



## 2024 – 2025 IFT Grant Summaries

### *Big Heroes: Little Sidekick Program*

**\$17,052 | Ke Huang**

#### **Alum Rock Educators Association**

This project aims to connect students with autism with their typically developing peers and create meaningful experiences for students with and without disabilities. The school administrators and teachers have diligently supported students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The “Big Heroes, Little Sidekick” reading buddy program has been implemented with students in general education classrooms. We would like to include students with autism in the reading buddy program and build partnerships with typically developing students across various learning activities. First, all classroom teachers will attend an autism awareness training and participate in educating all students on how to support students with autism. Second, upper-grade students who volunteer as reading buddies (i.e., Big Hero) will be trained to use the dialogic reading approach with younger students with autism. Structured story time, access to storybooks, and parent training on dialogic reading will also be implemented to prepare students with autism for the reading partnership. Third, matched grade-level peer buddies will be selected to partner with students with autism to support their mainstreaming experience in the general education environment. Dedicated spaces for inclusive activities and reading with peers will be created throughout the school.

### *Understanding Ecosystems Through Water Chemistry, Fishing, and Rearing White Seabass in the Classroom*

**\$7,315 | James Cavanagh**

#### **Anaheim Secondary Teachers Association**

Students in seventh and eighth grade science learn about living organisms and various ecosystems. Raising White Seabass in the classroom will be through a partnership with the Hubbs SeaWorld Research Institute. Maintaining a saltwater fish tank will provide students the opportunity to make

connections between the physical and life sciences by measuring water chemistry parameters and observing juvenile fish. The White Seabass will be monitored for three months and then students will help researchers tag the fish before releasing them into the local ocean ecosystem. Trips to three different ecosystems will be planned throughout the year so students can extend their classroom learning with field experiences. Students and one adult family member will be invited to participate in all field trips to encourage our students and families to become knowledgeable of the local habitats. A wetland trip will help students understand this sensitive habitat for plants, wildlife, and fish. We will also take students and a family member fishing at a lake and out on a half day sportfishing boat to enjoy and appreciate these environments. The sport of fishing engages a person in the environment and can lead to a lifetime of caring for the environment.

### *Beyond the Canvas: Elevating Art Education With Virtual Reality*

**\$4,280 | Luz Esquivel**

#### **Anaheim Secondary Teachers Association**

"Beyond the Canvas: Elevating Art Education with Virtual Reality" allows students to explore limitless artistic possibilities. Navigating virtual art environments requires students to analyze and solve challenges creatively. Integrating VR exposes students to technology, enhancing their technological proficiency. As VR becomes increasingly prevalent in various industries, students gain valuable skills that are transferable to future careers, contributing to their overall preparedness for a technologically advanced workforce. It allows collaborative art projects, even in virtual spaces. Students learn to communicate and work effectively with peers, sharing ideas, providing constructive feedback, and collectively creating art. These collaboration skills are transferable to various professional settings where teamwork is essential. VR also provides students with

self-paced learning experiences. This autonomy encourages self-direction and effective time management, skills that are vital for success in both academic and professional settings. Exposure to VR in the art classroom equips students with the ability to adapt to emerging trends and technologies. This adaptability is crucial for success in dynamic and rapidly evolving fields, ensuring that students remain competitive in the job market.

***Ground Zero: Building Community Through a Cross-Curricular, School-Wide Read***

**\$19,981 | Karen Pollack**

**Anaheim Secondary Teachers Association**

Brookhurst Junior High School will be embarking on a school-wide read of Alan Gratz’s number one New York Times Bestseller book, *Ground Zero*, in the 2024-25 school year. This novel is told from two perspectives: Brandon, 2001, at the World Trade Center on the day of the 9/11 attacks, and Reshmina, 2019, stuck between the American troops and the Taliban soldiers in Afghanistan. We believe that the “right book can bring a school community together...and help students and teachers strengthen their bonds as a community.” Our community was impacted by the events of 9/11. We are located in West Anaheim, California, about a mile away from Little Arabia with at least five mosques/Islamic learning centers in our immediate neighborhood. We want to address this topic because the students are very curious about the attacks on 9/11 and we are in a unique place to be able to use the assets in our community in a meaningful and engaging way so that students can see that the diversity of our community is a strength. In turn, this will help develop students’ character and compassion. Students will focus on oral histories and local heroes in their final project.

***Anaheim Kids for Kindness***

**\$20,000 | Gregory Taylor**

**Anaheim Secondary Teachers Association**

The Anaheim Kids for Kindness proposal seeks to address the critical need for equity and access to high-quality educational

experiences for ALL students, regardless of ability, disability diagnosis, or social emotional needs. Student Mentor Guides will be trained and grouped with students who are differently abled for the year and will work on a number of small projects together. Our students who are often labeled “high caliber” kids are exposed to several workshops, conferences, and training, and unfortunately, these opportunities become exclusive to them and are considered equal access, but are not equitable. The goal of this grant is four fold: 1) Train Student Mentor Guides and create opportunities to form genuine friendships with differently abled; 2), encourage as many of our differently abled students to attend leadership or skill based workshops with a Student Mentor Guide; 3) Have the mentors lead smaller scale workshops for the differently abled students; 4) Provide students with real world experiences through learning based field trips and community building events at local venues.

***Books for Badgers***

**\$14,800 | Tami Hildebrand**

**Angels Copper Educators**

The "Books for Badgers" project proposes the installation of a book vending machine in our school's library to promote literacy and cultivate a love of reading among students. Through this innovative initiative, students will earn tokens to "purchase" books, incentivizing reading and providing access to a diverse range of literature. The project aims to integrate parental involvement, community partnerships, and a focus on equity and diversity to create a supportive and inclusive learning environment. By leveraging the book vending machine as a tool for incentivizing reading and fostering student engagement, the project seeks to enhance literacy skills, promote critical thinking, and build students' capacity for future success. Through collaborative efforts with parents and other school stakeholders, the "Books for Badgers" project aims to create a vibrant and dynamic learning environment where every student has the opportunity to thrive academically and personally.



*"This is How We Roll" in PE With  
Dr. Hazel & Dr. D*

**\$20,000 | Hazel Richardson**

**Antelope Valley Teachers Association**

The East Side High School PE & Palmdale High School SPED Department will collaborate while partnering with their community as they participate in a project called: "This is How We Roll". This project fosters community involvement with students' advocacy to enhance their PE course experience and curriculum. The city of Lancaster and Palmdale students will see PE differently as the project promotes and introduces "Physical Fitness for Life" opportunities for students and their families year-round within the community. PE and fitness are not a popular priority. This project helps to bridge the gap academically, socially, and emotionally. Students and their parents get an opportunity to participate in a series of events that develop life-long physical fitness skills while increasing self-esteem and a positive attitude about participating in PE. Students and their parents learn about lifetime fitness choices and community resources that will benefit them for years. We have partnered with local transportation, YMCA, bowling alleys, skating rinks, horse stables, and jump stations to introduce the students to the activities as a student-centered approach that spotlights sportsmanship, self advocacy, student equity, accountability and leadership.

*Compete With Us*

**\$19,892.81 | Avery Cox**

**Associated Chaffey Teachers**

Our project aims to integrate robotic components into our engineering curriculum to ignite student engagement and inspiration. Through exciting competition-based projects, we instill a passion for robotics and technology, making learning enjoyable and meaningful. We prioritize student equity, advocacy, and relationship-building, ensuring that every student has access to resources and opportunities regardless of background or circumstance. By fostering a supportive and inclusive environment, we strive to increase student interest in high-paying STEM

fields, preparing them for future success. Our approach not only enhances academic achievement but also promotes attendance and enthusiasm for learning. Through hands-on experiences and collaborative projects, we aim to cultivate essential skills and ignite a lifelong curiosity for innovation.

