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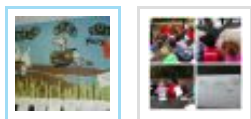
Pacifica Teachers Awarded STEM Grants for Innovative School Projects

Posted by [Christa Bigue](#) (Editor) , December 23, 2013 at 12:07 PM



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ed Oceans 411 — which is the culmination of the year's



A handful of Pacifica teachers at both Cabrillo School and Ocean Shore elementary schools were recently named Math and Science Teacher Innovation Grant award winners for 2013-14, receiving funds for STEM projects for 4th to 6th graders.

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At Cabrillo Elementary, teachers Victoria Ferretti and Dwan Padilla were awarded \$4,500 for a Garden Project and Ocean Shore teachers Sandy Mills, Jonathan Harris, Patty McNally, and Virginia Szczepaniak were awarded \$5,000 for "Thar She Blows," a gray whale data collection project.

Both programs are recognized for being innovative in science and math based on:

- Creative use of technology in science, technology, engineering, math (STEM) projects that engage and educate students through interactive, hands-on activities.
- Integration of 21st Century analytical and workforce skills supporting Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards.

- Provision of unique STEM learning opportunities relating to the school's in San Mateo County.

The grant for Cabrillo means that the school can bring their garden back. The funds will provide students an opportunity to refurbish the garden while incorporating Common Core standards and utilizing technology to study climate, earth science, and plant biology. Three ipads were part of the grant request.

At Ocean Shore, funds from the Teacher Innovation Grant will be used to help students observe and collect data on gray whale migration for research by working with the Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito.

"Pacifica really has cutting edge leaders and is pushing forward in STEM," said Josie Yu, STEM education liaison for Workforce Development who manages the grants. "Pacifica is one of the best districts in the County recognized for doing innovative work with youth in these fields."

The Math and Science Teacher Innovation Grant awards are made possible through the support of the County of San Mateo Board of Supervisors working in collaboration with Workforce Development, which helps prepare youth and adults for the workplace and provides a pathway for youth to explore and be prepared for STEM jobs.

The workgroup encourages collaborations between the County, cities, schools and businesses to build a strong workforce responsive to changes and demands in STEM innovation.

In 2005, former Supervisors Mark Church Rose Jacobs Gibson established the Math and Science Workgroup and Innovation programs to promote and improve student achievement and teacher excellence in math and science employing creative strategies to engage and inspire students.

Currently Supervisor Carole Groom and Supervisor Warren Slocum are the Chair and Co-Chairs of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs.

Their overall mission is to prepare San Mateo County youth and young adults for Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) careers, support STEM career pathways from elementary to post-secondary education, develop skills associated with STEM through hand-on learning opportunities for K-12 youth and address the growing demand for a strong STEM workforce in the Bay Area.

"San Mateo County is one of the only counties I know that is committed to supporting STEM programs for youth through general funds," said Yu. "We award \$36,000 a year for the Math and Science Teacher Innovation Grants. We receive about 15 to 20 applications and a committee reviews them, giving out \$2,500 to \$5,000 grants for those programs that best fit our mission's criteria."

This year, teachers at nine schools in San Mateo County were awarded. They can be found listed [here](#).

Yu would like to grow the program and is interested in working with industry partners that would do matching grants. Those businesses interested should contact Yu at jvyu@smcgov.org.

The County with Workforce Development also awards grant money to San Mateo County high school teachers to attend a summer internship program with Stanford Industry Initiatives for Science and Math Education (IISME) and STEM out of school programs and after school academic centers that give K to 8th graders extra help with core academic subjects.

Pacifica's Parks, Beaches and Recreation Department will be offering Science, Technology, Engineering and Math workshops at various school locations for 4th to 8th graders in 2014. Check for updates: www.cityofpacifica.org/STEM.

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