IFT Board Approves a Record 52 Grants for CTA Members for 2018-19

Thanks to a unanimous vote in June by the IFT Board of Directors, more than four dozen CTA members will receive grant funds next year to pursue their strength-based projects in their classrooms, schools and local communities.

Because of our union members’ voluntary dues contributions, the CTA Institute for Teaching is able to provide more than $600,000 in grants for the 2018-19 school year.

One Year Later- Looking Back on Teacher Dreams That Came True

Twelve months ago, Lake Elsinore Middle School music teacher Jeanine Dinger (above) discovered that she was one of 47 union members selected for a strength-based grant.

In Jeanine’s case, it meant opening up a new world of music for her students and colleagues. That world included connections with the high school, integration with EMS science teachers and the opening of a string section in her orchestra.

This assistance from fellow CTA members put 35 musical instruments into the hands of her students and, she believes, enabled her orchestra to win recognition from the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM), one of only 38 schools to be honored nationwide.

Chico teachers Reta Rickmers and Linda Elliott (above) used their grant funds for Phoenix Rising. Their Pleasant Valley High School students’ fashions arose from their own creativity using materials that would otherwise be thrown away. This wearable art was presented at a fashion show and boutique with live music and entertainment. They wrote, “Our partner, the CTA Institute for Teaching, allowed us to conceive and dream of this project. The financial backing and the focus developed through strength-based learning created an environment which allowed us to explore this unique way for students to express themselves and involve the community in their lives.”
IFT Welcomes Veteran Teacher and Activist to the Board of Directors

Mike Patterson will serve as the Northern California Liaison from the CTA Board

Mike Patterson, a veteran teacher at South Tahoe High School in the Lake Tahoe Unified School District, was selected by his CTA Board colleagues to serve on the IFT Board. He will replace E. Toby Boyd as the Northern California liaison on the IFT Board. Mike’s sprawling Board District D covers 23 counties from Tuolumne north to the Oregon border.

Mike is a strong supporter of the IFT and in each of the past two years, teachers from Mike’s district received the largest number of grants in any CTA directorial district. A veteran educator and union activist, Patterson’s 30 years of teaching have all been at South Tahoe High School. He was a three-time president of the South Tahoe Educators Association and chaired the CTA Capital Service Center Council for many years. He also served as his chapter’s vice president and organizing chair.

Mike is a strong advocate for career technical education in public schools. The automotive technology teacher believes, “not all students are going to college or should go to college...We need to give students skills in the trades in high school. We must expand career technical education for all students.”

International Educational Collaborative Will Visit California in September

CTA will be a featured guest to explore “The California Way”

The Institute for Teaching was recently awarded two grants (from the Stuart and Bechtel Foundations) to support the third-annual summit of the Atlantic Rim Collaboratory (ARC), a global group of educational systems that advances values such as equity, excellence, wellbeing, inclusion, democracy and human rights for all students within high-quality, professionally-run systems.

The founding organizations include the Ministries of Education of Scotland, Iceland, Ireland, Finland, Aruba, Sweden, Wales and the Canadian province of Ontario, the Office of the Secretary of Education in Vermont, and the California Board of Education.

This year’s event, scheduled for the Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles from September 8-11, will feature discussion of The California Way. According to the CDE, the California Way builds on a collaborative team approach to positive education change and is now attracting national and international attention as an alternative to test-driven reform.

The California Way “rests on the belief that educators want to excel, trusts them to improve when given the proper supports, and provides local schools and districts with the leeway and flexibility to deploy resources so they can improve. The California Way engages students, parents, and communities as part of a collaborative decision-making process around how to fund and implement these improvement efforts, and provides supplemental resources to ensure that California’s English Learners (ELs), foster youths, and students in poverty have the learning supports they need.”