

## New grant to focus on equity and improvement



Last week, the Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE) learned that it would receive a Model Design & Initiation (MDI) grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. TCOE was the only K-12 agency in California among the current cohort of MDI grantees. The MDI grant is the second grant awarded to TCOE by the foundation; the first was used to fund the original Central Valley Networked Improvement Community (CVNIC).

As an MDI grantee, TCOE will work to increase its knowledge and skills in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion; measurement and evaluation; and to scale its continuous improvement expertise more broadly across the organization. As a culminating grant activity, TCOE intends to codify its learning through the development of a Network for School Improvement (NSI) in order to facilitate countywide implementation. The future countywide NSI will be used to increase the academic outcomes for Black, Latino, and low-income secondary students in Tulare and Kings counties.

For more information on the MDI grant, contact Charlene Stringham at [charlene.stringham@tcoe.org](mailto:charlene.stringham@tcoe.org).

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## Excellence in Education Awards hosts 25th annual event honoring 30 Tulare County educators and school employees



Tuesday morning, 30 exceptional Tulare County educators and school employees were honored at the 25th annual Excellence in Education Awards – an event co-hosted by EECU. The nominees were submitted by Tulare County school districts and the Tulare County Office of Education in three categories – Administrator/Manager of the Year, Teacher of the Year, and School Employee of the Year. A committee of Tulare County business and educational leaders individually reviewed and scored each nominee to determine the winners who were announced in May.

At the conclusion of the event, the category winners posed with EECU President Elizabeth Dooley (left) and Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Tim Hire (right). The winners were (left to right) Teacher of the Year Dr. Tabby Grabowski (Tulare Union High School), Administrator/Manager of the Year Dr. Clare Gist (retired, Tulare City School District), and School Employee of the Year Taurie Thayer (Tulare County Office of Education).

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## UC Merced/SCICON Field Station hosts science study weekend

Last weekend, the UC Merced/SCICON Field Station hosted its annual field research event at the Circle J-Norris Ranch. High school students attended the three-day event to study the health of the site's foothill oaks.



Thirty-one students participated from Monache, Porterville, and Granite Hills High Schools. Under the leadership of UC Merced Professor Jessica Blois and Circle J-Norris Ranch lead teacher Nancy Bruce, the students surveyed plots and measured oak trees on the 640-acre site. The Field Station's oak mortality study began during an internship program in June. Additionally, timber assessment training was provided by foresters from Cal Fire and the Tule Reservation.

“We are delighted that more students are getting connected to UC Merced and our partners through these events, and seeing the career opportunities in the sciences,” said Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Tim Hire. The event concluded with presentations from each student group on their findings. For information about upcoming activities sponsored by the UC Merced/SCICON Field Station, contact Dianne Shew at [dshew@tcoe.org](mailto:dshew@tcoe.org).

*Photo above:*

*~ Students who participated in the annual UC Merced/SCICON field research event continued the oak mortality study begun in June. Students learned about tree health and survey techniques from UC Merced Professor Jessica Blois and foresters from Cal Fire and the Tule Reservation.*

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## **Kings River students bring history to life at Fresno's Civil War Reenactment**

Eighteen years ago, students at Kings River Union School began to replicate Early American history on campus. After researching a historic figure, students became that person for a day to experience what it may have been like to live in their time period.

Seeing the students enact their characters, Sharon Hiigal of the Fresno Historical Society asked if Kings River Union students would consider helping with the annual Civil War Reenactment her organization held annually at Kearney Park in Fresno. She envisioned a readers' theater based on the writing of children who lived during the Civil War, specifically in Gettysburg. The students performed so well that Kings River students have been asked back for 18 years.



Kings River Union Superintendent Sherry Martin said, “Our students have covered topics such as Gettysburg, the siege of Vicksburg, the burning of Atlanta, the Civil War's Naval Battles, and Civil War Medicine. This year our script involved what happened to children when war came to their own front doors. Our students always begin and end each performance by saying, ‘Some of these events were sweet and tender, and some were like living a nightmare, but all the events are told through the experiences of children, and told in their own words.’”

Kings River Union sixth-grade teacher Patrick Delgado and retired educator Janet Kelly worked together with students and parents to create an experience for audiences visiting the Fresno Civil War Reenactment that makes history come alive. On October 18 and 19, Kings River students performed 24 times, bringing a voice to children who lived 150 years ago. Mr. Delgado reports that Kings River's performances are among the most requested at the annual event because they tell the stories of children often unheard in history.