*Community Landscape Maintenance*

**\$6,022.59 | Morgan Zerwas**

**Associated Teachers of Placer**

At Confluence High School we offer students many opportunities to explore their skills and interests in a very hands-on and individualized manner. As a Big Picture Learning School we offer students the opportunity to learn at their own pace, to create projects that are focused on their own interests, to participate in internships, and to interact with professionals in a variety of careers through guest speakers, community service, tours, and visits. Due to our school having a high percentage of low income students, our goal is to expose them to as many future opportunities as possible. While many of our students are in internships on Tuesdays and Thursdays, about 30% are not in an internship due to lack of motivation, mental health struggles, or just a general lack of direction. In order to engage the 30% who are not in an internship, we would like to start a Community Landscape Maintenance project. The students would use our Loomis Community Facebook page to find people in need of yard maintenance. They would do the scheduling, the invoices (we will not actually charge), the communicating, the marketing, and the yard work.

*BHS Mental Health Garden*

**\$11,850 | Melanie Najera**

**Banning Teachers Association**

The counseling team of Banning High School would like to establish a mental health garden for all students. Our students, who range from 13 to 18 years old, are in their adolescent years where they are becoming aware of their mental health and the impact it has on their lives. Gardening has proven to lighten moods and lower levels of anxiety and stress. The goal of our counseling team is to

teach students coping skills they can utilize in their everyday routines. Gardening can help students learn the skills of increased physical activity, breathing and relaxing the mind, finding a community of like-minded friends, gratitude, and pride as they share the food they have grown. In addition, we can incorporate gardening into our science courses, as students learn to germinate and sustain the plant growth cycles. We hope to establish this therapeutic garden to help enrich the school and local community by distributing the food grown to those in need. The garden will impact the lives of all students of Banning High in the areas of curriculum and mental health.

***Empowering Minds, Building Futures: A Student-Driven STEM Program With 3D Printing***

**\$5,000 | Zachariah Hunter**

**Beverly Hills Education Association**

This project fosters a student-centered STEM environment where students become active designers, problem-solvers, and creators through 3D printing technology. Students will design solutions to real-world problems, promoting student agency and ownership. By integrating the Strength-Based Equity Matrix, the program ensures equitable access for all learners, fostering collaboration and positive interdependence. Through presentations and showcasing their creations, students will advocate for their ideas, fostering school-wide and community engagement with parents and local organizations. This project builds future-ready skills by equipping students with design thinking, critical thinking, technology proficiency, and preparing them for success in college and careers.

***Bulldog Heroes: An Epic VR Odyssey***

**\$19,995.48 | Jaime Tintor**

**Beverly Hills Education Association**

The project aims to revolutionize the educational experience in our sixth-grade classroom by integrating Virtual Reality (VR) technology into our existing gamified curriculum. Over the past year, we've successfully implemented a system of

houses, quests, prizes, and awards to engage students deeply with the material. By adding a classroom set of 30 VR devices, we plan to elevate this engagement to unprecedented levels, offering immersive, interactive learning experiences that bring historical events and literary worlds to life. This technology will not only enhance learning for our general education students but will be particularly transformative for those in special education and reading support. The visual and experiential nature of VR can cater to diverse learning styles, making complex concepts more accessible and captivating for students who benefit from visual learning. By extending the use of VR to other courses in the sixth grade, we aim to create an inclusive, innovative, and fun learning environment that fosters accessibility, motivation, and educational success for all students.

***Inspiring the Next Generation of Engineers With an Integrated Software/Hardware Curriculum***

**\$4,955.84 | Ji Min Lee**

**Capistrano Unified Education Association**

This project aims to empower young minds through hands-on learning by introducing them to Arduino technology. With an emphasis on integrating software skills learned throughout the year with real-life hardware projects, this proposal seeks to cultivate innovation and critical thinking skills in high schoolers, reinforcing the idea that all students can code. Through structured workshops and interactive sessions, students will learn the fundamentals of engineering, electronics, and programming, using Arduino microcontrollers as their gateway. The project addresses the growing need for STEM education by providing accessible and engaging resources for young learners. By incorporating real-world applications and project-based learning, I hope to inspire curiosity and creativity in students, fostering a lifelong passion for technology. Through this grant, I aspire to bridge the gap between theory and practice, equipping the next generation with the skills and confidence needed to thrive in an increasingly technological world.



***Fostering Academic Excellence Through Theater***

**\$15,602 | Sophia Rendon**

**Capistrano Unified Education Association**

We are a group of teachers who believe in the powerful impact of the performing arts. This project aims to support a school musical that will cultivate a sense of joy and belonging as over 70 students of different ages, grade levels, abilities, and backgrounds can come together to develop friendships and life-long memories. It brings together the community: parents, staff, and students fostering a sense of partnership and shared purpose. With over 50% English Language Learners the funding will enrich our students' educational journey in countless ways: from fostering better communication skills to improving reading comprehension and memory. The Musical helps close the achievement gap because it improves student motivation, attendance, and helps develop leadership skills and improved self-confidence that then extend back into the classroom. The theater arts teach collaborative skills and empathy as students work with fellow actors, backstage crew, teachers, and families to put on an amazing show.

***Remote Control 1/4 Scale Mars Perseverance Rover Models***

**\$5,000 | Nic (Nicholas) Giannandrea**

**Central Unified Teachers Association**

Our project aims to inspire and educate students across various age groups by building, programming, and deploying three 1/4 scale remote-controlled models of the Mars Perseverance Rover. This interdisciplinary initiative will involve students from Digital 3D Design classes in creating and 3D printing parts, while those in Robotics and Electronics courses will handle assembly, wiring, and programming. The project's core objective is to foster practical STEM skills among high school students and to promote STEM education by showcasing these models at district elementary and middle schools. By combining hands-on learning with real-world applications, we aim to spark curiosity and enthusiasm for science, technology, engineering, and

mathematics. The initiative not only provides a unique educational opportunity for students to work on a collaborative and technologically advanced project but also aims to inspire the next generation of innovators and explorers by bringing the excitement of space exploration closer to home. Through this project, we seek to create a tangible connection between students and the forefront of scientific exploration, highlighting the importance and excitement of STEM fields.

***10 Ways to Help Our Planet This Summer!***

**\$1,645 | Lucia Ronan**

**Chico Unified Teachers Association**

Following a 5E model (Engage/Explore/Explain/Elaborate/Evaluate), students will be introduced to climate change through a timelapse video of our Earth changing environment. Students will then explore and elaborate on this topic through hands-on activities that promote solution-based thinking. The unit will end with a group pamphlet or poster board project. Students will work in groups to create simple and effective strategies they can share with their families and community to help the environment. Student projects will task them with presenting "10 things you can start doing this summer to help the environment in Chico". All student ideas will be rooted in the knowledge and hands-on experience they have gained from the unit and their understanding of the ecosystems of Chico.

***Del Norte Speech and Debate***

**\$4,649 | Charlotte Svolos**

**Del Norte Teachers Association**

We are attempting to relaunch our speech and debate team. There is no speech and debate league in California within 200 miles and we would like to be a model to other areas near us. We have tripled interest in the program with students qualifying for the state championship. We plan to hold a tournament for our younger grades to build interest.

***Growing MORE Healthy Students 2.0***  
***“Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow, for Life!” [R]***  
**\$19,200 | Patricia Schoenfeld**

**Desert Sands Teachers Association**

The project will strengthen and promote academic scholars and physical fitness at Hoover. Working together to combine strengths and knowledge, as we rebuild Hoover’s running club, after rebounding from the affects of Covid at Hoover. Our aim is to promote healthy habits, in and out of the classroom. Promote 100 Mile Club memberships, pre-school through fifth, and include family and community memberships. We will participate in 2-3 local 5Ks, and help plan a mutli-school 5K walk. Hoover had previously logged 50,000+ miles of walking between March 2012 and February 2020 when Covid hit. During a meeting, parents in attendance asked for the return of our running club. We have committed to re-growing our program with new students and re-create and promote excitement about health, wellness, and academics. We will strive to grow happy, healthy lifelong habits for our entire community. We are excited to reboot the running club and continue an "old journey." Cheers to our health, one mile, student, family membe, and community member at time.

