Grant Awards Reception

October 30, 2019

Grants Sponsored by FCSS Employees & Friends
The Foundation @ FCOE believes that education is preparation for life and that excellence, access and innovation can change the life trajectory of Fresno County students - and that it is our moral imperative to do so. The Innovation Grants will foster new techniques, new tools, new methods, and new promising programs, which will serve students well.

We are proud to celebrate the 2019 Innovation Grant recipients. Inside this brochure is a collective list and description of all awarded grants illustrating the breadth and depth of innovative teaching and learning occurring in classrooms across Fresno County. The 2019 Innovation Grant recipients span broadly across the county, from small rural schools to large urban ones, from kindergarten to high school, and include special needs students. In each innovative program, students will be challenged to expand their traditional thinking and perceived limitations. We are very optimistic that the investment made in these programs will equate to better teaching and learning, which is a significant return on investment.

We celebrate the educators who applied for the Innovation Grants. They are the type of educator that no doubt inspires students to achieve their dreams, building them up in the process and potentially transforming their future.

This grant program is made possible by the generosity of dedicated employees and friends of the Office of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools. These folks made a commitment to support innovation in Fresno County schools, mostly through monthly payroll deductions, and have collectively funded these grants. Together, they too are to be celebrated for the impact they make on the future of Fresno County students.

These shared sentiments are expressed on behalf of the FCSS employees, the Fresno County Board of Education, and the Foundation Board of Directors. We believe every student can fulfill their potential and this is at the core of the Foundation’s mission.
Growing Our Future One STEM at a Time
Forest Daniels, Teacher Alvina Elementary School District

Students will learn about STEM and the future of agriculture by building and maintaining an aquaponics system. Aquaponics is a form of agriculture that is used to sustainably raise fresh fish and vegetables all year 'round, in any climate. The waste from the fish will feed the plants, and the plants will clean the water for the fish. Students will use technology to automate and keep track of the health of our system. This enclosed ecosystem covers multiple next generation science standards, across multiple grade levels, and makes learning fun. Other grade levels will be invited to see this on going project, which will allow the students to teach others.

Wood Shop Rocks!
Toby Wait, Superintendent Big Creek School District

With Woodshop Rocks’ unique approach to an age old subject, woodshop will be buzzing with engaged students practicing classic shop concepts and techniques to build an electric guitar. They will design, engineer and construct their project throughout the school year. Students of all skill levels will apply their math and science lessons in real-world applications while fostering their self-confidence in a craft as they take pride in an instrument that they have created.

Environmental Science Center
Rachel Cooper, Teacher Burrel Union Elementary

This project will focus on developing an Environmental Science Center for student's from kindergarten to 8th grade. The development of the center will provide opportunities for the 6-8th grade students to learn about the types of plants that can be grown and nurtured, how to keep a creek bed flowing so that it maintains and feeds the plants growing in and around it, and develop plans for the greenhouse. The rest of the student body will be able to go out and explore certain plants when learning some of the specific NGSS science standards for their grade level, including getting to observe a specific biome, or getting to watch the life cycle of a plant in an up-close, realistic, tangible way.

Getting Ready for College Math
Casie Limdren, Teacher Caruthers Unified School District

The goal of this project is to help rural high school student's to be mathematically ready as they prepare for post-secondary education that will open doors of opportunities for a bright future. Students can work through online practice problems with or without a teacher's guidance as they prepare for CAASPP and SAT/ACT through Khan Academy, Smarter Balanced, and College Board websites. Working with a partner or in small group settings will allow the teacher to identify areas that need improvement and deepen their math understandings. Providing students with additional math assistance will increase their chances to be mathematically proficient for college-level math courses.
INNOVATION GRANT Awardees 2019

Battle of the Books Club
Ramona Cheek, Teacher Librarian Central Unified School District

Battle of the Books is a voluntary reading incentive program for students from various schools who compete for points on questions based on assigned books that they have read. This year, Central Unified will be part of the multi-district reading event. The West Campus has a book club with young students ready to read and who will continue on to be life-long readers. Students of all grade levels are invited to be part of the teams. The goal is to encourage students to read interesting books that have been thoughtfully chosen.

Divide and Conquer
Stormie Scomona, Intervention Specialist Clay Joint Elementary School District

Divide and Conquer will provide students at Clay Elementary with a learning environment within the Learning Center classroom that will allow for more students to easily pair up and work in small groups. The Learning Center team has created a plan for movable wall structures and flexible seating and table areas for teacher/student meeting areas. Flexible seating was chosen over the traditional desk or chairs due to the growing research that flexible seating options help stimulate students’ senses while making it more comfortable for the learning environment.

