

Paulina Cisneros
UCSD, Structural Engineer Class of 2010
Calexico High School Class of 2006
William Moreno Jr. High School Class of 2003

I am extremely honored to have been a part of the MESA program while attending Calexico High School from 2003 to 2006. MESA gave me the opportunity and motivation to pursue a college education when I didn't have a clear idea of my future. The program exposed me to math and science and showed me that I actually had passion for it. I wasn't sure exactly how I could apply that passion until I started working on the balsa wood bridges. It was then that I realized that I wanted to become an engineer. In the MESA program, I was able to place in multiple occasions and received many awards. This gave me confidence and most important, made me realize that I enjoyed engineering, math, and science.

After getting into UCSD, I went ahead and became a Structural Engineer. After graduation, just as the stories will tell, it is extremely hard to find a job, but eventually I was offered one. It was not related to my field, but certainly had to do with math and science. I moved to TEXAS to become a Fracturing Field Engineer and drill for oil. It was a life altering experience, but two years was enough...

In July 2013, I started working as a Project Engineer for FYFE Company in San Diego. As a Project Engineer I assist in the design of fiber resin polymer (FRP) to achieve seismic retrofits, steel repairs, and other structural applications. We make structures such as buildings, bridges, parking structures, pipes, etc. stronger with our products. In my position, I also supervise the installation of our products, answer questions to our clients, visit job sites, and improvise when the job doesn't go as planned. My job requires the understanding of the California Building Codes and the fundamentals of engineering but what's most important is to have a great attitude in work and life.

The application of our technology has many benefits, but notably in southern California, we make structures resist earthquakes. Being raised in Imperial County, I know the horror of earthquakes and being a part of a company that remedies these disasters showed me that I can really make a difference... And it all started from just a balsa wood bridge.



