MESA competition promotes engineers of future

By TARIMO HANNULA
OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN
UC SANTA CRUZ — More than 400 twelfth and high school students got a dose of university life Saturday during the annual Math Engineering and Science Achievement preliminary competition at UC Santa Cruz.

The educationally disadvantaged students, from 16 schools between the Pajaro Valley and Soledad, competed in the one-day event in a week of math and hands-on exercises, and Alexandra Lechitter, MESA director.

As the world economy changes focus from industrial to technological, there is a demand to prepare students to be successful in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. MESA, which is nationally recognized for its academic-development programs, engages thousands of students so they excel in math and science and graduate with math-based degrees. MESA partners with all segments of California higher education as well as 822 institutions.

For more than 42 years, MESA has a track record of producing math-based graduates by providing classes, hands-on competitions, counseling, transfer support and a community environment for students from middle school through four-year college.

Marcus Arguelles, a Watsonville High student, said he competed in the Math Quest in three divisions, advanced algebra/trigonometry, pre-calculus and calculus.

"There's definitely some stiff competition here," he said. "Students do take this seriously." See MESA, page A8

Sun power

Stanford University's solar-powered car was on display Saturday at UC Santa Cruz. The vehicle, once fully charged, can travel up to 50 mph and for several hours.