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# News Release

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## **Thirty-five Grants Awarded to Educators in Fresno, Kings, Madera and Tulare Counties**

Fresno, CA – Thousands of students have the opportunity to participate in innovative educational projects, thanks to a long-standing program funded by the California Table Grape Commission (commission) on behalf of California table grape growers.

The “Innovation in Teaching” grant program was created in 1993 to support innovative teaching projects in the California table grape growing regions of the San Joaquin and Coachella valleys. Projects include the areas of agriculture, math, science, art, health, and technology.

In total, 52 education grants worth up to \$750 each are being awarded. The funded projects will be implemented in the current academic year and will reach over 9,000 students. Thirty-five of the grants were awarded to educators in Fresno, Kings, Madera, and Tulare counties.

“California grape growers are proud to support this education grant program that benefits students in classrooms all over the grape-growing regions of the state,” said Kathleen Nave, commission president.

Examples of projects in Fresno, Kings, Madera and Tulare counties include creating a new device that makes wheelchair use easier, building a solar rover, coding for kindergarteners, and using a sensor-laden glove to help biomechanics and bioengineering students learn how the hand moves.

A list of all the projects in Fresno, Kings, Madera, and Tulare Counties is attached.

### **About the California Table Grape Commission**

The California Table Grape Commission was created by the California legislature in 1967 to create worldwide demand for fresh California grapes through a variety of research and promotional programs.

For more information on the “Innovation in Teaching” grant program, go to [www.grapesfromcalifornia.com/community-outreach/](http://www.grapesfromcalifornia.com/community-outreach/).

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## Summaries of Funded Education Grant Projects – 2017-18

Here are the 35 winners in Fresno, Kings, Madera, and Tulare counties:

### Central Unified School District

- **ART + MATH Really Adds Up!**  
**Dawn Donat, Harvest Elementary School**  
Fifth grade students will integrate art projects with concrete and abstract mathematical concepts. Grant funds will be used to purchase art supplies.
- **College and Career Motivation**  
**Jill Brooks, Central High School (East Campus)**  
Grant funds will be used to expand the school career center activities at lunch and after-school. Activities include job panels and mock interviews.
- **Super Heroes Teach Kids Robotics and Coding**  
**Dawnette Brenner, Steinbeck Elementary School**  
Fourth grade students will program robots to re-enact scenes from stories to help students study character and plot, and gain deeper understanding of story analysis. Grant funds will be used to purchase robots.

### Clovis Unified School District

- **Exploring Computer Science through 3D Modeling**  
**Mary Allen, Clovis North High School**  
Students will use a hand-held 3D scanner, purchased with grant funds, to create a new device that makes wheelchair use easier.
- **Growing Love (and Sharing it with Others)**  
**Chris Penning, Clovis Elementary School**  
Fourth grade students will grow flowers in their classroom, paint the flowerpots, and then give the flowers to mothers, grandmothers, and great-grandmothers at a local assisted living facility for Mother's Day. Grant funds will be used to purchase the indoor garden, pots, and paint.

### Coalinga-Huron Unified School District

- **Green Science – Solar Rover**  
**Taylor Redding, Coalinga Middle School**  
Grant funds will be used to purchase solar-rover building kits for eighth grade students, who will explore space science via hands-on experience in this NASA-focused space unit.

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### Cutler Orosi Joint Unified School District

- **Technology Equipment for Multimedia Classroom**

**Larissa Goosev, El Monte Middle School**

Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students in this mass media and journalism class will learn about video broadcasting and create monthly school announcements. Grant funds will be used to purchase a camera, teleprompter, microphone, and tripod.

### Dinuba Unified School District

- **GATE/Campus Life – Community Service Project**

**Audra Sasselli Thornburg, Kennedy/Wilson Elementary School**

Third through sixth grade GATE students and Campus Life Mentor Program participants will work together to restore and maintain three planter boxes in downtown Dinuba, and become more knowledgeable in conjunction with lessons about gardening, farming, and horticulture. Grant funds will be used to purchase supplies, awards, and curriculum.

