Strength-based education will be on display at the 2019 Teacher Innovation Expo. This free teacher-driven event is part of CTA’s Good Teaching Pre-Conference. The Expo will take place in Garden Grove at the OC Hyatt Regency on Friday, March 22, 2019 from 8:30 a.m. until 4 p.m.

After attending a previous Expo, Claremont professor Charles Kerchner wrote, “Want more innovative teaching? I know the secret sauce. Find teachers who already innovate, give them a little money, get out of their way, and invite them to share the results with other teachers.”

After the 2017 Expo, Orange County teacher, Carol Ashdown, said, “I was beyond impressed that the conference offered such valuable information. I couldn’t acquire enough. I left the day wanting the conference to continue. I wanted more.”

Keara Simon, a 2018 Expo participant from Victor Elementary TA, said, “The conference was great. I am inspired by the IFT Grants and as I become more involved in CTA, I realize we must fight to ensure that our future generations have quality public education experiences in California.”
Student-Centered, Hands-On Projects Enhance Student Relations
Two teachers use grant contributions from fellow members this year to provide strength-based education

**Advanced Robotics at Vail Ranch Middle School- Temecula Valley EA**

Kelly Maxey feels fortunate to have received a grant from the CTA Institute for Teaching. The grant has made such an impact on her classroom that she wrote to the IFT to let us know how much she appreciates the generosity of her fellow CTA members.

“The grant has allowed me to grow a more robust robotics program at Vail Ranch Middle School. We purchased an official VEX robot arena, the competition materials for the current VEX robot game called “Turning Point”, and a variety of essential components to build competitive robots.”

“We entered our first robot tournament and competed against 30 other teams from across California. We won several of our matches and made it into the finals round. We also made a giant leap forward in our pursuit of building a robot league in the Temecula Valley USD.

The grant is also being used to introduce more students to robotics. We purchased additional materials, formed an introduction to robotics class and enhanced the advanced robotics class currently in place. I am so thankful for all that you have done to make this happen.”

**Liberty Elementary School and Community Garden- Liberty TA**

Nancy Grimmius and her grant partners have a vision. “We want to expand the Liberty Elementary School garden/ag science areas by adding an outdoor classroom, expanding the garden beds, adding a greenhouse, orchard, and weather station. The grant funds help provide hands-on learning in all core areas of study and allow us to include our special education students, our behavior intervention students, and our Ag science students, as well as to provide a community area for parents.”

“The grant funds will also enable our students to learn life skills and responsibility by sustaining the greenhouse, outside gardens, tree nursery, and ornamental landscaping areas. We hope to help our students discover their own strengths through various creative and unique community service projects. Our goal is to create a self-sustaining garden program that fosters an awareness of community and the environment in our whole student body.”