



Statewide Washington MESA Day To Be Held May 22 At Microsoft

SEATTLE – Washington MESA Day, a one-day event of academic challenges for middle and high school students representing seven MESA (Math, Engineering, Science Achievement) Centers from across the state, will be held Sat., May 22, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Microsoft Conference Center in Redmond, Wash.

Fostering collaboration with the state's rich community of scientists and engineers, MESA Day students will showcase their talents for future careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields. Sponsored by Microsoft, the event will feature regional MESA team winners competing in three core challenges highlighted by a wind energy challenge (WEC) during which students will work with teachers and mentors to construct a windmill to generate electricity. The WEC winner will go on to compete in the national MESA competition in Colorado in June. Students will also compete in mathematics and structural engineering challenges.

Washington MESA, which is a part of the University of Washington's Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity, builds a pathway to college and careers in STEM fields for students who are underrepresented in these fields: African American, Native American, Latino/a and female students.

"MESA Day is the culmination of the rigorous academic work and hands-on learning instruction that our MESA students have been involved with all year," Washington MESA Senior Associate Director Lucy Casale said. "Given the continued achievement gap and constant bad news we get about our educational system and our students' performance, it is important that we work hard to engage our students and innovative programs like this do just that. MESA Day is also important because regardless of whether or not our students come from homes that have higher poverty levels or have less exposure to extracurricular and out-of-class learning opportunities, this is an opportunity to show what all our students, especially underrepresented minority students, can and do achieve."

Several MESA teams from across the state have earned the opportunity to compete in the event. Shadle Park High School, Shaw Middle School and Salk Middle School will represent Spokane MESA, while Jason Lee Middle School, Mountain View High School and Hudson's Bay High School have advanced from the Southwest Vancouver MESA region. Tacoma MESA will be represented by Washington High School, Curtis Junior High, Keithley Middle School and First Creek Middle School. Also competing will be Yakama Valley First Nations High School from the First Nations East/Toppenish region, as well as Wapato High School and Granger High School from Tri-Cities MESA. First Nations West will be represented by Suquamish Huchoosedah High School, while Jane Adams Middle School and Rainier Beach High School advanced from the Seattle MESA Day competition.

For more information about Washington MESA Day, contact Phyllis Harvey-Buschel, Washington MESA Government Regional/Curriculum Director, at pgharvey@u.washington.edu or 206-897-1714.