

TRF Newsletter



A Student at El Dorado Avenue Elementary using her iPad to document growth in the school garden.

Growing Learners at El Dorado

One of the best parts of any grant program is empowering people and organizations to take their most imaginative ideas and make them reality. This fact was highlighted when we visited Instructional Innovation Grant-winner El Dorado Avenue

Elementary at the end of the school year to see the progress of their Growing 21st Century Learners project.

The vision for this program was to increase student interaction with the school’s soon-to-be-constructed garden by leveraging mobile technology. Students would use iPads to take pictures, document growth, conduct research, and take readings from an on-site weather station. While the idea sounded amazing, all we saw when we visited the school during the application process was a plot of dirt and a lot of extremely passionate educators.

The transformation is amazing: the school garden is now full of life and the students could not have been more excited to share their favorite experiences using the technology. In a series of Keynotes, students talked about eating the vegetables they grew, helping build benches and planters, and learning about their favorite flowers. Though this project is far from complete, its impact can already be seen in the ownership and intrinsic motivation the children exhibit for learning. We are excited to see the future results!

2016 CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 30

Recreational Reading Mini-Grant Application Opens

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER

Instructional Innovation Grant Awareness Sessions

NOVEMBER 18

Recreational Reading Mini Grant Application Closes

Agency Highlight: Mar Vista Family Center

Nearly 1,300 children, teens, and adults benefit from the services of Mar Vista Family Center (MVFC) every year, and it’s no wonder, given the range of programs they provide. Through MVFC, local low-income families have access to quality early childhood education options, youth enrichment, leadership development, and tools to create positive, community-wide change. While their local successes have been amazing, they hope to soon amplify their impact beyond the Mar Vista neighborhood through their Families Building Communities Initiative.



The goal of Families Building Communities is to train other organizations that serve low-income and minority populations on MVFC's Shared Responsibility Curriculum Model. This strategy supports healthy families and communities by improving family functioning, decreasing domestic and gang violence, improving academic success, and more. The key to the program's effectiveness is its emphasis on incorporating the people served by the organization as leaders who then gain the skills to train the next generation. The Riordan Foundation supported MVFC in these efforts with an Agency Grant in 2016 and we are excited to see the impact of this new partnership!

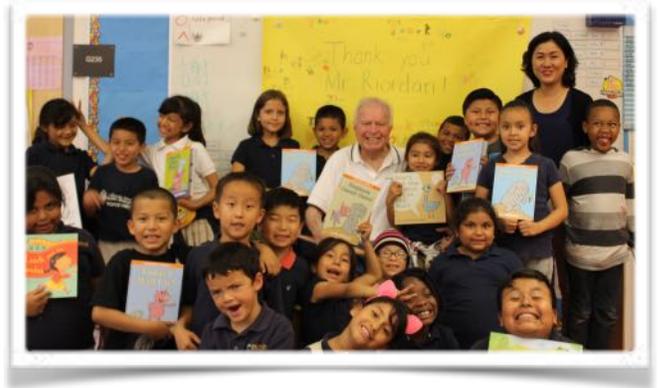
How to Make Your RRMG App Stand-Out

The start of a new school year always brings optimism and renewed determination. Teachers are preparing their lesson plans, setting goals, and deciding how to execute. And of course, they are excited about the progression of their students! For elementary school teachers, one of the most important areas for student growth is in reading. Unfortunately, most proven strategies for improving student literacy require access to a large and varied collection of reading material. We are here to help.

MEET OUR NEWEST TEAM MEMBER : NIKKOLETTE HUNTER

After relocating from Franklin, Tennessee to Los Angeles, Nikkolette joined TRF in the middle of June. Previously, she has worked at UCLA's Office of Undergraduate Admission and the Boys and Girls Club. Nikkolette graduated from UCLA with a B.A. in International Development Studies and a minor in Latin American Studies.

Having an interest in education, Nikkolette loves hearing the foundation's success stories and learning more about LA County schools. As Assistant to the President, Nikkolette will help with the foundation's day-to-day operations. Additionally, she will be responsible for the newsletter and the Recreational Reading Mini Grant. When she is not hard at work, Nikkolette can be found exploring LA with friends or gardening with her grandmother.



Nothing but smiles at Ambassador School of Global Education. As a 2015-2016 RRMG winner, Ms. Eva Eng's class hosted Mayor Riordan.

Every year since 1993, The Riordan Foundation has offered the Recreational Reading Mini-Grant to Los Angeles county PreK-5th grade teachers. These \$1,000 awards are meant to help nourish the love of reading in students by offering a variety of high-interest and high-quality reading material. As the application period for this program approaches, we want to offer some tips to help you stand out.

First, make sure to read the entire application carefully and answer questions fully. In general, we want to know how you have inspired a love of reading in your students and how you will continue to do so with access to new material. The strongest applications usually share a compelling story about a specific student's struggles or success and his or her impact on the applicant. Furthermore, remember that the booklist is just as important as the rest of the application so really think about the type of books your students will enjoy reading. After all, it is called the RECREATIONAL Reading Mini-Grant.

