

High school students to showcase math, science skills

By **HOWARD BUCK**
Columbian staff writer

Scores of middle and high school students will demonstrate their skills and host a day of learning, discovery, competitions and fun activities centered on science, technology, engineering and math Saturday at Clark College.

It's the sixth-annual MESA Day, hosted by the Southwest Washington Math, Engineering and Science Achievement program that brings underrepresented students into technical fields of study.

All students and parents are invited to attend the free events that run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in various buildings on Clark's main campus, 1933 Fort Vancouver Way. There will be a seminar on financial aid and college scholarships from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. in the Foster Hall auditorium. An electrical engineer from the Bonneville Power Administration will host a presentation, and an awards ceremony caps off the day.

A new attraction this year is a Wind Energy Challenge. Students have built wind devices that must be able to lift

a mass, move a vehicle and, for high school students only, generate electricity. Students will test devices, give oral presentations and develop an academic display board, all within the O'Connell Sports Complex, from 10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Other scheduled challenges include a Math Olympiad and buoyancy barges, ice-cream stick towers, egg drop and rocket car events.

Southwest Washington MESA now engages about 150 students, the vast majority of them middle-school stu-

dents, in the Vancouver, Evergreen and Hockinson school districts. Students are typically referred by teachers. MESA Day allows participants to showcase design, problem-solving, math and communications skills.

Local partners include Washington State University Vancouver, where MESA is housed; Clark College; Hewlett-Packard; College Spark; Bank of America; and Qwest Communications International. Individuals interested in volunteering should call Armetta Burney, MESA director: 360-546-9355.