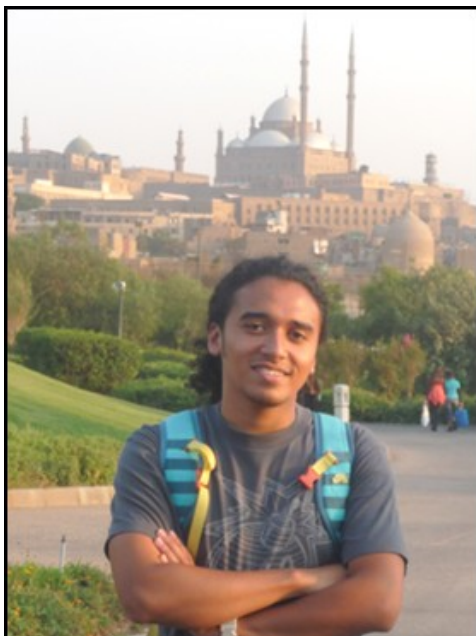
**MESA Center Room 434**

**Hours:**

**Mon** 8:30am-4:00pm  
**Tues** 8:30am-12:30pm & 1:00-5:30pm  
**Wed** 8:30am-6:00pm  
**Thurs** 8:30am-3:00pm  
**Fri** 8:30am-4:00pm

## MESA Student Seeks Cure

By Shemila Johnson, Public Relations SCC



Abraham Gacad, Chemical Engineering

FAIRFIELD, CA, MAY 22, 2012: Solano Community College (SCC) produces phenomenal students and the success story of graduating student, Abraham Gacad is no exception. A six year SCC student; graduating with five degrees in Physics, Chemistry, Math, General Science and Liberal Arts; accepted to University of California, Davis in the Fall to major in Chemical Engineering, recipient of the 2012 National Science Foundation- Scholarship for Science, Engineering, Technology, and Mathematics; and Solano College Outstanding Students Achievement in Excellence Award, Abraham plans to build a career in the field of Cancer research. His ultimate educational goal is to earn his Doctoral Degree in Chemical Engineering; however Abraham's objective for summer 2012 is to obtain an internship in science or engineer-

ing for practical application of educational curriculum.

Born in Kuwait, reared in Egypt, and relocated to the United States in 2006 (to live with his father in Vallejo), Abraham experienced life-changing trials and tribulations along the way to today's success.

His desire to work in cancer research comes from a very personal place; after losing his mother on his third birthday to the illness and supporting his elder sister as she fought the disease, he is determined and personally motivated to aid in finding the cure for cancer.

Abraham came to the U.S. knowing very little of the English language; however, with the support of his family he was determined to learn. After attending "poor schools with low-quality education in Cairo", he decided to start his U.S. education at Solano. A year and a half into his college experience, Abraham's sole supporter (his father) passed away. Now, at a very young age, parentless, he admits struggling his first semester (due to the language barrier and family struggles) and decided to focus on learning the language through SCC's ESL program. He studied ESL and basic science courses for two years and was able to successfully move on taking courses outlined in his educational plan.

Abraham immersed in his studies and joined academic enrichment programs and student clubs such as: Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA); Mesa Student Society (MSS); National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE); and Society for the Advancement of Chicanos & Americans in Science (SACNAS).

See **Seeks Cure**, Page 6

## Students Choose Path to Leadership

By Danielle McNamara, Assistant Director of Communications-MESA Statewide



Left to Right: Bibiana Mejia, Antara Finney, Sante Thomas, Alonzo Brown, Leah Ferrell, and Raul Ramirez in front of the Biology Library at UC Santa Cruz

FAIRFIELD, CA, MAY 24, 2012: Solano Community College (SCC) is proud to report

that eight SCC students: Alonzo Brown, Raul Ramirez, Bibiana Mejia, Sante Thomas, Leah Ferrell, Jenna Gu, Asifa Wong and Antara Finney were selected to attend a Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) leadership conference. The event was held at the Happy Valley Conference Center in Santa Cruz, CA April 13-15. The retreat was an opportunity for community college students to interact, network and build leadership skills.

More than 150 MESA community colleges students from throughout the state met in the Santa Cruz area for the MESA Student Leadership

Retreat. Students were chosen based on their leadership potential. The event included field experiments handling chemistry and engineering design, industry speakers and hands-on breakout sessions.

