

# MESA PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

January 2024



## FALL 2023 BY THE NUMBERS

**73** Members

**45** Events

**12** STEM classes  
MESA provides  
tutoring in

**1,765**  
Recorded visits  
to the MESA Center

**4,400**  
Actual visit  
projection

## FALL RECAP

I'd like to start by thanking everyone for the warm welcome to College of Marin. I feel so fortunate to do my dream job surrounded by supportive colleagues and welcoming students.

We started the semester with four priorities. These included establishing sustainable administrative processes, building relationships with faculty, campus partners, and local high schools, and creating a welcoming and well resourced MESA Community Center. Our final priority was meeting as many COM students as possible by saying "yes!" to every event and opportunity we encountered.

I am very proud of all we have accomplished in our six months and hope you enjoy the sampling that follows. This semester's successes would not have been possible without our dynamite team:

- Lisa Abellera
- Sam Jimenez
- Guadalupe Jimenez Martinez
- Olivia Thorgersen
- Fernando Agudelo Silva
- Levi Chacon
- Paul Daubenmire
- Leila Leibert
- Solomon Smith
- Our amazing MESA students

-Nicole McIntyre  
MESA Director

# Program Overview

All College of Marin students are welcome to visit the MESA Community Center in SMN 127. In the space, they can access tutoring, mentoring, drop-in counseling, office hours with the MESA Director, textbooks, snacks, coffee, a fridge, and microwave.

Many of our MESA events are open to the student body and are widely advertised via the Community Hour schedule, flyers, social media, etc.

Learn more at [www1.marin.edu/MESA](http://www1.marin.edu/MESA) or on instagram at [@MESA\\_at\\_COM](https://www.instagram.com/MESA_at_COM)



To join the MESA cohort, students must meet a series of eligibility criteria:

- Studying a calculus-based major in a STEM field
- Intend to transfer to a four-year university
- Be a first-generation college student (parents did not graduate with a four-year degree)
- Demonstrate financial need by receiving financial aid (including the California Promise Grant or Pell Grant) or by participating in an EOPS, CARE, CalWORKS, or TRIO outreach program
- Have not previously earned a bachelor's degree
- Be a US Citizen, Permanent Resident, or AB540

### Friends of MESA:

Students may join the “Friends of MESA cohort” if they meet the above requirements but EITHER demonstrate financial need OR are a first-generation college student.

## MESA STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: ISELA SOSA MENDOZA

Hello, my name is Isela, I'm from El Salvador and I have two children. I started studying in the ESL program 5 years ago at COM. Then, I learned that it was possible to continue my education in a 4-year university and started taking the required classes to transfer and get a mechanical engineering degree. In the last two summers I had the chance to do research at a neuroscience lab at Stanford focused on studying an alternative treatment for pain and depression using electricity instead of opioids. I got the chance to learn new things and apply concepts that I knew from my science classes.

This was possible with the help of the STEM center (now MESA) because they helped me to find this opportunity and guided me through the process. They also have helped me to attend different conferences where I learned more about engineering. This semester I applied for transfer. Although I don't know yet where I will go, I would like to continue doing research because it is something I enjoy.

I'll be here in the spring and I'm always happy to talk to anyone who wants to talk with me! I understand that sometimes the educational path is hard, but I believe that if we work with passion we can succeed.



## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community outreach is a cornerstone of the state-wide MESA grant. At College of Marin, we are especially excited to speak with local middle and high school students and hope to facilitate their excitement about studying STEM.

This Fall, outreach included:

- Bilingual student panels for COMPASS students from San Rafael High School and Terra Linda High School
- A hands-on chemistry demonstration for COMPASS students from Tamalpais High School
- Spanish language student panel and faculty welcome for English Language Learners from Novato High School
- Presenting to high school counselors from across Marin Country and 10,000 degree
- Strategic planning with school leaders from Novato Unified School District and Terra Linda High School

We look forward to building strong partnerships with school sites and developing ongoing programming to bolster STEM participation and recruit future MESA students.

Current MESA students who are interested in community outreach are encouraged to connect with Nicole.

