

2015

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

**LIGHT AWARDS 2016
GRANTEE PROJECTS**

"¡ADELANTE JUNTOS!" DEVELOPING A DUAL IMMERSION MODEL IN A BLENDED PROGRAM

BUENA VISTA HORACE MANN K-8, SAN FRANCISCO

The team of six, including elementary and middle school teachers and reading intervention specialists, will re-envision their school's K-8 Spanish/English dual immersion program. They will build capacity to close the achievement and experience gap of students, particularly long-term English Learners. Additionally, they strive for a cohesive program across the grades that can be used to both train new teachers and allow parents to be partners in the model. The team's professional development plan includes National and California Associations of Bilingual Educators conferences, visits with other exemplar schools to share practices, and the study of current theoretical texts. They plan to build out a series of education modules for current and new teachers, after-school staff, families, and community members.

ALGEOMULUS PREP ACADEMY

MERRILL F. WEST HIGH SCHOOL, TRACY

The team of five high school math teachers will design and develop a home grown project called "Algeomulus Prep Academy", in which students work in collaborative groups to create math tutorial videos. Students will learn 21st century skills, academic language, and critical thinking through explaining math problems from the Common Core to their peers. To enhance their skills, the team will participate in technology and math conferences, including Computer Using Educators (CUE) and the California Mathematics Council, for a deep dive into the areas of video production, 21st century skills, website development, and innovative ways of teaching math. Eventually, the math teachers aim to facilitate staff development opportunities for school-wide expansion of the project.

BUILDING NGSS KNOWLEDGE AND STEM EDUCATION

LAFAYETTE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SAN FRANCISCO

As their school district moves towards adopting the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), the six member, K-5th grade teacher team will pursue professional development to transform their science and math instruction to help students develop a design thinking mindset. The team will attend the Engineering is Elementary sessions provided by the Museum of Science in Boston, and plan a STEM retreat with their district's science department and community-based science organizations to bring the NGSS to their classrooms. By working in a professional learning community to pilot the Engineering is Elementary curriculum, they aim to move from a traditional method of subject matter instruction to an integrated STEM approach.

CULTURE OF MINDFULNESS

JUNE JORDAN SCHOOL FOR EQUITY, SAN FRANCISCO

The team of five high school teachers, representing a variety of subject areas and grade levels, will participate in a two-year long training and certification cycle with Mindful Schools. They will introduce a mindfulness curriculum and practice throughout the school to help foster a culture of emotional and interpersonal health and stress management—skills that can be used both in and out of the classroom. Students will also be trained as peer mentors, and will gain leadership experience through helping other students with their mindfulness practice.

IMPROVING MATH LITERACY: SCHOOL WIDE, TK-12

MADISON PARK BUSINESS & ART ACADEMY, OAKLAND

The team of five teachers, spanning elementary through high school, will engage in a two-year study around best practices to improve mathematical literacy. By working regularly with a SCALE consultant (the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity), attending the California Mathematics Council conference, and engaging in cycles of inquiry and ongoing study, the team members aim to become experts in best practices for working with English Language Learners to improve the ability to understand the "language" of math and use numbers to help solve real-world problems. Once effective strategies have been identified, this team will present the strategy to the whole staff with the goal of school-wide implementation.

INTERDISCIPLINARY REAL WORLD CHALLENGES

LONGFELLOW MIDDLE SCHOOL, BERKELEY

The team of four middle school teachers will work collaboratively on Project-Based Learning (PBL) techniques to address two pressing goals: increase student readiness for Algebra 1 and improve writing skills across subject areas. The team will attend MathAction's Summer Institute, participate in workshops, and engage expert coaching and technical support. Their training will help the team develop strategies for growth mindsets, optimize student engagement, and develop exemplary lessons for the classroom. The team will create and implement their own interdisciplinary thematic projects and share student work with parents and staff via student learning exhibits such as debates and research projects. They plan to teach this approach to their colleagues as well as to a wider audience via online platforms.

