

2015

WE RECOGNIZE
CREATIVE, INNOVATIVE,
AND PASSIONATE
TEACHERS LOOKING TO
PURSUE HIGH QUALITY
PROFESSIONAL
LEARNING

**LIGHT AWARDS 2015
GRANTEE PROJECTS**

AP-LEVEL U.S. HISTORY FOR EAST OAKLAND'S STUDENTS

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Team Lead

Carrie Haslanger

Castlemont High School

The team of three Oakland Unified School District United States History teachers will develop an innovative, rigorous curriculum for U.S. History that reflects new thematic and skill-based standards for the Advanced Placement course. They will attend a summer institute of workshops on historical content and AP-level thinking strategies developed with the UC Berkeley History-Social Science Project. The project will also involve a graduate student advisor. The team is committed to developing and sharing strategies specific to supporting diverse and high need students—a population that traditional AP teaching methods do not serve well.

WORLD LANGUAGE (JAPANESE)

SAN MATEO UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Team Lead

Junko Hosoi

Aragon High School

The team of four Bay Area Japanese teachers seeks to invest in more productive networking circles to overcome the limitations of the typically small, "one-man-program" Japanese language departments in their schools. In the first phase of this project, the team members will attend local, regional and national world language conferences to observe and connect with recognized instructors. Then they will share their experiences with local teachers, communities and Japanese teachers' associations. In particular, the team hopes to develop a more comprehensive, technology-inclusive pedagogy for teaching Japanese language.

BRINGING AVID BACK

EAST UNION HIGH SCHOOL, MANTECA, CA

Team Lead

Sandy Riggins

AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) is a four-year program dedicated to closing the achievement gap by providing underrepresented students with the support and tools needed to navigate through the rigor of A-G requirements and prepare them for college. The program was dropped at East Union High School in 2012 due to a shift in funding, a problematic change especially because it created discontinuity for students who left AVID feeder schools to attend EUHS. The team of six teachers will receive AVID summer institute training in order to re-implement AVID at their school site, and will continue to collaborate throughout the school year.

DEEPENING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT: SCHOOL WIDE K-12

LIGHTHOUSE COMMUNITY CHARTER, OAKLAND, CA

Team Lead

Laura Kretschmar

The four-member teaching team, spanning first through tenth grade, will engage in a two-year study of best practices in student engagement. They will dive deeply into the Expeditionary Learning and Deeper Learning models, attend several conferences and institutes, receive onsite coaching from an Expeditionary Learning coach, and visit and share with other schools. Institutional capacity to support in-depth project based learning and inquiry has been historically limited. Through their professional development, team members aim to bring renewed coherence to the school in line with updated Common Core standards.

BLENDED PRACTICES TO ACHIEVE A PROJECT-BASED LEARNING CULTURE

FREMONT HIGH ARCHITECTURE ACADEMY, OAKLAND, CA

Team Lead

Johanna Paraiso

The six team members will pursue professional development opportunities in Blended Practices, with the objective of ensuring that students gain the technical and communication skills necessary for a rapidly changing workforce. The team will receive initial training in project-based learning through the Buck Institute for Education. They will then engage in trainings with the Alvo Institute in August 2015. Their first program year will focus on piloting new blended practices and documenting student and teacher feedback, followed by a year of facilitating school-wide professional development.

STEM WRITING PROJECT

KENNEDY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
STOCKTON, CA

Team Lead

Monika Hernandez

Four K-8 teachers will pursue STEM teacher professional development with a focus on experiential, project-based science education that will strengthen students' writing proficiency. Over two years, members will attend STEM certificate training at Teachers College of San Joaquin and Project Based Learning seminars at the Buck Institute of Education's annual conference. The entire Kennedy faculty will receive expert training in how to link project-based science with writing, creating a cadre of teachers to disseminate these best practices across the district.

INQUIRY INTO ELD

LIFE ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL,
OAKLAND, CA

Team Lead

Marguerite Sheffer

The team of three middle and three high school teachers will design and investigate their own inquiry questions on best practices in English language development. They will conduct research on current strategies for supporting English Language Learners and develop teacher-initiated lesson cycles. With the help of coaches who are experts in the fields of both ELD and inquiry, teachers will implement projects in their classrooms and analyze results. Ultimately their findings will be presented at conferences and published in professional journals with support from the Bay Area Writing Project.

PEER COACHING: USING VIDEO IN COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY GROUPS

ARISE HIGH SCHOOL,
OAKLAND, CA

Team Lead

Dana Leindecker

Six teachers will become facilitators of Collaborative Inquiry Groups (CIGs) aimed at improving literacy in all subject areas. In a teacher-centric collaborative reflection process, teachers will identify their own challenges, test solutions and reflect on their progress as a peer group. The team plans to attend the Summit on Professional Learning Communities at Work in March 2016 and will engage an educational consultant to provide CIG facilitation coaching. The use of video technologies will allow the CIG groups to use relevant evidence of instructional strategies and provide timely feedback to participants. In the second year of the grant, team members will mentor other teacher leaders to be future CIG facilitators.

SPANISH FOR NATIVE SPEAKERS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

SAN MATEO UNION HS DISTRICT

Team Lead

Arienne Adamcikova

San Mateo High School

The team of six Bay Area Spanish language teachers currently teaches Spanish heritage speakers without the support of textbooks, networks or pedagogical training aligned with their student populations. There is a need for a Bay Area professional learning community for SNS programs, as well as a shared database for curricula and lessons. The team will engage in language teachers' conferences and mentorship, and participate in the Stanford World Language Project five-day seminar. From this working group, the team members will work in collaboration with other SNS teachers to create a program outline and a website for Bay Area teachers to share lessons and find curricular and program support.

READING LAB SITES

THINK COLLEGE NOW
ELEMENTARY, OAKLAND, CA

Team Lead

Madeline Noonan

The team of three elementary school teachers will conduct "job-embedded" professional development in the form of lab-sites (action research in the classroom during the course of an entire lesson) to help increase the effectiveness of classroom Reading Workshops. A Teacher's College Reading and Writing Project staff developer will be engaged five times during the 2015-16 school year. The project team will collaborate in the interim to implement the coach's suggestions school-wide through professional development, peer coaching, and cross-grade level consultancies. Eventually, the teacher team will develop a plan for supporting and hosting lab-sites at their school through the following academic year.

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We believe that teachers are the most valued members of the American workforce. There is tremendous leverage in investing in education by supporting and encouraging great teachers like you. Throughout your career, you will impact hundreds of students.

LIGHT Awards is a program of Intrepid Philanthropy, a private family foundation which was created in 2008. We seek to improve the U.S. educational system in order to provide opportunities for all students to be productive members of their communities. We aim to impact student achievement by identifying, recruiting, mentoring and recognizing superior teaching, and helping to create environments in which teachers and students can flourish.



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