Presenters from Genentech, Oracle, NASA and the Society of Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) spoke to students. The Hispanic College Fund partially funded the event.

MESA is an award-winning academic enrichment program that provides educationally disadvantaged students with the tools to earn bachelor's degrees in math-based fields. With tutoring, mentoring, study sessions, transfer counseling and

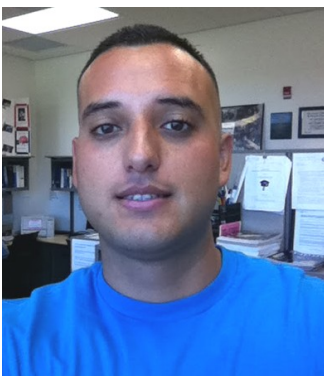
study centers, MESA provides an environment that allows students to succeed and navigate the transfer system more easily. MESA has programs in more than 30 community colleges in California and one hundred percent of MESA students who go to four-year College enter as math-based majors.



MESA students on ropes course.

## MESA Student Receives \$5,000 Grant

By Shemila Johnson, Public Relations SCC



Arturo Castillo  
Civil Engineering

SOLANO COMMUNITY COLLEGE, AUGUST 30, 2012: The Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement Program (MESA) at Solano Community College is proud to announce that MESA Student,

Arturo Castillo was awarded a \$5,000 grant from the 2012 Dwight David Eisenhower Community College Fellowship Program. Arturo will also have the opportunity to attend the Transportation Research Board (TRB) annual meeting this coming January in Washington, DC. As stated in their website, "The Transportation Research Board engages professionals worldwide in a broad range of interdisciplinary, multimodal activities to lay the foundation for innovative transportation solutions." The Dwight David Eisenhower Transportation Fellowship Program (DDETFP) awards fellowships to exemplary students pursuing degrees in transportation-related disciplines. This program advances

the transportation workforce by attracting the brightest minds to the field through education, research, and workforce development.

This scholarship will be helpful to Arturo as he pursues his major in Civil Engineering where he plans to transfer to Sacramento State University in the Fall of 2013.

In addition to being a dedicated student, Arturo has taken the lead in working with a non-profit organization and fellow MESA students to plan and build a K-12 school in Charette, Haiti. In 2011 Arturo was elected by the students as the Associated Students of Solano College's Legislative Advocate.

Throughout his academic career Arturo has held leadership positions in the Puente club and the MESA Student Society. As one of the country's most innovative and successful programs, MESA works with thousands of educationally disadvantaged students as they excel in math and science and graduate with math-based degrees. MESA works closely with industry partners and the University of California, California State University, the California Community Colleges, the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, and the State Department of Education. MESA is nationally recognized for its innovative academic development program.

## 2012 SACNAS Conference - A Whole New World of Opportunities!

By Bibiana Mejia, Biology-Fall 2013 & Antara Finney, Biology -Fall 2014

We all have had experiences that **change** the direction in which our lives are moving. A number of people also had experiences that allowed them to realize their purpose in life in terms of academic goals and personal development. Such moments of awareness are forever to be remembered. Not too long ago, we thought we had a clear vision of what needed to be done in order to fulfill our academic goals. Antara Finney and I, Bibiana Mejia, attended the 2012 SACNAS National Conference that took place in Seattle, Washington from Wednesday October 11th through Sunday October 14th and we have realized how clueless we were about the variety of opportunities that are offered to help us reach our final goals. This event opened our eyes to a whole new world we did not know existed. It encouraged us to continue reaching our goals and dreams.

The 2012 SACNAS National Conference is one of the largest national gatherings for minority students seeking or pursuing a career in the science field. We were both first time attendees at the conference this year. Upon arrival, we registered at our hotel, got settled in, and made our way to the conference room to register. We were welcomed by a group of people who explained to us what we were going to do for the next few days. The following day we started networking with different people who had similar majors as ours. Some of those majors were biology, economics, pre-med, pre-vet, etc. We felt welcomed and had a feeling that we were going to have a great time. We were overwhelmed by the number of students presenting their research projects, as well as

the number of university representatives recruiting students and giving information about research opportunity programs. We attended a field trip to the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, which allowed us to get a sense of what it feels like to work in a lab. Not only did the conference provide numerous opportunities such as workshops, networking, career research, and inspiring speakers, it also brought together students from different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds and promoted a sense of community.