***Cultivating Serenity: Establishing a Meditation Garden***

**\$4,918.30 | Ericka Gutierrez Estrada**  
**Downey Education Association**

Our proposal seeks funding to establish a meditation garden within our school premises, aiming to provide our school's Gardening Club with the opportunity to design and create a serene and rejuvenating space for relaxation and contemplation. Our grant proposal for a meditation garden fosters student agency by involving them in garden planning and maintenance, promoting responsibility and self-reliance. Universal design principles ensure equitable access for all learners. Through student-led initiatives, such as mindfulness sessions and gardening clubs, positive interdependence and collaboration are nurtured, amplifying student voices. The garden strengthens

school-wide relations, garnering commitment from colleagues and stakeholders. Parental involvement integrates their strengths into the learning environment, enhancing school-family relationships. Ultimately, we hope to foster resilience, leadership, and collaboration within a supportive ecosystem of well-being and inclusivity.

***Print Journalism***

**\$4,860 | Katherine Newray**  
**Eastside Teachers Association**

Four years ago, I took over the Silver Creek High School journalism program from a retiring teacher. While the paper continues, it only continues in a digital form. To give budding journalists the true journalistic experience, I would like the opportunity to send their articles to print. Giving students the opportunity to see and distribute their printed work will help them to engage the community and help to build the program.

***International Cultural Club and International Cultural Soirée***

**\$5,000 | Rajini Christadoss**  
**El Centro Secondary Teachers Association**

The International Cultural club will be initiated by the French students of Central Union High School in El Centro, CA. It is a small world after all when we get to know the cultures of other countries! On-going activities during the year include: speakers from different countries invited to speak about their country; cooking classes of ethnic dishes; basic language sessions for different languages, French, Japanese, Spanish, Tamil, Mandarin, Korean etc. by native or advance level presenters; international film screening; an international picnic for the community, students, parents, families and friends; practice sessions for cultural activities highlighted during the soirée; visits to special cultural events in the community; voluntary help and donations offered to those in need of help in the community; a trip in summer after school to a country of interest for those who are interested; a world pageant show with participants speaking different languages; international cultural programs; international decor with flags and posters; a

variety of international cuisine, lively international music, and colorful lights.

**Capital Region Engineering Science Technology (CREST) Project**

**\$16,742 | Michael Juba**

**Elk Grove Education Association**

The Capital Region Engineering Science Technology (CREST) project will provide students with hands-on experiences to build their interest and knowledge in science, engineering, math, and technology. Students will meet with designated advisors on a weekly basis to explore a variety of STEM activities and concepts. In addition, they will be given the opportunity to showcase their knowledge and acquired skills at two regional events. At these events, students will work in teams to tackle a variety of science, math, and engineering challenges and get an opportunity to share their passion for STEM with students from around the Capital region. The students will participate in a variety of activities such as building and launching water bottle rockets, identifying minerals, building wind turbines, and investigating STEM or scientific concepts such as force and motion, properties of matter, and steps of the engineering design process.

**Garden of Curiosity and Inquiry/Huerta de Curiosidad e Indagación**

**\$17,995.24 | Ashley Silva**

**Fontana Teachers Association**

The Dolores Huerta International Academy STEAM Garden is a school-wide initiative to promote transdisciplinary learning through real-world applied experience. Students/staff will work in project teams to design and develop a community garden focused on environmental stewardship. This living laboratory will be guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and study of earth sciences, native resources, environmental science, cultural practices, the engineering design process, and technology for sustainability. Team facilitators will align classroom content studies to applied learning in the garden to provide opportunities for students to make connections between subject content and

applied learning as they design, construct, and cultivate the garden. Team one will focus on collecting data from a community survey to establish the purpose of our garden (i.e. nutritional, experimental, aesthetic, or a combination) and design the garden space using the engineering design process while keeping in mind sustainable technology. Team two will focus on earth studies to investigate soil, soil amendment, native plants and what can be grown naturally. Team three will focus on water systems and climate. Our final team will focus on plant and animal life cycles and how living organisms play a crucial role in maintaining a healthy and thriving garden.

**The Suitcase Project: 5th Grade Mandarin Immersion Students Craft Their Narrative Through Art and Language**

**\$4,500 | Kristine Tsung**

**Fremont Unified District Teachers Association**

Mandarin, as China's primary language and a cornerstone of its global influence, has become increasingly vital. With over 1.3 billion people, constituting nearly 20% of the world's population, China's economic prowess and expansive market demand proficient Mandarin speakers. Despite its complexity due to character-based writing, mastering Mandarin opens doors to diverse career paths, from government roles to teaching in either American or Chinese institutions, as well as opportunities in international business. The Suitcase Project integrates Mandarin Immersion Program (MIP) students' language skills with cultural exploration, such as delving into family heritage through activities like cooking traditional dishes. Through experiential learning, MIP students prepare to navigate global dynamics and contribute effectively in an interconnected world. Creating art pieces throughout the year, 5th Grade Mandarin Immersion students fill and curate their handcrafted suitcases with written family narratives, and artwork, including family trees, recipes, interviews, self-portraits, timelines, and meaningful artifacts. Graduating 5th grade students will be

encouraged to reflect on their family history, and narrate how they will use their MIP education to better our global future. The project culminates in showcasing the handcrafted suitcases during Open House in person and an online photo exhibition.

***MIT Literacy Project***

**\$14,350 | Ryan Payne**

**Griffin Education Association**

The purpose of the project is to encourage reading for pleasure and improve students' literacy skills and comfort level in using a library. The majority of MIT students don't choose to read. To motivate students to visit the school library, the grant team will offer a reading program with incentives. We will purchase additional books for the library, including high interest titles and those for underrepresented groups. Students will earn credit toward community service hours by serving on the Book Selection or Book Processing committees. Parents, along with students, will be invited to attend a promotional event early in the school year, as well as a spring event to celebrate the MIT Literacy Projects' accomplishments.

***¡Si se puede, Horticultura!***

***(Yes You Can, Horticulture!)***

**\$20,000 | Cindy Stowe**

**Hanford Elementary Teachers Association**

Students will be avidly involved in the creation and nurturing of our plant life. Our grant promotes many learning opportunities and access for all students involved. Students will apply grade-level math to measure the perimeter and find the area of the garden beds and compost bins being built. Students will be able to learn and work outdoors with our outdoor classroom setup. We will be able to fully apply learning happening in the classroom directly to our school garden, making deeper school to home connections. Students will enjoy activities related to plant life and the cycle of matter within our school, including the use of unwanted food and composting. We will learn about the life cycles of various insects/decomposers and interpret the impact they have on our garden and the

growth of plants. Together we will reduce the amount of food wasted by composting and producing rich usable soil for the whole school. Fifth graders will enjoy a nature walk to Storybook Garden and Museum; a field trip offered to younger grades which focuses heavily on content related to our garden. By the end of the year, students will present their knowledge of matter and energy in plants to families.

***3D Design and Innovation Lab***

**\$20,000 | Amy Lindahl**

**Hayward Education Association**

Our students reside in an area that is the hub of software and technology innovation. Despite this, they lack access and exposure to coding, 3D design, and robotics. Our school community is underrepresented in STEM fields, but we have an opportunity to generate interest in STEM careers beginning in elementary school. This will put our students on a path to success and inclusion. To prepare our students with the 21st-century skills they need to be successful in today's technology-driven marketplace, they must have hands-on experience with technology. Our project is to develop a 3D Design and Innovation Lab as part of an onsite Makerspace. This dynamic hub will serve as a space for upper elementary students to engage in immersive project-based learning experiences. This state-of-the-art facility will foster creativity and critical thinking through hands-on exploration of robotics, 3D modeling, and design thinking. A tech council of student leaders will participate in this project to help set up and maintain the lab. This project will give our students a seat at the table in today's technology-driven economy.