### Earlimart School District

- **Coding in Kinder with Bee-Bots**

**Debbie O'Neill, Alila Elementary School**

Grant funds will be used to purchase Bee-Bots, a docking station, and backpack for kindergarteners to learn about coding.

### Exeter Unified School District

- **Full STEAM Ahead – 3D Printing**

**Nora Allstedt, Wilson Middle School**

Sixth through eighth graders will use a 3D printer, purchased with grant funds, to build parts for their robotic program.

### Farmersville Unified School District

- **Biomechanics with a Sensor Glove**

**Gerardo Vazquez, Freedom Elementary School**

Sixth grade students in this after-school engineering club learn about biomechanics and bioengineering through the construction of a sensor glove. The sensor glove will generate data that helps students learn how the hand moves.

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### Fresno Unified School District

- **Frogs, Frogs, Frogs**

**Erick Rozigas, Wilson Elementary School**

Grant funds will be used to purchase frog dissection kits, a poster, and a large model for first through sixth grade students.

- **Roosevelt High Water-Wise Demonstration Garden**

**Reid Gromis, Roosevelt High School**

Roosevelt Ecology Club will develop a climate-appropriate demonstration garden highlighting water-wise plants and smart-irrigation technologies. Grant funds will be used to purchase the materials to create the garden.

- **Which Came First, the Chicken or the Egg?**

**Gonzalo de Alba, Ewing Elementary School**

Fifth grade students will incubate, care for, and monitor chicken or quail eggs as they study habitat, food, ecosystem, prey and predators, and the egg and poultry market in this science project. Grant funds will be used to purchase incubator kits and eggs.

### Golden Valley Unified School District

- **Where's Waldo? – GPS and GIS is How to Find Him!**

**Michael Robert Erickson, Liberty Madera Ranchos High School**

Grant funds will be used to purchase geocaching information and materials for eleventh and twelfth grade students who will learn about Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

### Kerman Unified School District

- **Odyssey of the Mind 2017**

**Oneida Gonzalez, Sun Empire Elementary School**

Odyssey of the Mind is a state competition where fourth through sixth grade students think creatively and problem-solve in the areas of art, music, creative writing, math, acting, and more. Grant funds will be used to purchase team created t-shirts, pay competition fees, and buy snacks for students at Sun Empire Elementary School.

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### Kings County Unified School District

- **Reedley High School Four-Year College Promise**

**Hector L. Chapa Jr., Reedley High School**

Ninth grade students will make a pledge to attend college, learn how to make that possible by meeting eligibility requirements with their choices and decisions, and wear t-shirts with the requirements listed as a reminder to themselves and others. Grant funds will be used to purchase the t-shirts.

### Kings River Union Elementary School District

- **Growing Science**

**Randi Amador, Kings River Union Elementary School**

Fifth grade students will learn about plants and weather as they make and monitor a weather station to assist this gardening project. Grant funds will be used to purchase a pro-weather unit, composter, and gardening tools and supplies.

### Lindsay Unified School District

- **Lindsay Ag: Bluebird & Owl Boxes**

**Carlos R. Diaz, Lindsay High School**

Grant funds will be used to purchase blue bird and owl box kits that will be constructed, placed throughout the foothills, and monitored by ninth and tenth grade students who will learn about lifecycles, habitat, and requirements for these birds.

### Madera Unified School District

- **Recycled Art Show**

**Casey Gates, John Adams Elementary School**

Sixth grade students will create sculptures, crafts, and “up-cycled” pieces, and will display their artwork or projects at a school-wide art show, “Recycled Art Showcase.” Grant funds will be used to purchase art supplies.

- **Virtual Reality in the Classroom**

**Charmaine C. George, Madera South High School**

Grant-funded Viewmaster Virtual Reality Goggles will allow ninth through twelfth grade students to take virtual field trips as forensic biology jumps off the pages of books and becomes a real experience.

