CTA Members, you’re invited!

For the fourth consecutive year, the Institute for Teaching is proud to present an inspirational look at the critical work that teachers do.

Educators from a variety of California communities, grade levels, and subject areas are gathering to present the key learnings and successes of their strength-based grant projects.

Expo participants will discover how strength-based principles, coupled with resources from CTA members’ voluntary dues contributions, can yield dynamic new opportunities for learning and student engagement.

The 2018 Teacher Innovation Expo personifies IFT’s belief in “strength-based teacher driven change.”

Union Program Boosts Classroom Innovation

Writing in Education Week in March 2017, Education Professor Charles Kerchner of Claremont Graduate University, said this of last year’s Expo: “Want more innovative teaching? I know the secret sauce. Find teachers who already innovate, give them a little money, get out of their way, and invite them to share the results with other teachers. That’s what I witnessed last week at a gathering of the Institute for Teaching…The CTA could do even more of this; building teacher leadership is good for teachers and kids alike. It bufffs up the union’s image, and broadens its political power. And, oh yes, CTA members like this work.”
IFT Grant Applications are Now Open for the 2018-19 School Year

Dozens of strength-based proposals are expected from all grade levels and curricular areas

Toby Brannon, science teacher at Temecula Valley High School and Jeannine Dinger, music teacher at Lake Elsinore Middle School have more than their passion for teaching in common. They are both among a small group of CTA members who took the time to envision and develop a strength-based project and to apply for an IFT Grant. Today, both are utilizing $20,000 in voluntary dues contributions from their fellow CTA members as they implement their grant projects. Both also acknowledge that these changes are only happening because of the support of their union.

Temecula Valley High School Science teacher Toby Brannon (below left) sends his student teams off to work independently and inter-dependently on lab projects. Many of his students spent a long December 16-17 weekend on the TVHS campus to begin construction of their future Aquaponics Greenhouse.

It’s all part of a student-centered BioSustainability elective program created by the science teacher. Students will grow fresh produce for the very popular culinary arts classes at the high school. In addition, half of the food grown on campus will also be distributed free-of-charge to the Temecula Community Food Pantry.

3 Things to Know About the IFT Grant Program

Now in its ninth year, the IFT has awarded 262 grants totaling more than $2.9 million. All CTA members are eligible to apply for an Educator grant (up to $5,000) or an Impact grant (up to $20,000).

This is a competitive grant program and grants are evaluated by the IFT Grant Selection Committee, made up of five educators from around the state.

Applications are due no later than April 30, 2018. The seven-factor IFT Strength-based Matrix is the lens used by the committee to evaluate all grant proposals.