***Learning Through the Arts: Arts Integration and Academic Achievement***

**\$19,250 | Lynette Nielsen**

**Hayward Education Association**

Arts integration practices involve thinking about routines and strategies that help expand student voice and offer more avenues of entry to core curriculum for all learners. We aim to bring arts integration practices



more fully into our classrooms and into the school at large. By doing so, we hope to increase student engagement, a deeper sense of community throughout our classrooms and school, and greater academic achievement. We will explore and develop lessons and concepts in our own classrooms and then with other teachers. As we build on these practices and explore art skills in connection with grade level standards, we will begin developing projects for each class based on student discussion and feedback. These materials will give students the ability to conduct hands on investigations and create in new ways. Field trips will help students experience content outside of the classroom structure and connect to learning that is happening in the classroom. At the end of the year students will present their learning to the community in culminating projects at various forums.

***Understanding Unsheltered Homelessness: An Examination of Systems, Services and Stories***

**\$4,820 | Grace D'Antuono  
High Tech Education Collective**

Across six months students will seek to answer two questions. How do we disrupt systems perpetuating homelessness? How can we change misconceptions about homelessness? To do so, students will explore three units. First, students will learn about homelessness across the nation as well as in their own communities. This will serve as an introduction to the issue and the humans who are affected by it every single day. Second, students will deeply examine causes and perpetuations of homelessness. They will do so through present and past case studies of systemic causes and perpetuations of homelessness such as mass incarceration, mental healthcare, and redlining. Third, students will explore solutions to address homelessness and local advocacy. Throughout the entirety of the project, students will partner with a local organization and their clients to learn more about individuals' experiences of homelessness and ongoing work to address these needs. The third unit provides time for

all of the learning to be put to action by students themselves in service of our partner non-profit and through local political advocacy. Throughout the project, students will write a book of short stories to be accompanied by a short documentary-style video of their experiences.

***Society, Technology and LEGO Robotics Project***

**\$20,000 | Adam Ko  
High Tech Education Collective**

This integrated 7th grade Humanities and STEM project aims to spark students' learning around technology and society. First, students will read a novel. Currently, our book idea is 7th Grade vs the Galaxy, but it may change. Students will learn about theme, grammar, character development, protagonists and antagonists. After finishing the book, the students will design their own comic, which allows students to see themselves in fiction as they model the characters and problems after their own lives. These comics will be combined into a class comic book, which will be presented to families and the community in our winter exhibition of learning. In the second part of the project, students will travel to LEGOLAND California to see how creativity and engineering can yield limitless possibilities. Back in the classroom, students will learn about computer science, work in teams, and problem solve with LEGO robotics. Students will attempt weekly challenges as they learn about coding, engineering, and math. In March, students will exhibit their learning to their families and the community by showcasing their LEGO robots completing specific challenges. We will close out the project by having students reflect on technology and society and adding this to their digital portfolio.

***Firebaugh School Garden***

**\$8,122 | Kate Thomas  
Lynwood Teachers Association**

We plan to create an inclusive, organic school garden to cultivate socioemotional learning and increase the awareness of healthy eating among our students. We will integrate the

garden into health and nutritional lessons through the implementation of an educational program. Our new school garden will involve building new components to the garden each month beginning next year. We want to create a communal space where students can gather and immerse themselves in outdoor activities and the art of growing produce. Our goal is for students to spend time in the garden learning about the food we are growing and where their food comes from. We aspire to expand the knowledge of the multi-faceted benefits of healthy eating to our students by encouraging students to attend after-school gardening classes hosted by Educare and our other Educational sponsors such as CaliFarmer and Moonwater Farm. Through our educational sponsors, we believe it is fundamental to increase the enrichment of students' educational experiences by arranging in-person field trips to these local farms. Ultimately, students will share with local food banks and those in need as well as encourage other students to eat vegetables and fruit from the garden.

***Classroom Library***

**\$5,000 | Vanja Miller**

**Mt. Diablo Education Association**

This project will allow us to expand our classroom library with books my first graders can get excited about and read on their own. We will be able to get nonfiction books on various topics at levels appropriate for my students as well as a range of fiction titles, both standalone and series. I would also like to add poetry to the mix. In addition, we will be able to make our library a place of mirrors and windows, so my students can see themselves reflected in the writings as well as learn about other cultures.

***Little Farmers' Oasis: Growing, Learning, and Clucking Together***

**\$10,075.22 | Mary VanDyke**

**Newman-Crows Landing Teachers Association**

Our second-grade students are embarking on an exciting and educational journey that combines science, economics, and hands-on learning. Through the integration of

hydroponics, succulent gardens, and chicken hatching, our young farmers will cultivate a thriving micro-farm right within the walls of their classrooms. Our second-graders will then sell the harvests from their gardens and handmade crafts to the students and staff at our school at our "Little Farmers' Oasis" Farmers' Market. At the market, our student customers will select a river rock to decorate and place in our school rock garden. This will provide a sense of community and a hands-on educational experience with economics that will impact our entire school.

***Faces of Fremont: Community Representation Through Collaborative Portraiture***

**\$9,195 | John Christie**

**Oakland Education Association**

Fremont High School faculty and students will implement the third iteration of the Faces of Fremont Project: a tradition of student painted large scale portrait murals rooted in community representation. These collaborative artworks will uplift the identities and assets of current students and families. Year three will expand the project to three departments: visual art, multimedia/photography, and wood technology. Students will engage in community research and portrait photography during semester one, developing a plan for student representation in a new set of murals. During semester two, art students will work in small groups through an iterative portrait design process with community input, before working collaboratively to paint a series of narrative portraits of current students or community members. Wood tech students will build frames for the artworks to be permanently displayed on campus. Community input sessions and ongoing evaluation and reflection systems will steer the project towards its overarching goals: to promote student agency, cultivate a sense of belonging, and empower youth to shape their environment both in school and beyond.

***Empowering LGBTQ+ Futures: Inclusion and Advocacy at Fremont High***

**\$17,000 | Thomas Martin-Edwards  
Oakland Education Association**

"Empowering LGBTQ+ Futures at Fremont High" is a pioneering project designed to deepen the support for LGBTQ+ students within Fremont High School. This initiative is set to enrich our campus culture with enhanced and new activities aimed at advancing inclusivity, empowerment, and community solidarity for LGBTQ+ students. The project includes comprehensive professional development for educators to foster a supportive learning environment, an innovative back-to-school shopping experience offering gender-affirming attire, a strategic advocacy field trip to Sacramento, and a series of drag performances and workshops to celebrate and educate on LGBTQ+ culture. Moreover, the initiative plans for the distribution of gender-affirming shapewear and the development of an impactful mural project to visualize LGBTQ+ activism and presence on campus, alongside the acquisition of curriculum materials that reflect diverse LGBTQ+ narratives. Our goal is to create a nurturing atmosphere where LGBTQ+ students are affirmed in their identities, supported in their educational journey, and empowered to advocate for themselves and their community, laying the groundwork for sustained inclusivity and equality at Fremont High School and beyond.

***Be Your Own Best Friend: SEL Through Creative Expression***

**\$18,600 | Kimberly Hunter  
Ontario-Montclair Teachers Association**

We would like to provide all our middle school, 6th-8th grade students, enrolled in SEL classes with a "Be Your Own Best Friend" journal, art supplies, and vision board materials. Students will receive instruction, materials, and a unique platform where they will have an opportunity to explore and express their emotions, thoughts, and experiences. Students will engage in various forms of artistic expression, verbal and non-verbal, such as different forms of drawing, painting, creating collages, sculpting, writing,

and performance. The artistic expression provided will offer our students a safe and creative outlet to process and communicate their inner world, making it an invaluable tool for enhancing social emotional learning. Students will now have an engaging platform that will support the SEL goals of emotional awareness and regulation, enhancing self-awareness, self-acceptance, self-confidence and promoting empathy and perspective-taking. Our students will have, as a result of this project, highly improved social-emotional skills and health.