## COUNSELOR CORNER



Congrats on being done with the FALL semester!

MESA has completed it's first official semester that was full of changes and growth. In my time here, I have been able to meet many of you and learn more about who you are and who you strive to be. This leaves me with excitement to see all the places you will each be part of: from conferences, internships, research opportunities and especially the universities you will transfer to. There is so much variety and many unique paths! I am grateful to be learning so much alongside of you all, faculty and students alike. Working together to make sense of all the different pieces needed to get you where you want to go is exciting. I know it can also be confusing and overwhelming so I am glad to be on your team and work towards figuring it out.

Thank you for bearing with us as we build a strong foundation for MESA that ensures everyone feels welcome, supported and seen. Looking forward to the new year and to see you all again!

Felices Fiestas! Happy Holidays!

-Guadalupe Jimenez Martinez  
MESA Counselor

## MESA GOES TO THE BOARD

On November 14, Carol Hernandez (Dean of Mathematics, Sciences, & Business) and Nicole McIntyre presented to the College of Marin Board of Trustees.

The Board was excited to learn of all the progress made by the MESA program this semester. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

You can review the slides from the Board meeting at [tinyurl.com/COMBoard23](https://tinyurl.com/COMBoard23)

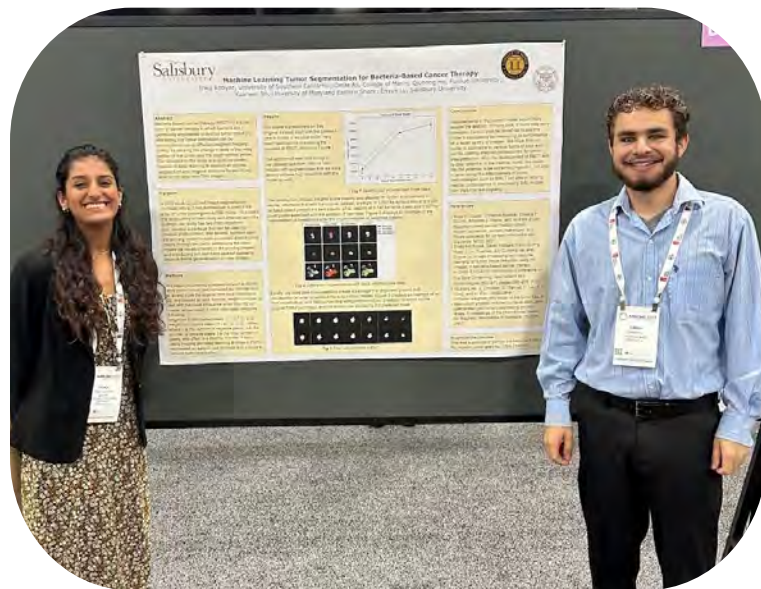


## MESA STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: OMAR ALI

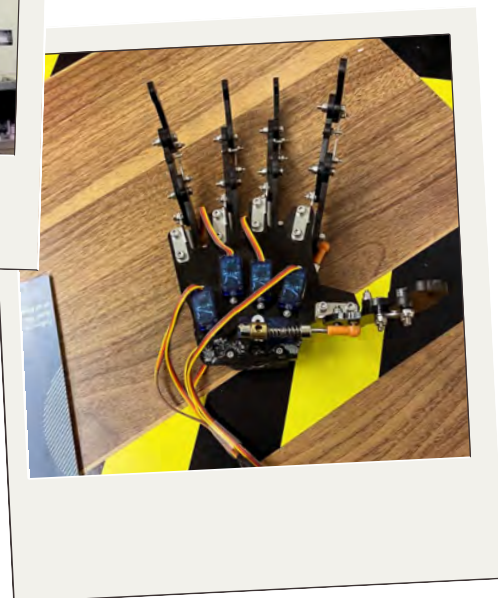
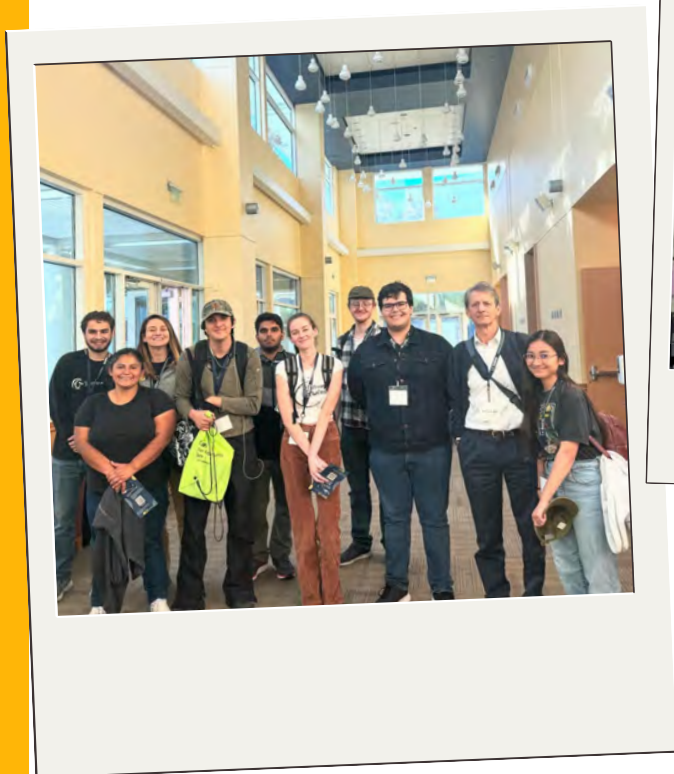
The MESA program has really helped me grow academically as well as in my career, and MESA has been my biggest advocate.

My past summer was spent in Maryland at Salisbury University, studying an application of machine learning to tumor segmentation in bacteria-based cancer therapy. I had a great time there thanks to my project partner and mentors, and I would highly recommend other students apply to REUs who are interested in research or want to dive deeper into their field. Thanks to funding from ASCOM and MESA, I was able to attend the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minoritized Scientists this November where I presented the work I did over the summer.