As you can imagine, this has been a tremendous experience and we are beyond thankful to have been a part of this wonderful event.



From Left to Right: Bibiana Mejia, Antara Finney, Casey Bess, Alonzo Brown, Leah Ferrell & Matthew Pinkerton-Lloyd

## Science Technology Engineering & Math (STEM) Clubs

### National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE)

President: Alonzo Brown

Contact Info: boyod@ymail.com

### American Medical Student Association (AMSA)

President: Matthew Pinkerton-Lloyd

Vice President: Chris Johnson

Contact Info: sccamsa@gmail.com

### MESA Student Society (MSS)

President: Antara Finney

Vice President: Vincent Gacad

Contact Info: antarafinney@gmail.com  
vincent.gacad@gmail.com

### Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)

President: Joel Rodriguez

Vice President: Cesiah Diaz

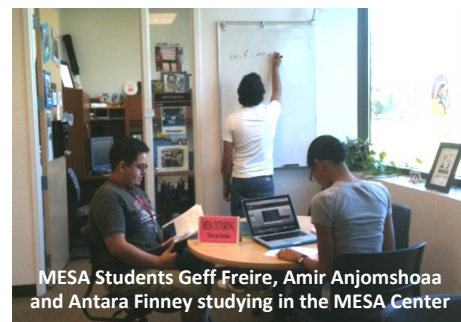
Contact Info: joel.b.rodz@gmail.com  
cdiaz\_11@yahoo.com

### Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE)

President: Alonzo Brown/Jenna Gu

Vice President: Leah Ferrell

Contact Info: boyod@ymail.com  
jennakoo@yahoo.com  
leahfrll@gmail.com



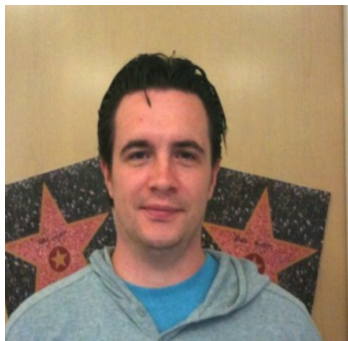
MESA Students Geff Freire, Amir Anjomshoaa and Antara Finney studying in the MESA Center

# MESA High-Achievers



**Anamaria Eljach** has been the Student government Trustee, Vice President of SACNAS, President of MESA Student Society, Recipient of Solano College 2012 Excellence in Achievement Award, and Spring 2012 Haiti Humanitarian Volunteer/ Participant.

**Matthew Pinkerton-Lloyd** was a recipient of Phi Theta Kappa All-California Academic 1st Team Award and the Solano College 2012 Excellence in Achievement Award. He is President of AMSA, an active member of MESA Student Society, and Rotaract. He was a Spring 2012 Haiti Humanitarian Volunteer/ Participant, and he continues to volunteer for various organizations on and off campus.



**Jiaxing (Jenna) Gu** was a recipient of Phi Theta Kappa All-California Academic 2nd Team Award. She is co-president of SHPE, an active member of MESA Student Society and Rotaract, and is treasurer for International Society for Pharmaceutical Engineering. She volunteers as a tutor for the MESA Program and continues to volunteer for other various organizations.



**Abraham Gacad** was MESA Student Society Vice President, Recipient of MESA NSF S-STEM Scholarship, Recipient of Solano College 2012 Excellence in Achievement Award, Spring 2012 Haiti Humanitarian Volunteer/ Participant and Tutor for the MESA program.

## Science Funnies

Have a laugh before your next class!

-An ion walks into a bar looking really depressed, the barman asks why he looks so sad and the ion says he has lost an electron, the barman asks is he sure and the ion replies,

"I am positive!"

-A neutron walks into a bar; he asks the bartender: "How much for a beer?" The bartender looks at him and says:

"For you, it's no charge".

-A frog went to visit a fortune teller. "What do you see in my future?" asked the frog. "Very soon," replied the fortune teller, "you will meet a pretty young girl who will want to know everything about you." "That's great!" said the frog, hopping up and down excitedly. "But when will I meet her?"

"Next week in science class." said the fortune teller.

-Biology is the only science in which multiplication means the same thing as division.