***The Brown-Stronger Together Heritage Celebration Series***

**\$14,800 | Diana Castillo-Siplin  
Oroville Secondary Teachers Association**

The Oroville Union High School District students would like to plan, execute, and celebrate four cultural celebrations throughout the national Latino Heritage month, Black History month, Native American Heritage Month, and Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. The celebrations will be student run and will include dinner, student art displays, student performances, student presented cultural information, and a motivational speaker with a focus on student success, overcoming obstacles, and how parents and families can aid in student success. With guidance from club advisors, and community stakeholders, the clubs from all three campuses will collaborate to plan logistics of the celebration, design promotional materials, plan décor, contact stakeholders and performers, and work within their budget. Our hope is to bring students, parents, and the community together in celebrating our students' heritage by learning about our differences, similarities, and struggles.

***Empowering Home Study Students to Combat Climate Change***

**\$20,000 | Laura McCorkell  
Piner Olivet Education Association**

Last year, students in the Piner-Olivet Home Study Program successfully completed their first year-long PBL endeavor. The experience cultivated the skills of critical-thinking,

collaboration, agency, and responsibility. This grant will build upon that achievement and expand students' research projects next year by incorporating STEAM and hands-on learning. Students will investigate the question, "How has climate change altered our planet, and what can we do to prevent further irreparable damage?" Students will research the impact of climate change on the land, water, and air over time. They will generate their own solutions both locally and globally. Students will attend field trips to local environmental research centers and organize a local beach cleanup. They will interact with guest speakers from local organizations working to fight climate change. At the Fall Project Fair, students will display a recycled art project. The project will culminate in 4-12 students presenting research papers and PowerPoint presentations at the Spring Project Fair, and K-3 students will present informational books. This grant will fund the opportunity for students to educate and connect with our community. This will provide students with a platform for their voices and will demonstrate that they can be agents of change in our world.

*Explorando Nuevas Culturas a Través de A.B.C.D. (Arte, Baile, Canto y Drama) (Exploring New Cultures Through A.B.C.D.; Art, Dance, Singing and Drama)*

**\$17,635.12 | Rosa Martinez**

**Pittsburg Education Association**

The Dual Immersion program educators in our two elementary sites, Foothill and Willow Cove, have pondered the question, How can we integrate cultural diversity in our schools and have students and families feel welcomed, accepted, and appreciated with a sense of belonging? This project is about the importance of learning about other cultures, celebrating diversity, and the value each family brings to cultivate an attitude of acceptance and respect. By creating an atmosphere of inclusivity, we will be able to develop multiculturalism, confidence, pride, teamwork, patriotism, and leadership, through different modalities, but we will integrate an entire community. All students

will be provided with a number of interesting facts from various countries represented in our program. Each teacher will use the resources obtained to highlight culture through art, dance, singing, or drama. Students will present their final projects in a celebration that will have as an incentive an award and recognition for their effort and dedication.

*Engineering Electric Vehicles*

**\$5,000 | Brian Bartlett**

**Redlands Teachers Association**

Electric vehicles (EVs) will make up 10 percent of new vehicles by the year 2030, and electric bike (e-bike) sales have surged 269% as of 2022. Most of our students have ridden, or know of someone that has an e-bike or electric vehicle. It is important that our students know how these vehicles work, know how they are designed differently, and know how to properly build and maintain electric vehicles. This grant will provide advanced engineering students the opportunity to design, build, and test their own electric vehicle. As the demand for electric vehicles increases, so does the demand for engineers with background in EVs.

*Code & Create: Empowering Student-Centered Game Design*

**\$19,987.45 | Cory Elgin**

**Redlands Teachers Association**

This project has 7th and 8th grade computer programming students at multiple sites collaborating to design, code, and create games that they will present and share with classmates, peers, other students in the district, and the community. Students enrolled in computer programming currently learn text-based coding and logic. This project will allow us to expand our curriculum to include 2D and 3D visual games. It will be implemented in multiple classes at two different schools, and consist of three phases each year. The project will be student-centered and collaborative, with a focus on teamwork, creativity, skill-building, and problem-solving. First, students will learn coding and game design fundamentals





through lessons, game tutorials, and small individual projects. Second, they will collaborate to develop their own games from concept to completion. Students will share ideas and strategies, receive, and utilize feedback from peers. Finally, they will present their games to peers, families, and the community, and awards will be given to top designs in various categories. Code & Create will provide an engaging way for students to practice coding and logic, develop an interest in the gaming industry, and provide them with skills needed to succeed in a technology-driven world.

### ***Thestival: Inspiring the Next Generation of Theatre Artists***

**\$12,600 | Elena Villa**

#### **Redlands Teachers Association**

Held annually in March, "Thes-tival," (a "festival" of "thespians") brings together current Redlands middle school Advanced theatre students to showcase their creativity, passion, and dedication to the arts. The festival provides acting technique and technical workshops led by Citrus Valley Advanced Theatre students and features a middle school performance showcase. The festival will culminate in an awards ceremony, recognizing outstanding performances, innovative storytelling, and collaborative efforts. Thestival not only provides a platform for young artists to shine but also fosters a sense of community, camaraderie, and a lifelong love for theatre.

### ***Lions Showcase***

**\$14,500 | Joshua Augustus**

#### **Rialto Education Association**

The Lions Showcase Project combines Performing Arts and Leadership. Performing and visual arts productions are an incredible way to reach a large audience with our message on the importance of diversity. Students will collaborate with other student body members to create a culturally relevant showcase for middle school and elementary school students. Students will learn to write scripts, improve public speaking, and learn different ways of expression. Each one of our events will promote social justice through a

lens of understanding our differences and showing empathy for others. The Lion Showcase team members develop as leaders by learning rules of conduct in a formal meeting. Students will learn how to open/close a meeting, bring up new business, and how to vote on important issues. The students will elect peer leaders and learn how to navigate education and business organizational structures. Students will learn best practices on how to keep their team motivated, ways to use ice breakers effectively, and positive leadership styles.

### ***The Inner Stage: Cultivating Confidence and Creativity***

**\$14,180 | Jessica Alvarado**

#### **Round Valley Teachers Association**

"The Inner Stage" creative drama and theater project is an initiative for K-12 students that transcends the traditional boundaries of performing arts. Rooted in the belief that self-assurance and the courage to be one's true self are invaluable, this project aims to provide a platform for personal and collective expression. Our mission is to harness the transformative power of theater and the joy of playful expression to develop essential life skills in a safe and supportive community space, enabling students to grow socially, emotionally, and intellectually.

### ***Multisensory Learning Environment***

**\$19,716.35 | Katrina Marr**

#### **Saddleback Valley Educators Association**

A designated sensory space in the school environment supports student learning as well as their health and wellbeing. A designated sensory space is a space within the school site that provides sensory input based on individual student needs while also providing opportunities for students to self-regulate. When students are given the opportunity to regulate their emotions and have access to sensory input they are more likely to be ready to learn and be more attentive. Regulating emotions and sensory needs will allow students to better interact with peers and adults. The multisensory learning environment will have materials and equipment to support development in the



tactile, auditory, visual, vestibular, and proprioception sensory systems. The designated sensory space will be developed based on the needs and strengths of each student by providing spaces that develop and utilize the different sensory systems.

### *Let's Read and Play, TK and K!*

**\$17,500 | Marilyn Farrens**

**Salida Teachers Association**

Let's Read and Play, TK and K! will provide a motivating experience for TK and kindergarten students to play and learn at the same time. This project will be a collaborative effort between parents, teachers, students, and the community to promote literacy and social-emotional skills through play-based activities. During the first portion of this program, classrooms will be revamped in order to implement play areas, such as a kitchen, café, blocks, and puppets/drama. The other half of the project will include Family Literacy Nights that will be offered to TK and K families in the fall and spring, in order to educate families of the importance of at-home reading and playing.

