IFT Grant Helps Students & Staff Move Full Speed Ahead
at La Mirada High’s Green Jobs Prep School

Not waiting for the future, high school students and their teachers are exploring new technologies right now. Moving full speed ahead, Norwalk-La Mirada teachers, students and community partners are using the Green Jobs Prep School IFT Grant to examine how traditional forms of energy can be converted to solar power. This grant is part of the Solar Energy Academy at La Mirada High School.

According to Norma Williamson, grant author and program director, students are learning the ins and outs of solar power as an alternative energy source. Moving from theory to practice, students are working to convert a campus golf cart through solar power.

Imagine a vehicle that could run without you spending a dime on fuel. If you drove a solar-powered car, that dream might just come true. Like solar-powered homes, solar cars harness energy from the sun, converting it into electricity. That electricity then fuels the battery that runs the car's motor. Instead of using a battery, some solar cars direct the power straight to an electric motor.

But how practical are solar powered cars? Is it the next big idea? These are some of the questions that students at La Mirada High School are considering.

Solar2Green Jobs Prep School is a career technical education/career pathway school within a school that prepares high school students to join post-secondary programs in environmental majors. The goal is for these programs to lead to an industry recognized certificate, licensure, associate or baccalaureate degree and, ultimately, success in the green economy. Look for updates on this great program where the future is right now.

Said Williamson, “The Green Jobs Prep School Project could not have completed this solar project without the generous support of CTA members! Thank you to visionary, compassionate, professional public school teachers everywhere!” She added, “Everyone on campus, teachers, students, support staff, security and custodians, are excited by our solar golf cart zipping around. It is a great promotional tool, especially now with the Japanese tragedy focusing worldwide attention on alternative energy sources.”

Their slogan...SOLAR POWER FOREVER!!!
The CTA Institute for Teaching has established a competitive grant program for CTA members and chapters to support strength-based, teacher-driven reform for students and public schools. The program is in its second year and is IFT’s chance to give back to members and thank them for their support of the Foundation for Teaching and Learning.

The on-line grant application process is open to individual CTA members, small teams of educators and affiliated local chapters. The deadline for 2011-12 grants is April 30, 2011.

Competitive educator grants will be awarded in amounts up to $5,000. Competitive chapter grants will be awarded in amounts up to $20,000.

All applications must reflect innovative efforts to achieve school & district reform and be strength-based and teacher-driven. Applications must specify how the proposal is strength-based, how it will improve teaching and learning conditions and how student outcomes will be improved. Important information and on-line applications are available now at the IFT website: www.teacherdrivenchange.org