## A Special Thanks

The MESA Program of Solano Community College would like to thank the following for their support and generous donations to the MESA Foundation in Spring 2012:

- Tara Dacus
- Kitchell Construction Management
- Pacific Gas and Electric Company





## Solano College MESA Team Makes Progress in Haiti

By Imani Dhahabu, B.S. Engineering 2014



SCC MESA Students Abraham Gacad, Silvia Murguia and Arturo Castillo in April 2012 taking measurements for new school construction plans



Arturo Castillo, SCC MESA student (center) going over the proposed school plans with interested residents of Cherette



The school walls are coming up! Progress being made on construction of the new school during the last visit to Cherette, Haiti in July 2012



In the summer of 2011, Water Education International approached Solano College's President Jowel Laguerre to work on a project in his home village of St. Georges, Haiti. While reluctant at first, Dr. Laguerre accepted the challenge and has shared it with some of the students in the MESA program. Over the last year three trips have been made by Dr. Laguerre, the MESA director Mostafa Ghous, and several MESA students to renovate a seriously dilapidated school site in a nearby village of Cherette and host medical clinics in these villages. I was so fortunate to be a part of the team

that went on this trip last April.

It was really life changing to see people so hungry for knowledge, education, and ways that they might better their lives and the lives of their neighbors. They are very capable people and I am so thankful to take part in a project that will empower those capabilities. It has been special to me to build a bridge with some of the people I met along the way and cultivate relationships with other MESA students. By far, the greatest reward was being a part of the medical clinics and not only helping in the impactful empowerment of literally hundreds of people, but being

open to them touching my life. I look forward to returning.

On the most recent trip in July, much progress was made. Our hope is that the reconstruction of the school facilities will be completed by the end of October of this year. However, much work still needs to be done, most notably by way of fundraising. If you have any great ideas please share them with Mostafa Ghous, Arturo Castillo, a member of the MESA Staff, or myself. Also stay open to the possibilities of participating in similar projects in the near future as I know they are in the works.

## Solano Community College Graduate Seeks Cure

By Shemila Johnson, Public Relations SCC



Abraham Gacad

Seeks Cure.... Continued from page 1

“I learned professionalism, responsibility, leadership, and mentoring through the aca-

demical programs and clubs. The resources offered at the school were a great support, my grade point average increased every semester after joining MESA,” shared Abraham. “The project for Haiti (building a school in a remote village) has also taught me invaluable life lessons. We raised about \$20,000 to fund this project through fundraising activities and building partnerships with local business owners. Not only have I learned the curriculum for Chemical Engineering, but also Civil Engineering through my experiences and opportunities at SCC!”

Abraham’s siblings, Farrah Gacad (older

sister) and Vincent Gacad (younger brother) are also SCC student successes. Farrah graduated from SCC and will graduate with her Bachelor’s degree from Sacramento State University in December 2012, and Vincent currently attends Solano planning to run for Presidency of the MSS club in the fall. The Gacad family embodies the SCC mission and vision, congratulations Abraham on your present and future success!

## Congrats to Students on MESA Director’s List !

The following students earned a GPA of 3.0 or higher for Spring 2012.

<b>Latifah Alexander</b>	<b>Colin Ferguson</b>	<b>Baban Malhi</b>	<b>Donna Sandoval</b>
<b>Sarah Amin</b>	<b>Leah Ferrell</b>	<b>Gregory Maring</b>	<b>Lakshay Seth</b>
<b>Walid Arghandewal</b>	<b>Antara Finney</b>	<b>Karen Martinez</b>	<b>Pei-Ju Shih</b>
<b>Chanratha Augustus</b>	<b>Abraham Gacad</b>	<b>Monica Moelk</b>	<b>Akashdeep Singh</b>
<b>Naser Baig</b>	<b>Vincent Gacad</b>	<b>Amr Mohamed</b>	<b>Naila Souder</b>
<b>Casey Bess</b>	<b>Jenna Gu</b>	<b>Silvia Murguia</b>	<b>Bitu Teymouri</b>
<b>Gurdev Biring</b>	<b>Tony Guevara</b>	<b>Nehemiah O’Neal</b>	<b>Mitra Teymouri</b>
<b>Thomas Bock</b>	<b>Edgar Guzman</b>	<b>Matthew Pinkerton-Lloyd</b>	<b>Sante Thomas</b>
<b>Alex Braich</b>	<b>Sandy Harapetian</b>	<b>Jimmy Quach</b>	<b>Khon Tram</b>
<b>Alonzo Brown</b>	<b>Michelle Johnson</b>	<b>Hazel Quintanilla</b>	<b>Sean Tran</b>
<b>Arturo Castillo</b>	<b>Alamgir Kandhari</b>	<b>Ciclydy Rodriguez</b>	<b>Maria Vasquez</b>
<b>Joshua Cox</b>	<b>Candace Lambert</b>	<b>Jamie Rodriguez</b>	<b>Qi Wang</b>
<b>Christina Dang</b>	<b>Rickey Lee</b>	<b>Joel Rodriguez</b>	<b>Asifa Wong</b>
<b>Stephanie DaRosa</b>	<b>Sijie Lin</b>	<b>Viridiana Ruiz</b>	
<b>Anamaria Eljach</b>	<b>Ting Lin</b>	<b>Julio Sanchez</b>	