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### Pacific Union School District

- **Taking a Closer Look!**

**Jane Hills, Pacific Union Elementary School**

Grant funds will be used to purchase microscopes for fifth grade students to observe living and non-living specimens as they study photosynthesis in science class.

### Palo Verde Union Elementary School District

- **Coding for Kids**

**Maria Lawson, Palo Verde Elementary School**

Sixth grade students will learn coding and create programs that will power and move robots. Grant money will be used to purchase the coding and robot kits.

- **Palo Verde Tiger Tales (Journalism Club)**

**Anthony Nguyen, Palo Verde Elementary School**

Sixth through eighth grade journalism students will be able to go into the field and report on school events and people with the grant-funded purchase of a camera and voice recorder.

### Porterville Unified School District

- **College Café, College and Career Readiness Center**

**Teresa Zamarripa, Porterville High School**

A College Café will be created to provide students with an environment to become college and career-ready. Grant funds will be used to purchase computers, a printer, a table, and chairs for the café.

- **Robotics and Automation with Lego Education**

**Gustavo Rojo, Los Robles Elementary School**

Fifth grade students will learn about robotics and automation, programming, and coding with grant-funded purchase of Lego Mindstorm Robot Kit for Kids.

### Riverdale Joint Unified School District

- **Break Out of Boring: Using Escape Rooms in the Science Classroom**

**Darcie Elliott, Riverdale Elementary School**

Escape rooms will interest and engage seventh and eighth grade students with math and science-based questions and problems for them to solve to get to the next challenge. Grant funds will be used to purchase locks, lock boxes, magnets, and more to encourage creative thinking, problem solving, and teamwork.

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### Sanger Unified School District

- **Full Steam Ahead!**

**Kathleen Kuczler, Washington Academic Middle School**

Grant funds will be used to purchase science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) projects to help sixth through eighth grade students tutor disabled students.

### Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE)

- **Horticultural Vocations in Action**

**Kyra Hoehn, TCOE Satellite Location at El Diamante High School**

Ninth through twelfth grade students with severe handicaps and learning disabilities will learn vocational training skills through gardening. Grant funds will be used to purchase gardening supplies.

### Tulare Joint Union High School District

- **Entrepreneurship Opportunities at The Barn – TW Student Store**

**Jennifer Ferguson, Tulare Western High School**

Ninth through twelfth grade students will operate and manage a student store in order to learn responsibility, and improve their communication and money management skills. Grant funds will be used to purchase a commercial stainless steel sink for the store.

- **Robotic Engineering for Migrant STEM and AP Physics**

**Eric York, Tulare Union High School**

Ninth through twelfth grade students will design and build a robot using VEX robotics as part of their studies in science, engineering, and math. Grant funds will be used to purchase robotic kits.

### Visalia Unified School District

- **Communicating with Puppets**

**Salvador Campos, Golden Oak Elementary School**

Grant funds will be used to purchase puppets to help fourth grade students develop listening and speaking skills through art and dramatic expression.

- **Helpful and Harmful Bugs: A STEAM Unit for the School Garden**

**Lori Irvine, Linwood Elementary School**

Praying mantises, ladybugs, ants, and other materials purchased with grant funds will allow first through sixth grade students to learn about insects and garden ecosystems.

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- **Through the Lens**

**Brianna Rodriguez, Ivanhoe Elementary School**

Fifth through eighth grade students will study life-science and math as they dissect owl pellets, and examine plant and animal specimens with grant-funded microscopes and materials.

Washington Unified School District

- **Makeblock Laser Engraver/Cutter for American Union STEM Classes**

**Andre Hernandez, American Union Elementary School**

Grant funds will be used to purchase a laser engraver/cutter for sixth through eighth grade students to learn about math and science. Students will design, create, and build a battery-powered vehicle.