*Photo above:*

*~ Students from Kings River Union School are pictured performing at this year's annual Civil War Reenactment in Fresno. For the past 18 years, Kings River Union students have performed original productions based on the experiences of children who lived through the Civil War.*



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## **Tulare Kings College and Career Collaborative holds second annual Manufacturing Day**

Last week, the Tulare Kings College and Career Collaborative held its second annual TK Manufacturing (MFG) Day. MFG Day is a nationwide event where manufacturing facilities open their doors to students to explore industry careers. Locally, the event served approximately 150 students from eight high schools and one community college. The students were members of high school pathway programs focused on manufacturing and engineering.



The participants were able to tour two of the eleven participating facilities in the morning and join together to learn about related community college programs and share lunch conversations with business partners. The Tulare and Kings county manufacturers included TF Tire, Advanced Food Products, Diamond Crystal, Screw Conveyor, Electric Motor Shop, Hilti, Joann Fabric, Agusa, McClellan, TC Transcontinental, and Perfection Pet Foods.

The College and Career Collaborative partnered with the Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County and the Kings County Economic Development Corporation to connect students with local manufacturers and expand their perspectives on manufacturing careers. For more information on upcoming industry events for students, contact Joy Soares at [joy.soares@tcoe.org](mailto:joy.soares@tcoe.org).

*Photo above:*

*~ Eleven manufacturers in Tulare and Kings counties opened their facilities on national Manufacturing Day to 150 Tulare County students to expand their view of career opportunities in the field.*

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## Holocaust survivor Gabriella Karin visits La Sierra Military Academy

On October 18, La Sierra Military Academy welcomed Holocaust survivor Gabriella Karin, who shared her painful story of survival with the cadets and staff. Ms. Karin, a Jew, spent three years of her childhood in a Catholic convent in Bratislava, Slovakia, before moving with family members to a one-bedroom apartment owned by a man who risked his life to house them.

Ms. Karin's presentation was made possible through a partnership the school has with The California Holocaust Education & Resource Center of Visalia (CHERC). For three years, La Sierra students – along with many other community members – have collected and counted buttons to represent each of the six million Jews who lost their lives during the Holocaust. CHERC has five of the six million buttons it needs for a Holocaust memorial planned for Visalia. To donate buttons through the La Sierra Military Academy, call (559) 733-6963.



*Photo above:*

*~ Holocaust survivor Gabriella Karin spoke to cadets at La Sierra Military Academy about her experiences hiding from German forces that occupied Slovakia during WWII.*

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## Coming Up!

- **October 30**  
**Tulare County Red Ribbon Celebration**  
4:00 - 6:00pm, Visalia Convention Center, 303 E. Acequia, Visalia  
For more information, contact the CHOICES Program (559) 651-0155.
- **November 1**  
**Planetarium Public Show**  
6:00pm: *The Secrets of Gravity*  
7:00pm: *CAPCOM GO! The Apollo Story*  
Peña Planetarium, 11535 Avenue 264, Visalia

- **November 2**  
**Expanding Your Horizons**  
8:00am - 2:00pm, College of Sequoias Visalia campus  
For more information, contact [Paula Terrill](#).
- **November 4**  
**Implementing the EL Roadmap for Leadership Teams**  
9:00am - 2:00pm, TCOE Conference Center, 6200 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia  
Register online to attend at [tulare.k12oms.org/147-172073](http://tulare.k12oms.org/147-172073).
- **November 4 - December 23**  
**A Holiday in the City**  
(annual exhibition of holiday porcelain buildings and figurines)  
TCOE Administration Building Lobby, 6200 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia
- **November 5**  
**Region VII Conference Best Results for English Learners**  
8:00am - 3:30pm, Double Tree Conference Center, 2233 Ventura St., Fresno  
Register online to attend at [tulare.k12oms.org/147-166551](http://tulare.k12oms.org/147-166551).

View more events at [tcoe.org/CalendarofEvents](http://tcoe.org/CalendarofEvents).

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To receive *News Gallery Week*, visit [tcoe.org/GetTheGallery](http://tcoe.org/GetTheGallery), or contact Jennifer Fisher at [jenniferf@tcoe.org](mailto:jenniferf@tcoe.org) or (559) 733-6172.

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