### *Sewing Seeds of Kindness*

**\$4,104 | Lisa Pena**

**Salida Teachers Association**

This project will be a basic sewing club that meets after school to teach 9-11 year old kids sewing skills. We will begin with learning hand sewing stitches and practice small projects of stuffed monsters. After they master this, we will move to machine skills. Students will have to demonstrate machine knowledge and basic threading and bobbin winding skills before starting the sewing of projects. While studying these skills, we will introduce fabric, texture and color knowledge to help them start to see how the combination of fabric they choose will enhance the esthetics of their finished projects. The first charity we will sew for is Ryan's Case for Smiles, a non-profit that takes thematic, fun, and colorful cases to children in the hospital. There are actually 14 non-profit charities that will accept our pillow cases, so we will have lots to keep us busy! Lastly, students will get to keep one pillow case they make to remember their time

in Sewing Seeds of Kindness and all the smiles they promoted through sharing their new-found talent. "The first thing I ever sewed" is a big deal to sewists, so it is important they get to take a memento with them.

### *Puma Lab: Bridging Cultures Through Creative Innovation*

**\$15,379.16 | Cristina Lizaola**

**Salinas Elementary Teachers Council**

Nestled in our dual language immersion school, the PumaLab is envisioned as a cornerstone of creativity and cultural understanding. This maker space is designed to foster the arts at the core of our educational philosophy, ensuring every student, irrespective of background, has the means to express and innovate. Our initiative champions student-centered learning, empowering them with the tools for creativity, self-reliance, and a strong sense of ownership over their learning journey. PumaLab is a testament to our commitment to equity, providing a space where every voice can shape the future. It encourages student advocacy through art and collaboration, promoting a sense of interdependence and teamwork. This initiative will strengthen school-wide relationships, inspiring teachers and students to integrate STEAM into our curriculum and share their unique talents. The lab will extend its reach to families, inviting them to contribute and participate in our cultural celebrations like El Día de los Muertos and Art Night, making it a hub of communal creativity. Moreover, PumaLab aims to build community solidarity, engaging with local artists and organizations such as Hijos Del Sol, supported by our PTO and Parent Voices team. This approach enriches our learning environment and crafts a network of support and inspiration

### *Black and Brown Girls United to Heal*

**\$20,000 | Maria Miller**

**San Diego Education Association**

There is a lack of representation of young girls in leadership positions. Girls are involved in disciplinary actions dealing with fights and unhealthy choices. Girls are receiving less

than “C” grades in courses for lack of dressing out or participating. They would benefit from involvement in leadership development that explores all aspects of their life to gain a better understanding of self and their sense of belonging in the community. Through small group interventions and reflection, girls will gain a better understanding of their actions and the ramifications to themselves and others. Building their self-esteem and confidence to take on leadership roles will increase their sense of belonging and self love.

*Designing Our Future*

**\$20,000 | Alice Johnson**

**San Joaquin County Educators Association**

The world is evolving quickly, and this project will empower students to become leaders and change makers. High school students will use the design-thinking process to create new or improved solutions to difficulties that they see in society. They will use maker resources such as 3D printers, basic electronics, and sewing machines to make prototypes of their solutions. After going through the design thinking process themselves, the high school students will guide the TK-8th grade students through the same process. The high school students will host a school-wide invention convention, where students of grades TK-12 will showcase prototypes of their inventions and solutions. This will be a community event where students, parents, teachers, and friends will join together to celebrate the accomplishments of the students. Going through this experience is about more than creating a specific prototype; this type of activity can help students understand that they are capable of solving problems in their lives and help them expand their future possibilities.

*Turning San Joaquin County’s Media Desert Into an Oasis*

**\$18,640 | Tara Cuslidge-Staiano**

**San Joaquin Delta College Teachers Association**

Fierce Mustang Media group is the student-run content creation and media production

firm of San Joaquin Delta College. Our mission is to provide students with experiential learning opportunities with flexibility, allowing students who may not have been able to complete an internship off campus due to other obligations to do so through a campus-based firm. As part of that drive, we also focus on digital media literacy. San Joaquin County only has one remaining daily newspaper and only satellite broadcast news outlets calling the community home. This proposal looks to take our trained, media savvy students into San Joaquin County to talk about misinformation, digital media literacy, and ethical use of media to middle and high school students as well as the community. Students in the Multimedia programs at Delta College (Mass Communication/Journalism and Digital Media specifically), will work to create tangible print deliverables and a digital media toolkit for the community to be distributed to community members during presentations that include a hands-on component for learners. The purpose is to expose students to digital media devices while giving them the basis on how to navigate a very crowded media sphere where misinformation is problematic.

*Empowering All Learners: Expanding the Library Makerspace for Enhanced Student Outcomes*

**\$5,000 | Alicia Martin**

**San Ramon Valley Education Association**

As a Teacher Librarian, my vision is to transform our school’s library into a vibrant 21st century library, a welcoming space that ignites exploration, creation, and collaboration between students, teachers, and the broader community. A key component of this vision is our Makerspace program. This grant proposal seeks to expand the current Makerspace program with mobile storage units and an Ozobot entry kit and resources. Adding mobile storage will allow for flexible use of space, enabling myself and other staff members to conduct Makerspace activities with our current materials beyond its designated area, potentially reaching an additional 250 students per month. This

addition of an Ozobot entry kit will support students in developing skills in basic robotics and coding literacy. This expansion will also support student equity by allowing all students to engage in STEAM-based learning, regardless of their elective enrollment. Ultimately, the Makerspace program’s hands-on learning experiences will serve to enhance student outcomes by helping them develop critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills, all crucial skills for innovation in the 21st century.

***Road Trip Adventures***

**\$5,000 | Marcos Mendoza**

**San Ysidro Education Association**

Many of my students and their families do not have the financial resources to travel outside of our community. This road trip project allows them to utilize many cross-curricular skills in math, budgeting, planning, time management, design, and presentation to create their own unique adventure. They will familiarize themselves with landmarks, entertainment, and sight seeing in and around their community through designing a road trip, and immersing themselves in an adventure that many of them have never had.

***Root Down Garden Project***

**\$16,490 | Hugo Vazquez**

**Santa Ana Educators Association**

Santa Ana USD Adult Transition Program (ATP) Root Down Garden Project connects ATP students with elementary age future gardeners. Along with SAUSD’s Farm to School Coordinator, our Special Education ATP teachers provide their students with a look at how food is grown and distributed while building job-related soft skills with local partners. Using traditional classrooms and the garden as a classroom, students learn composting, landscape design, and how to grow a variety of plants. These skills can assist in the development of gardens throughout the school district while enhancing our current garden project. We have partnered with three schools: Taft, Monte Vista Elementary, and Santa Ana Valley High School. Students will create committees of each school’s community members and

plan a garden at each school site and develop the tools to practice sustainable development. Students will participate in learning opportunities with our partners from the local agriculture community such as Heritage Museum of Orange County; Gospel Swamp Farm, and the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Center.

***Game On: Unlocking Potential Through eSport Education***

**\$19,769.25 | Julia Wheatley**

**Santa Ana Educators Association**

We are excited to launch a mobile eSports arena, enhancing our growing Makerspace by merging the thrill of gaming with learning important skills that will translate into STEM-related job fields. As a K-8 school spread out over two campuses, having mobile access is not only important it's critical to ensure full and equal access for all of our students. We plan to add three mobile eSports carts that are fully equipped with everything a teacher would need to immediately implement a gaming environment in their classroom. Our plan is to have a cart for 3rd-4th, 5th-6th and 7th-8th grades. Teachers will have students not only growing their gaming skills but they will also participate in project based learning opportunities that further connect the gaming components to their classroom learning. We are thrilled to embrace the popularity of eSports and propel our students into the digital age. Our aim is to introduce a program that enriches their current classroom learning and fosters a deeper connection to the curriculum. We aspire to establish a dynamic and inclusive eSports environment that appeals to every student, inspiring them to explore, innovate, and excel!