United Sound
David Lesser, Director of Bands Clovis Unified School District

The United Sound program will provide musical performance experiences for students with special needs through peer mentorship. A music teacher will pair up with a special education teacher to serve as sponsors and work together by trading roles. The music teacher will guide the musical aspects and focus on the musical learning of the New Musicians, who are students with special needs. The special education teacher has the primary responsibility of training the Peer Mentors, general education band and orchestra students, to be effective mentors. United Sound is intended to be a very student-run, student-centered program, but the teachers provide the foundation and stability of the program.

Sensory Room
Lori Villanueva, Superintendent Coalinga Huron Unified School District

The new Sensory Room at Coalinga High School will give Special Education students a calming space to help them re-engage in the classroom by supporting their social emotional needs. Students will engage in self-directed activities that will support classroom learning in a supportive and unique environment. This grant will fund furniture, manipulatives, and equipment to enhance the Sensory Room experience for students.

Biofeedback and Mindfulness
Andy Ginther, Mental Health Counselor Firebaugh-Las Deltas Unified School District

The Biofeedback and Mindfulness project will use fingertip pulse monitors to teach junior high and high school students emotional regulation through basic real time biofeedback, mindfulness and social-emotional learning techniques. There is significant research to support the effectiveness of the use of biofeedback and mindfulness strategies to improve physical and emotional functioning. Mental health counselors, administrators and students will use the fingertip pulse monitor devices in individual and group counseling sessions and with student mental
health and mindfulness clubs. Students will be taught how to use mindfulness techniques, SEL skills to track and reduce their heart rate beats per minute, fostering greater understanding of how to calm and regulate themselves with actual real time data.

**Film Production Program**  
Kris Cadieux, Theatre & Film Teacher  
Fowler Unified School District

The Theatre Department at Fowler High School will expand into a Theatre AND Film Department. This year students will push their creative bounds and make a full length film adaptation of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. Students will develop an original script from Lewis Carroll’s book, pre-plan out the film process, film the movie, edit the movie, and culminate with a movie premiere showing in the cafeteria for the community.

**Enhanced Traveling Library**  
Michelle Trevino, Teacher Librarian  
Fresno County Superintendent of Schools

The Alice Worsley School serves incarcerated students residing at the Fresno County Juvenile Justice Campus. Despite difficult circumstances, many students use their time of incarceration to reflect on their past, set and achieve goals, and find new pathways to achieve a more positive and successful life. They also develop a newfound passion and interest in reading, but outside of class time, students have limited opportunities to access books for recreational reading. An *Enhanced Traveling Library* will provide continued access to reading materials. Not only does reading develop fundamental skills needed for college and career readiness, it also provides meaningful opportunities for students to self-reflect, explore real and imaginary worlds, and find inspiration in others’ stories.

**Dancing in Mexico!**  
Mark Alatorre, Teacher  
Fresno Unified School District

The Roosevelt School of Performing Arts will organize a Spring Folklorico show for the community and parents of Roosevelt's Folklorico, Mariachi y Latin Jazz 2020. This event will highlight the Mexican culture through dance and music and create opportunities for parents and the community to connect to the school.

**Robots and Coding**  
Terri Bradley, Teacher  
Golden Plains Unified School District

Students at San Joaquin Elementary will be given a variety of opportunities to work collaboratively in groups to perform tasks or create projects using Cue robots. They will use the Blocky app as an introduction to coding using pre-written lines of code that provides rigor in their logical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Students will maneuver the robot through simple paths and patterns that they design and then record the measurements of lanes, curves, angles, and obstacles in their project notebook.

**Campus Wide Seating Benches**  
Johnny Lopes, Teacher  
Kerman Unified School District

Students in the welding and fabrication course at Kerman High School will build 4 benches that will be installed around campus. The AVID students will determine the theme for the benches and the location of their placement. The students will work collaboratively to install the benches once they are completed. The benches will be
constructed of high gauge steel and they will be powder coated to ensure that they can be enjoyed by students for years to come.

**Engineering/Manufacturing Outreach**

Rose Presto, Teacher  
Kings Canyon Unified School District

The goal of the *Engineering and Manufacturing Outreach* project is to provide more opportunities and events that allow students to be college and career ready. Team 7057 of Orange Cove High School will be participating in events this school year to showcase and demonstrate the skills and career opportunities that are available. These events will range from on campus events and school district events to county-wide events held in Fresno County such as the KCUSD Fair, DevFest, CTE Nights, Club Rush, Club Days, SkillsUSA, FIRST Robotics, Freshman Orientation, Club Rush, Career Day, Career Skills and TigerRomp.