## Mission Statement:

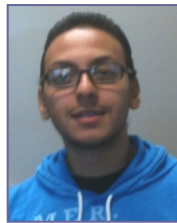
MESA supports and enables educationally and economically disadvantaged students to prepare and graduate to a four-year college or university with a math-based degree in areas such as engineering, the sciences, computer sciences or computer engineering, and mathematics.

Through MESA, students develop academic and leadership skills, increased educational performance, and gain confidence in their ability to compete professionally.... MESA students will be able to make significant contributions to the socioeconomic well-being of their families and their communities.

# TUTORING AVAILABLE TO MESA STUDENTS!

## GROUP TUTORING SCHEDULE FOR:

### FALL 2012



AMR MOHAMED

MATH 104

Monday & Wednesday

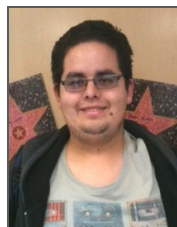
10am – 12pm



VINCENT GACAD

MATH 104, 20, 21 PHYSICS 6

Friday 10am – 12pm



GEOFFREY FREIRE

CIS 1, 15, 22 IT 101

MT 120, 122, 140, 162

MICROSOFT OFFICE 66,90

Monday 1 – 2pm

Wednesday 12 – 2pm



ANTARA FINNEY

MATH 104, 30 & 31 CHEM 160, 1

Tuesday 9:30 – 10:30am



ANGIE CORTES

M.A. Mathematics  
B.S. English

MATH 2, 4, 11, 20, 21, 30, 31, 51, 103, 104

ENGLISH 1, 2, 4, 30

Friday 1 – 3pm



LEAH FERRELL

MATH 104 CHEM 160 BIO 16

ENGLISH 1

Monday & Wednesday

12:30-1:30pm



JENNA GU

MATH 104, 20, 21

CHEM 160, 1, 2

Friday 10 – 11am

**All tutoring sessions will take place in the MESA Center.  
Please check the white board in the Center for any last  
minute schedule changes.**



## SOLANO

### COMMUNITY COLLEGE

4000 Suisun Valley Road

Fairfield, CA 94534-3197

#### **A NEWSLETTER PUBLICATION OF SOLANO COMMUNITY COLLEGE MESA PROGRAM**

The Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement (MESA) Program at Solano Community College was started in 1992 to serve economically and educationally underrepresented students. The focus was to encourage them, through a wide range of services, to develop the pre-requisite academic and leadership skills necessary to transfer to, and later graduate from, a four-year university with a degree in mathematics, engineering, and/or science. This semestral newsletter keeps the wider community and participants informed of what is happening at the MESA Center and the MESA/Solano community.

Solano Community College MESA Program

4000 Suisun Valley Road

Fairfield, CA 94534

Building 400, Room 434

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Dena Hudson - MESA Admin. Assistant

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Fax: 707-863-7867

Email: [mostafa.ghous@solano.edu](mailto:mostafa.ghous@solano.edu)

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Statewide Web-site: [mesa.ucop.edu](http://mesa.ucop.edu)

SCC MESA Page: [www.solano.edu/mesa](http://www.solano.edu/mesa)

Facebook: Friend 'MESA Solano' or log on to  
[www.facebook.com/mesa.solano](http://www.facebook.com/mesa.solano)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/MESAsolano](http://www.twitter.com/MESAsolano)

Blog: [www.blogs.solano.edu/MESA](http://www.blogs.solano.edu/MESA)

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