***Game On! Designing Arcade Games in a Project Based Learning Approach***

**\$17,400 | Rosalynn Moe**

**Santa Monica-Malibu Classroom Teachers Association**

The driving questions of “How do we create an arcade game that builds community?” is a Project Based Learning (PBL) unit that focuses on 7th grade math standards and



includes writing and social justice standards. Students will design an arcade game and look at the probability of winning. They will be innovative with their designs through a geometry unit. This project is part of a school-wide (PBL) for 7th grade students in which they take a deep dive into, “What is a worthwhile life?” Students learn how people have made an impact in their community, society, and world to be inspired to set their own goals to live a worthwhile life. Designing and creating an arcade game will have students looking into math from a perspective of careers in engineering, architecture and entrepreneurship. I would like to connect their creations by comparing their designs with actual games at an arcade. For the culmination of the project, students will visit Two Bit Circus in downtown LA. Students will look at the probability of winning games and create their own design at the arcade.

***Interdisciplinary Capstone Project: Bridging Engineering, Physics, and English in a Project Based Learning Academy***

**\$20,000 | Andrea Shore**

**Santa Monica-Malibu Classroom Teachers Association**

Our capstone project is a culmination of interdisciplinary learning, bringing together high school seniors from engineering, physics, and English disciplines. Students collaborate in teams to tackle real-world technical challenges by applying principles from engineering and physics, while honing their communication skills through comprehensive technical writing and presentations. This is a research based project in which students work in teams to research, develop, and design an original solution to a valid, open ended technical problem by applying engineering and physics principles. At the end of the project student teams will submit a final written report, complete Physics labs, lab reports, community outreach via surveys, and present and defend their final solution to outside review panels at a trade show. Students hit benchmarks along the way, present to peers, peer revise, seek mentorship from

credentialed professionals in their subject matter, and test their solution prototypes using real world scientific principles and applications. This course is taken by seniors who plan to enter fields of Engineering or Physics, and provides them with the support in technical writing that many scientific fields struggle with. The project is semester long and students balance three courses in two periods: English, Physics, and Engineering.

***Empowering Elementary Minds Through Programming***

**\$20,000 | Amanda Howard**

**Saugus Teachers Association**

Through this project, we aim to empower students with the skills and confidence to become tomorrow's innovators. Our project intends to establish a comprehensive computer programming plan for all TK-6th grade students at James Foster Elementary. By providing access to physical computing tools (robots), we will enhance and build upon students' understanding of coding, preparing them for success in the ever-changing digital age. This project will promote hands-on learning experiences through teamwork, collaboration, and problem-solving skills that are essential for their future endeavors. Opportunities for parent and stakeholder engagement will be integrated throughout the year, extending collaboration beyond the classroom.

***Sounds of Success: Transforming Education Through Music***

**\$11,926.96 | Andrea Genchi**

**Simi Educators Association**

"Sounds of Success: Transforming Education Through Music" is a project dedicated to empowering students with special needs, providing them with opportunities to thrive and succeed. By incorporating instruments like boom sticks, drums, and ukuleles, we aim to make learning enjoyable and engaging while addressing students' social-emotional needs. Through music, students will enhance their ability to listen attentively and follow directions, essential skills for academic achievement. These skills will not only benefit them in the classroom but also equip them



with the confidence to tackle challenges in various aspects of their lives. By infusing learning with the joy of music, our project lays the foundation for students' success in school and beyond.

***Bridging Real-World Learning: Field Trips for Emotional Disturbance Special Education Students***

**\$5,000 | Mark Chapman**

**Snowline Teachers Association**

The "Bridging Real-World Learning" project aims to provide emotionally disturbed (ED) special education students at Serrano High School with enriching field trip experiences to enhance their academic success and reduce challenging behaviors. These field trips will expose students to real-life situations, aligning with their Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals of increased independence and academic achievement. Additionally, funds will support the implementation of hands-on classroom manipulatives, empowering students to develop essential life skills and prepare for post-school transition. Through collaboration with school administration, school SPED teachers, support staff, students, and parents, this grant seeks to foster a culture of equity, inclusion, and academic excellence. The overarching goal is to reduce challenging/disruptive behaviors while increasing academic success among Serrano High School ED students.

***Dance, Create, Collaborate***

**\$3,550.81 | Ginger Cain**

**Solano College Chapter of the CTA/NEA**

The goal of this project is to establish the college's 1st annual dance festival and to create a pathway between the college, the Early College High School program on the college campus, other local high schools, and other bay area colleges who will collaborate with community artists to create a beautiful program. This is a student-centered project that will focus on opportunities for all students on campus, as well as the surrounding community and greater bay area. It will provide an opportunity for students to dance, to express themselves

through the art of performing, movement, creating, and learning about choreography. Students will experience and be exposed to the joy of performing in a beautiful theater setting and on a theater stage that will have professional theater technicians, photographer, videographer, and lighting designer. All cast members will receive a professional digital or DVD recording of the performance and professional photography of their performance. The dance festival will provide an inclusive safe place for all, and it will create a way to bond with the community and other artists. Students will experience the excitement of their family, friends, and classmates, witnessing their achievements through the art of dance and performance.

***Wilson High School Student Gallery***

**\$13,168.86 | Rena Winton**

**Teachers Association of Long Beach**

Our project aims to provide a platform for students to showcase their artwork, gain real world learning experiences, and foster a sense of community within the student body. The student gallery will engage with a wide variety of audiences such as students, faculty, parents, and the wider community. Our goal is to increase student engagement in the arts, enhance visibility of student talent, create opportunities for networking and collaboration, and establish long-term benefits for Wilson High School. The gallery will be ran by students giving them choice and voice on our campus. We will focus on uplifting marginalized communities through the arts and making students more involved in life at Wilson.

***Crafting Futures: Puppetry for Skills Development and Creativity***

**\$17,902 | Michelle Windes**

**Teachers Association of Paradise**

"Crafting Futures: Puppetry for Skills Development and Creativity" embarks on a journey to weave puppetry into elementary education, enhancing critical life skills while igniting the flame of creativity in young learners. This initiative stands on the belief that performing arts, particularly puppetry, offer a unique avenue to engage imaginations

and captivate young minds. By immersing students in the process of creating and animating puppets, the program not only fosters storytelling, communication, and critical thinking but also champions inclusivity. Puppetry allows children to explore and embody any character behind the curtain, breaking down barriers and fostering a sense of empathy and understanding. This project offers a dynamic and inclusive learning environment where every child is encouraged to express themselves freely, explore diverse narratives, and develop a rich appreciation for cultures and perspectives. "Crafting Futures" aims to empower students with the confidence to voice their ideas, nurture a lifelong passion for learning and the arts, and prepare them to be forward-thinking, empathetic contributors to society.

#### *MakerLab Enhancement*

**\$6,997 | Nichole Santangelo**

#### **Temecula Valley Educators Association**

With the addition of 7th grade to the Summit Academy middle school, we hope to enhance our basic MakerLab to include wood working, ceramics, and stained glass. The 6th and 7th graders will learn the basics of working with each material then create their own projects. Once they are solid in their understanding and abilities, students will work in teams to identify needs in the school and community then engineer and build solutions for those needs. Projects may include things like a recycling program, composting, the establishment of the school garden, and any other demands the students find. The projects will all be student lead and created. Summit places a high priority in creating leaders and innovators. With an expansion of our small maker program, all of the middle school students will have the opportunity to learn basic practical skills and help their school community with visions of expanding to the local community.

#### *Makers in a Multi-Cultural Marketplace*

**\$1,759 | Laura Boushell**

#### **Torrance Teachers Association**

"Makers in a Multi-Cultural Marketplace" is an educational initiative for second and third-

grade students, integrating technology, entrepreneurship, and cultural heritage exploration. Divided into three phases, it starts with students researching and promoting their culinary traditions through commercials. Next, they collaborate on a vlog series showcasing cultural diversity. The project culminates in a "Makers Marketplace" where students create and sell products, learning marketing and financial skills. They then invest their earnings in the school stock market and visit a local farmer's market. This program aims to develop entrepreneurial and cultural awareness, bridging classroom learning with real-world application for students to thrive in the 21st century.

