IFT’s Teacher Innovation Expo will help kick-off February’s CTA Good Teaching Conference- South in Garden Grove. The all-day Expo will give participants time to listen, reflect, and dialogue about innovative ideas across all grade levels involving the arts, parent engagement, STEM education, school gardens, civic engagement and more.

The Teacher Innovation Expo will provide an opportunity for IFT Teacher Think Tank members and their invited guests to engage with other CTA members who have implemented strength-based projects in their classrooms and schools. Registration for the Expo is free.

The Expo is divided into three parts:

**Project Presentations:** IFT Grant recipients and Teacher Leadership Cohort members will describe the scope, purpose, success, and challenges of their projects.

**Grant Showcase:** No vendors- but 1:1 time and additional information from practitioners to stimulate your thinking.

**Networking:** Real-time grant writing assistance and an opportunity to talk with successful recipients and members of the Grant Selection Committee.

IFT Grants can provide resources to tap into the passions that CTA members feel for the work in their classrooms, at their school sites and within their school communities. IFT believes that member-driven creativity, enthusiasm and inspiration are the keys to transforming the profession.

CTA’s Institute for Teaching is the non-profit, non-political arm of CTA that is founded on the belief that change should be teacher driven, focused on positive choices, and based on the Seven Factors supporting a school culture of success that are outlined in IFT’s Strength-Based Matrix.

For more information, please call the CTA Institute for Teaching at 619-683-3990 or go to the Good Teaching Conference website: Register for Good Teaching Conference

Three of the teachers presenting at this year’s Expo are successful 2014-15 IFT grant recipients. Norma Williamson (above left), turned her passion for the green economy into jobs connections for her La Mirada H.S. students. Drew Potts, teacher at Ocean View H.S. (lower left) created opportunities for his Environmental Science students to share their love of science with local elementary students. Dana Tomlinson (right) of Emory Elementary and her teaching partner, Erin Ecclefield, teamed up to do more than 60 home visits to their students’ families in southern San Diego County.
As it has grown over the past seven years, the Institute for Teaching has been fortunate to have had a small, but mighty staff to support our strength-based work with CTA members throughout the state. As we begin a new year, we sadly say goodbye to Merri Boston (left) as she retires after 33 years working with California teachers. Merri spent her final seven years as the IFT Project Specialist in San Diego. Her pioneer work helping to establish the IFT Grant Program and the Regional Teacher Think Tanks has enabled these programs to thrive.

Merri’s successor is a long-time colleague and fellow staff in the San Diego office, Jackie Hidalgo (right). Jackie brings more than 23 years of CTA experience to the job. Her organizational knowledge and commitment to serve our members will allow IFT to continue to thrive. Welcome, Jackie!

The CTA Institute for Teaching (IFT) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. IFT supports strength-based teacher driven change in school communities across California. Please contact IFT at 619-683-3990 or at contact@teacherdrivenchange.org