This year I returned to school with a newfound appreciation for the importance of extracurricular involvement, and I have participated in MESA field trips to an engineering conference in San Jose and UC Davis. I feel very fortunate for the support and counseling I have gotten from MESA which have been invaluable to my college success, and I hope that the program continues to grow so that many more can also feel the benefits the program has to offer.



## STEM TRANSFER DAY AT UC DAVIS



## BUCK INSTITUTE PARTNERSHIP

MESA and Career Services are building an exciting partnership with the Buck Institute for Research on Aging. On November 1, scientists from the Buck's Minority Training Association participated in a scientist panel at the College of Marin. They spoke about their education, career path, research, and experiences in STEM to a packed room.

A week later, the Buck's Senior Program Manager spoke to students about the exclusive opportunities for COM students to participate in paid research each semester.

Learn more: [ss.marin.edu/student-employment/buck-institute-internship-program](https://ss.marin.edu/student-employment/buck-institute-internship-program)



## UPCOMING PROJECTS

We are excited to continue to grow the MESA program and facilitate a more dynamic STEM community at COM. Keep an eye out for the following updates this Spring:

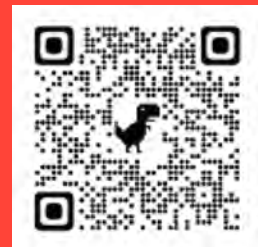
- MESA cohorts in 6 STEM classes
- Facilitated study groups in five STEM classes
- Cohorted mentoring program
- MESA student retreat
- New member orientation
- SMS texting to MESA participants
- More middle & high school outreach
- MESA swag!



## SAVE THE DATES

- 1/17 MESA Student Retreat
- 2/5 MESA Welcome Lunch
- 3/16 Silicon Valley Women in Engineering Conf.
- 3/18-3/21 LA College Visit Trip with MAPS
- 4/5-4/7 MESA Statewide Leadership Conference
- 4/24 COM Spring Fling
- 5/3 MESA Decision Day Festivities
- 5/10 Science & Math Study Party
- 5/23 MESA Spring Celebration

COLLEGE OF  
**MARIN**



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