#### *Foxboro Garden – Fox to Fork! Promoting Independence & Interdependence From the Heart of the Raised-Bed Planter Box*

**\$9,991 | Jason Bundy**

#### **Travis Unified Teachers Association**

The Foxboro Garden, established in 1995, became a special place for learners of all ages and abilities. From soil-and-seed to dining plate, it has allowed hands-on experiences related to many of our goals for Life Science, Math, and Language Arts, to name a few. Raised-bed planting spaces serve as a home base for a variety of projects. With IFT grant help in 2015, we were able to improve the safety of our aging wooden boxes and replace with eco-friendly 50-year raised-beds. There are already ideas to relocate our beloved 'outdoor classroom' by bordering the Foxboro Library, outdoor lunch area, and inner courtyard to allow improved access, plus heightened inspiration via garden learning. We also plan to continue a focus on native plants for our insect pollinators and Social Studies units. Grape growing, school-wide garden stone paint days, and milkweed habitat support for California's monarch butterfly are also special elements of "Foxboro Garden – Fox to Fork!"

***Growing Together (Creciendo Juntos) Garden***

**\$9,973.86 | Vanessa Zamora**

**Tustin Educators Association**

Through our Growing Together (Creciendo Juntos) Community Garden, all students at Heideman Elementary will have access and opportunity to develop language, social, and academic skills through hands-on gardening experiences. As a Title I Community School with almost 600 students, over 93% of our students are socioeconomically disadvantaged, 56% are English Learners and 16% receive special education services. Through culturally and linguistically appropriate workshops and resources, our school has emphasized strengthening student and home connections, highlighting the importance of incorporating math, literacy, and language skills in their native language during their daily activities. This community garden would provide all students with impactful experiences, teaching not only science and other academic standards, but also providing opportunities to connect learning experiences at home and school, while meeting and supporting the greater needs of our students and community. We are particularly excited to provide this opportunity for our students who receive special education services, as we believe that giving them ownership over the success and well-being of the garden will provide them with the opportunity to utilize skills they are taught in a different modality. This garden will also allow for families to come together and learn about sustainability, creativity, and stress reduction.

***Mini Ship Building Competition***

**\$4,639.11 | Jay Montesonti**

**Ukiah Teachers Association**

In this project, students will compete in groups of two designing, building, and floating mini metal ships. Each group is provided with two square feet of 16 gauge sheet metal and expected to build a ship. The project will involve math, measurement, blueprinting, and welding. We also include the Physics students to measure buoyancy of the ships and estimate how much weight it will hold

when we float them. This project is great for team building, fabrication, and design

***Unleashing Potential: Two Bit Circus STEAM Lab at Thomas Starr King***

**\$17,971 | William Page**

**United Teachers Los Angeles/NEA (UTLA/NEA)**

At Thomas Starr King Environmental STEAM Magnet, we ignite young minds for a sustainable future. Yet, our current spaces limit hands-on exploration. A Two Bit Circus STEAM Makerspace lab is the missing piece, providing essential tools and a vibrant environment for our sixth-graders to: deepen STEAM Learning: Go beyond textbooks! - students will tinker, engineer, code, and create, solidifying abstract concepts through real-world projects like coding eco-bots or building solar-powered models; spark Innovation - open-ended materials and playful challenges will drive curiosity and collaboration; students will imagine solutions to environmental problems, fostering a generation of innovative changemakers; cultivate 21st-Century Skills - the lab will be a crucible for critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication, equipping students with vital skills for success in any field; foster environmental stewardship - the focus on sustainable materials and green technologies will deepen students' understanding of environmental issues and empower them to become responsible stewards of our planet; transform learning spaces - the converted classroom, with its flexible and inviting design, will become a hub for creativity and collaboration, radiating energy and enthusiasm throughout the school. This grant is not just an investment in tools and space; it's an investment in our students' futures. It's about igniting their passion for STEAM.

***Recipes for Change***

**\$16,242 | Andrea Phillips**

**United Teachers Los Angeles/NEA (UTLA/NEA)**

The Valley Oaks Center for Enriched Studies (VOCES) premiere Culinary Arts and Film Career Technical Education programs recognize the pressing need for culinary





education to adapt to evolving consumer preferences and environmental concerns. Through “Recipes for Change”, culinary and film students will engage in a transformative experience where they will reimagine classic dishes to align with vegan and sustainable principles. Guided by the experienced Culinary Arts Instructor, students will work collaboratively to research, develop, and execute their vegan menu creations. The documentary, under the facilitation of the Film Academy Instructor, will be shot, produced, and edited by the VOCES Film Academy students and will provide an immersive insight into the students' journey, highlighting their creative process, challenges, and triumphs. Through captivating storytelling and cinematic visuals, the “Recipes for Change” documentary will showcase the importance of sustainability in culinary practices and the potential of vocational education to drive positive change in the food industry in the greater Los Angeles area. The student-led film crew will document the competition from the initial brainstorming sessions through to the intense cooking competition.

***Mustang Puppet Workshop: Handcrafted Characterization & Dialogue***

**\$4,050 | Theresia Rosa Kleeman  
United Teachers of Pasadena**

The Mustang Puppet Workshop (MPW) catalyzes student inquiry, imagination, and ingenuity by providing dramatic texts for close study, by supporting handcraft of original puppets, and by facilitating the production of collaborative, student-driven puppet plays for the learning community. During MPW Phase 1 and 2, students will have agency to reinterpret dramatic texts and explore principles of characterization. Beginning with strategies for close reads and script analysis of dramatic texts, students will reinterpret and affect change in the timeless elements of the story. Students will research the original production, then compare and distinguish from their own life experience. Further, students will gain skills in handcrafting to build puppets, in rewriting dialogue for characters, and in creating sound effects and

scenic elements to advance the narrative. Students will collaboratively reimagine timeless stories with new treatments of their own design which are relevant to their imagination, personal life experience, or a magical combination of both. In Phase 3, students will leverage their puppet show to build community by performing and publishing their work to a broader audience outside the classroom including the school, families, and neighbors.

***The Titan's Table: Hercules Middle School Culinary Club***

**\$4,799.55 | Amber Barron**

**United Teachers of Richmond**

Our goal is to bring fun and healthful eating to students and families through hands-on cooking and learning. Through this culinary project, we will offer our middle school students a variety of opportunities to develop healthy habits. Students will prepare culturally diverse menus, while learning about farm-to-table and sustainable food sources, as well as building life skills such as public speaking during cooking demonstrations, peer-to-peer collaboration both in preparation and execution of their seasonal menus, and through community outreach by taking leadership roles for our food drive.

***Mobile Welding Lab***

**\$8,946.98 | Benjamin Carpenter**

**United Teachers of Richmond**

The American Welding Society estimates a 400,000 person labor shortage by 2030. Our program is an attempt to remedy that and create better lives for our students at the same time, but we need help raising our numbers. Right now the Kennedy Welding Pathway only serves the students of Kennedy High, which has a student body of around 900 students. Only about 120 of which actually take welding classes in any given year. We seek to improve this with an after school project open to students from any high school in the district. This has the potential to increase the output of graduates from our program into local industry by a factor of five. The IFT grant will fund the construction of a



mobile welding lab that can be taken to the other schools (and beyond) to highlight what is taught in our program. A mobile welding lab will give us legs so that we can move around, be visible, and interact with the public in ways not possible without one. The potential for growth is tremendous, and growth is what we need to meet the needs of our students, community and industry.

***Murray High School Animal Career Explorer (ACE) Program***

**\$13,111 | Erik Conklin**

**Vista Teachers Association**

We are a career exploration program focused on experiences that connect at-risk teens to professionals who work with animals and the natural world. Our goal is to help students form relationships that lead to jobs, job-shadowing, internships, or careers in the field of animal care. Students are introduced to all the potential job/career fields at the community partner-sites; at last count there were 36 individual job descriptions from direct animal care to electrical engineering and water system management.