**Monitoring Today for Healthier Tomorrows**

Chris Bouck, Teacher  
Kingsburg Elementary School District

The *Monitoring Today for Healthier Tomorrows* project will utilize heart rate monitors to track each student’s effort during physical activity. The Heart Zone WASP system will allow for the tracking and collection of a student’s physical activity without the need of collecting personal information. The benefits of this system is to collect an individual’s fitness data promoting objective learning through a data-driven platform. This type of system will encourage communication between the teacher, parent and the student in an effort to improve the student’s fitness and learning while incorporating the parents into promoting a healthy lifestyle support team.

**Aztec Pride in the Community**

Sonya Mejia, Teacher  
Mendota Unified School District

Mendota Junior High student’s and staff will set out in the community to engage in projects to make Mendota schools and areas around the schools welcoming, clean and safe. Beautification of these areas will include picking up trash and planting shade trees and perennial flowers. The goal of this project is to instill pride in schools and throughout the community.

**Athletic Uniforms**

Jesus Cabello, Coach  
Monroe Elementary School District

The *Athletic Uniforms* project will provide every student-athlete the same opportunity to participate and evoke participation in school sports that will build life skills, which translate into the classroom and life. The power behind an attractive athletic uniform will increase confidence, school spirit and motivation as they develop their skills and talents. This project will help all student-athletes learn to work well and in conjunction with other teammates and set a high standard tone for increasing their self-esteem.

**Operation Robotics Community Outreach**

Angelica Sandez, Student Robotics Team Captain  
Non-Traditional Schools Category/CTEC High

The CTEC Robotics team will visit the Pediatric Cancer Center Ward at a local hospital to provide patients an insight of what it is like to be on a VEX team. Robotics team members will bring Arduino kits that allow beginners
to learn the basics of electronics using sensors and motors, as well as two robots, so that the children would be able to drive them, learn how they work, and engage in friendly competitions. The goals of this project are to teach and inform the children about robotics who otherwise would not have the opportunity and to ultimately put a smile on their face and make their day.

**¡Sigue el Mariachi!**
Patricia Bloodgood, EL Coordinator
Orange Center School District

The ¡Sigue el Mariachi! project is an expansion of the Mariachi group that began in 2018-19 and centers on a Mariachi music program for students in grades 6-8. There are three Fresno State University music majors and one Fresno City College music major teaching 20 students how to play trumpet, violin, guitar, guitarrón, and Mexican vihuela. There are plans for performances at Orange Center Elementary School and in the community. This project has been instrumental in introducing students to the Mexican culture, providing a learning experience of Mexican music for the entire school, and unifying the community.

**Fitness Starts Now!**
Jane Hills, Teacher
Pacific Union School District

*Fitness Starts Now!* aims to instill in each student the desire to be physically fit. Students will wear fitness trackers during the day to keep track of their steps, miles walked, and activity. At the end of each school day they will record this information to see how active they are. At the end of each week they will average their steps and compare their activity to other weeks. A desire for life-long fitness is the ultimate goal for this project.

**Reading Garden**
Marissa Estrada, Teacher
Parlier Unified School District

The *Reading Garden* project will be an extension of the school library at Mathew J. Brletic Elementary. The garden will create a relaxing environment for students and promote reading. It will provide another space for students to enjoy or study other than the library. Students will be involved in the maintenance of the garden and may assist in decorating the space, which will have plant boxes and barrels containing different plants and flowers. Teachers can use the garden to conduct an outdoor learning activity for their class. The *Reading Garden* will be fenced in with a gate that will remain open during school hours. It will be equipped with a large gazebo at the center that will provide shade and seating for the comfort of the students.

**STEM in Action**
Erin McCandless, Teacher
Pine Ridge Elementary School District

The goal of *STEM in Action* is to integrate math, science, literacy, and engineering skills while building hands-on projects. *STEM in Action* will consist of 3 STEM projects throughout the year. The first one is called “Helping Hand Design,” which teaches students about animal adaptions. The second project is called “Coding and Mineral Collection Challenge,” which teaches students about minerals and erosion using real-world scenarios. The final project “Solar House Design Challenge,” teaches students physical science while learning about energy conversion. Each project is hands-on while exploring through critical thinking, communication, and collaboration.
**Differentation Via Technology**
Raul Hernandez, Resource Specialist  
Raisin City School District

Special Education students at Raisin City Elementary will be given an opportunity to access their classwork from a Chromebook. The *Differentation Via Technology* project will enable students to receive assistance in the Special Education setting to help edit, comprehend and complete classwork that is difficult for them. This would allow the Special Education teacher to differentiate their learning by making accommodations and modifications in a setting where they receive individualized direct instruction. We intend to help students use the Chromebooks to learn speech-to-text technology to assist in their assignments. This use of technology will help empower students to become more proficient in the use of technology and assist in increasing their confidence with new innovative technology.

