For Four Dozen CTA Members & Their Students, IFT Grants Provide a Hopeful Start to the 2017-18 School Year

The Institute for Teaching congratulates the 48 CTA members who were selected as recipients of strength-based grants for the upcoming school year. At their June meeting, the IFT Board of Directors unanimously approved the recommendations of the members of the IFT Grant Selection Committee to award grants totaling $572,328.

All of the 132 of the IFT grant applications were evaluated based on their alignment with the Seven Factors in the IFT’s strength-based matrix (see illustrations). This year, successful proposals had to score at least 17 points on the 21-point scoring scale.

During the eight years of the grant program, the IFT has invested CTA members’ voluntary dues contributions in 263 teacher driven grant projects. Although this was a record year for grant applications, the IFT is proud that the cumulative acceptance rate among our grant applicants remains over 40%. The total amount awarded now stands at $2,960,767.

Sojourn to the Past- Looking Back with Respect but Looking Ahead, Too

Since 2011, the Institute for Teaching has sponsored two CTA members to accompany students on a field trip to the deep South to learn about the crucial issues and lessons of the U.S. Civil Rights movement. The field trip profoundly affects both the high school students and adults who participate because they come face-to-face with icons such as Congressman John Lewis and Minnijean Brown. Ms. Brown-Trickey was one of a group of African American teenagers known as the "Little Rock Nine," who, in September 1957, under the gaze of 1,200 armed soldiers and a worldwide audience, faced down an angry mob and helped to desegregate Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas.

The Sojourn program was started by Jeff Steinberg, a former High School Social Studies teacher from Northern California who believes that the annual field trips are the best way to teach this part of American history to our young people.
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 ift@teacherdrivenchange.org

The Palo Alto Educators Association is Promoting and Recognizing Educational Excellence through the Ovation! program

The great work by the PAEA serves as a model recognition program that can easily be adopted and adapted by other local unions.

Even more importantly, such local recognition serves as a direct antidote to the oft-heard narrative that all teacher unions do is protect “bad” teachers.

The IFT Ovation! toolkit is a self-contained, easy-to-administer awards/recognition program in a box. It was developed in 2016 by members of the South Bay Teacher Think Tank. To sample the program, please go to http://www.teacherdrivenchange.org/ovation.

For Temecula Teachers and Students, Grant Program was Music to their Ears

Veteran Temecula educator and 2-time IFT grant recipient, Blaine Boyer, was speaking in glowing terms about “Achievement Through the Arts,” his most recent grant project. The project involved guitar making (from raw wood to electronics), 3-D printing, guest artists and two field trips, to Fender Guitar and to UC San Diego.

“It was beyond our imagination how involved the students were and how motivated they were...The students were literally fighting to get into the class...This is one of the few things we have found that actually motivates our at-risk students.”

Mr. Boyer and his continuation high school colleagues felt that their students loved the class because it allowed them to show their creative sides. The photos below display some of their finished “products.”