PERSONALIZED LEARNING FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

ALPHA: JOSÉ HERNÁNDEZ MIDDLE SCHOOL, SAN JOSE

The team of three middle school teachers works with many students who have recently arrived in the United States or have grown up in the U.S. speaking Spanish or Vietnamese as their primary language. To hone their approach to working with this population of students, the team will engage with Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design), a model of professional development focused on the area of language acquisition and literacy. The team will attend workshops, engage coaches, and visit schools with strong personalized and blended learning programs. The team has access to technology and online resources at its school, and aims to better implement these tools with blended programs to support English Language Learner growth.

PROJECT BASED LEARNING WITH A MAKER MINDSET

GRASS VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, OAKLAND

The team of four elementary school teachers will pilot a Project Based Learning (PBL)/Maker-Centered program. To start, they will attend a PBL conference and workshop to learn the basics of creating excellent maker-based projects. Then, they will embark on courses of training to create integrated cross-curricular lessons that involve protocols, tools, and applications that are useful for evaluating and deepening their own and their students' learning. Ultimately, they will train additional educators at their site in the PBL/Maker mindset. The team's focus and expertise is on both general education and special needs classes. For students with special needs, the opportunity to participate in projects that highlight different ways of thinking increases engagement, confidence, and sense of belonging in the school community as a whole.

READER'S WORKSHOP

ELLIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SUNNYVALE

Six teachers in grades three and four will deepen the implementation of the Reader's Workshop (RW) model at their school. They will be trained at the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University. Third grade team members will collaborate during the school year to strengthen the existing third grade RW pilot program and will work with the fourth grade team members to begin implementation of RW in their classrooms. Additionally, the team will engage trainers for a Home Grown RW Institute at their school. The team aims to maximize the impact of the RW's engaging, Common Core-aligned approach to make a positive impact on their students' commitment to reading.

TAKING FLIGHT

JOHN MCCANDLESS STEM CHARTER SCHOOL, STOCKTON

The team of five elementary school teachers will develop vertically-aligned STEM Project Based Learning (PBL) units on a central theme: Flight. The units will integrate technology, Common Core, and Next Generation Science Standards. Team members will write lesson plans on the concept of Flight under the guidance of Teacher's College of San Joaquin STEM faculty. They will later implement the curricula, which will involve fabrication equipment and flight instruction devices and models, in a school-wide thematic PBL month culminating with a student-driven school Flight Museum. In the second year of the project, the team will integrate Design Thinking into the PBLs and share out at the California STEM Symposium. They hope to become a resource for other educators transitioning to PBL in order to allow students to personalize their learning and make lasting memories.

TEACHING GARDEN

VARGAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SUNNYVALE

With professional development and technical assistance provided by Life Lab at University of California, Santa Cruz, the team of six elementary teachers will transform its school's garden space into an inquiry-based teaching garden. Life Lab will provide an on-site garden design consultation, as well as two workshops at the Life Lab garden: The Growing Classroom and Next Generation Science Standards in the School Garden. The team plans to present their new knowledge to the Vargas staff during staff development days. They will lead implementation and monitor progress of the lessons. The team members hope that their expertise, along with the teaching garden, will blossom and flourish and be a center for science learning.

TRANSFORMATIONAL TEACHER MENTORING

MISSION, HILLSDALE, AND OAKLAND INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOLS

The team of six high school teachers at three high schools across the Bay Area are part of the Trellis Mentor Fellowship, through which they have all made a five-year commitment to mentoring new teachers. They will mentor brand new teachers placed at their sites in Fall 2016, then will continue mentoring these teachers as they enter classrooms of their own in order to develop a six-year model for mentoring new STEM teachers. To support this clinical work, they will engage in professional learning activities related to mentoring such as the New Teacher Center Mentor Academy Series and other STEM-specific and site-specific teaching workshops and resources. The team aims to develop and enact a long-term model of mentoring, with the belief that strong mentors make expert teachers.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LIGHT AWARDS 2016 GRANTEES!

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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