

# IRVINE WORLD NEWS

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## SCHOOLS



PHOTOS: LISA HU CHEN

Teresa Yau, Michelle Blanco, Jessica Mossbarger and Julie Siff of Woodbury Elementary School were awarded an Irvine Public Schools Foundation's mega-grant for their project, Build Today, Lead Tomorrow.

# EXTRA CREDIT

Innovative teachers, staff members in Irvine will receive \$160,000 in grants

By Tomoya Shimura » [tshimura@seng.com](mailto:tshimura@seng.com) » [@OCRTomoya on Twitter](https://twitter.com/OCRTomoya)

Irvine teachers and staff with innovative ideas will be granted \$160,000 to help turn them into reality.

The Irvine Public Schools Foundation – a nonprofit group that raises money to benefit the Irvine Unified School District – recently announced the winners of its annual Innovative Grants Program, intended to pay for a new curriculum and counseling.

The program will award 19 projects this year, including eight mega-grants that are up to \$20,000 each. “In order to prepare our student for the future, we must provide them with educational opportunities that give them hands-on experiences and skills that they can apply to real-world applications,” Neda Eaton, president and CEO of Irvine Public Schools Foundation, said in a statement.

GRANT » PAGE 9



Sandy Banks, Mickey Dickson and Phil Roh of Northwood High School were awarded an Irvine Public Schools Foundation grant for their Forensics Core Program.

# Grant

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“We are so proud to support IUSD instructors who are passionate about elevating our student’s learning far beyond standard academic curriculum. We are also thankful to our community and sponsors who help make these grants possible for our students.”

In addition to the innovative grants, the foundation on Feb. 13 presented a \$2 million check to Irvine Unified to show its 2018-19 funding commitment. The money will fund additional elementary instructional assistants and middle and high school teachers; the kindergarten-grade 3 primary music program at all elementary schools; the CubeSat STEM program at all high schools; athletic trainers at each high school; nursing services for kindergarten-grade 8; and districtwide mental health resources.

IPSF also contributes more than \$3 million each year to fund programs such as instrument rental and after-school and summer programs.

Here are this year’s eight innovative mega-grant projects, with provided descriptions, that will receive a combined \$120,244:

## Student learning and technology

(Mike Modeer at Rancho San Joaquin Middle School)

With increased access to technology, teachers will be able to provide differentiated instructional strategies, immediate feedback mechanisms, online textbooks and instructional resources, and increase student engagement in the classroom. Similarly, students will be able to gain the skills and have the practice necessary to appropriately access technology tools on campus, navigate virtual learning environments and work collaboratively with other students in a way that was not previously possible. This grant is funded by IPSF in part-



PHOTOS: LISA HU CHEN

Students at Stone Creek Elementary helped Irvine Public Schools Foundation surprise Christina Pierson, Francheska Anderson and Klara Saunders with a mega-innovation grant for their project Full STEAM Ahead, during their fire drill.



During a school fire drill, Irvine Public Schools Foundation surprised Tamara Brown, Stephanie Frazier and Patricia Hanes of Greentree Elementary School with a mega-innovation grant for their program, Project SOAR.

nership with GoogleFiber.

## Project SOAR

(Stephanie Frazier, Tamara Brown and Patricia Hanes at Greentree Elementary School)

Funding for the SOAR Media Center will expand the space and technol-

ogy available for students to establish higher-order thinking and collaboration skills. Technological tools and other items will increase students’ interest in subject matter, increase engagement and develop new learning behaviors, attitudes and experiences. With additional books, teachers and students will be able to reference materials and equipment, supporting new curriculum standards and provide engaging and relevant information. The implementation of Project SOAR will consist of three components: Tech-Buddies, Classroom Scoop and Lego Wall Collaboration: Mascot Challenge.

## The Forensics Core Program

(Sandy Banks, Mickey Dickson and Phil Roh at Northwood High School)

This project is a year-long, cross-curricular program seeking to understand the nature of truth through integration of science, psychology and phi-

losophy. With additional funding, the Forensics Core program will continue to sustain and improve the connection among three courses as the use of Chromebooks makes it possible for students to work together in the classroom. Consisting of three courses (forensic science, forensic psychology and critical theory and literature), the program will provide students an understanding of not just criminal but more generally human behavior. Students maintain a digital portfolio of work in all three classes and present a comprehensive inquiry-based capstone project each semester. Students will be introduced to a variety of majors and careers related to criminal justice.

## Full STEAM Ahead!

(Christina Pierson, Francheska Anderson and Klara Saunders at Stone Creek Elementary School)

The project is aimed at utilizing students as active agents in inquiry and investigation so they can connect their learning to

experiences they design. It enhances their current innovation lab by bringing in tools to create activities more aligned in developing essential modern learning skills critical to student success. With materials such as the Dasher launcher and Ozobot Evo robot, it will create engineering and building experiences that support coding activities. The project also creates more dynamic and flexible classrooms, building activities that activate deep thinking and allow students to explore beyond an innovation lab space.

## Industry certifications and internships/apprenticeships

(Tinh Tran at University High School)

The project seeks to implement industry certification exams into engineering core curriculum. Upon the validation of students’ knowledge and skills gained in the classroom and passing the exam, students receive a career skills certificate that could be used

in job interviews. Teachers will support students by leveraging existing connections with industry partners to place students in entry-level STEM positions at local companies. Teachers will continually work with both students and the employer during internship.

## Build Today, Lead Tomorrow

(Teresa Yau, Michelle Blanco, Jessica Mossbarger and Julie Siff at Woodbury Elementary School)

The project aims to provide engaging, project-based learning experiences for students through their STEAM Lab. Technology tools such as Dash and Dot, Blockly and 3D printers allow students to think creatively, reason systematically and work collaboratively. The lab will help address the need for greater workplace and college readiness as well as provide students opportunities to learn about careers in a STEM-related field.

## Building Lifelong Resiliency

(Sunghie Okino at IUSD Prevention and Intervention)

Licensing and support from Prevention and Intervention will enable staff members to implement evidence-based and uniformed approaches to building lifelong resiliency. Prevention and Intervention will partner with the Youth Action Team, the Irvine Police Department and other community organizations to build a system with the goal of establishing consistent strategies and language throughout Irvine so that students acquire resiliency and practice skills in multiple settings.

## Star Lab

(Kristen Winn at IUSD STEM Department)

It provides all elementary and middle school students a star lab projector to learn about astronomy and earth sciences. The StarLab is funded by IPSF in partnership with Microsemi.