**RC Car Racing**
Mario Gonzalez, Teacher  
Riverdale Joint Unified School District

The goal of the *RC Car Racing* project is to give students the ability to turn a regular remote control (RC) car into a high speed high performance electronic vehicle (EV). Through this project, student’s will have first-hand experience modifying the cars to higher performance levels to win races against other teams. Students will accomplish this by replacing regular components with performance components. This project will expand learning opportunities for students in various areas of STEM.

**Digital Stories Project**
Judy Duran, Teacher  
Sanger Unified School District

The *Digital Stories Project* uses the writing process to construct personal narratives and then uses a video editing application (e.g. iMovie) to visualize these stories with images, voice, and music. The project propels students to reflect on their lived experiences and acknowledges their perspectives without making judgments. The project asks teachers to embody a reflexive stance in using digital video technology to represent cultural realities. This is an academically and personally transformative project that asks students to use all four of the 21st century skills: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity.

**Eric White Coffee Bistro**
Nancy Butterick, RSP/Special Education Teacher  
Selma Unified School District

RSP students in grades 4th through 6th opened the *Eric White Coffee Bistro* last school year for staff, parents and community members. Now in its second year, this project provides students with opportunities to improve their math skills and develop their speaking, listening and writing skills. This project has also been used to teach the students life skills including how to fill out an application and about the interview process. This year the goal is to enhance the project and the offerings of the *Coffee Bistro*.

**Indigenous Outdoor Classroom**
Jamie Smith, Native American Program Advocate  
Sierra Unified School District

Students at Foothill Elementary will collaborate with tribal entities, tribal organizations and local businesses to conduct presentations on the Native American culture. The *Indigenous Outdoor Classroom* will introduce the
Native American culture to young children and embrace their curiosity, while teaching them the importance of native plants. A garden area will be created using local resources to plant plants related to the Native American culture. These plants have cultural uses from basketry to natural dyes and tools. The Indigenous Outdoor Classroom will be a space to invite community elders to do campus visits and hold age appropriate demonstrations such as: gathering of plants, teachings of how to prepare acorn mush, natural materials for basketry and gathering for preparation of tool making.

**3D Learning**
Brad Showalter, Teacher
Washington Colony Elementary School District

The 3D Learning project will increase student access to cutting edge technology including 3D printers. Having multiple 3D printers available in the 3D lab will give students the opportunity to design, program and print projects more efficiently. The goal of this project is to bolster excitement among the students to join STEM electives. This opportunity will also allow students to see real world impact and relevance of learning new technology.

**IMPACT Distracted & Drunk Driver Training**
Antonio Pena, Patient Care Pathway Coordinator
Washington Unified School District

Students at Washington Union High who received IMPACT Training with Community Regional Medical Centers will begin a peer-to-peer training on the dangers of driving impaired and/or distracted. Along with the IMPACT training curriculum, students will be using role-playing games using goggles that give students the experience of visual distortion, loss of balance, and lack of control that make drunk drivers so dangerous.

**WolfPack Band and Choir**
Richard Gallegos, Teacher
Westpark Elementary School District

The goal of the WolfPack Band and Choir project is to revitalize and sustain the West Park Elementary band and choir music program. With the assistance of local Fresno State music majors and musicians the project will take place once a week to give students an artistic outlet and a prosocial environment that will foster teamwork and positive social interactions. Other activities will include on-campus performances and music composition.

**Upgrade Base Ten**
Stephen Borba, Teacher
Westside Elementary School District

Upgrade Base Ten will help students develop a conceptual understanding of multiplication through meaningful practice time with Base Ten Legos. Students will be able to create colorful arrays that are symmetrical and cleaner looking and interconnect on a lego baseboard. Using the baseboard, students are able to lift it up and show their answers and display it before the class. The colors help students differentiate the parts of the number that were decomposed into the different place values. This project would serve to add another layer of conceptual understanding by adding a tangible element to instruction.
THANK YOU

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About The Foundation @ FCOE
The Foundation @ FCOE is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and the fundraising arm of the Office of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools (FCSS). The Foundation exists to call attention to educational needs in Fresno County and to solicit tax-free gifts from private sources. All gifts are used to fund programs, activities and improvements beyond the scope of school tax dollars to improve the quality of education for approximately 195,000 students served by FCSS.

Mission
The mission of The Foundation @ FCOE is to support students by providing exemplary educational programs and services through a shared community responsibility.

Belief
Guided by the belief that education is preparation for life, The Foundation @ FCOE pledges to promote excellence, access and innovation in education for all students.

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