

# PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

July 2014

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## H. Frank Dominguez Elementary School



Over a year in the making, the brand new H. Frank Dominguez Elementary School will open its doors on August 4, 2014. Dominguez Elementary will be a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) school equipped with 19 classrooms, Apple Software integration, computer lab, library, and many athletic fields. Principal Alejandro Hernandez, is very excited for the opening. An immigrant himself, he understands the school's surrounding community and the struggles of the many students the Vanir Foundation strives to serve. He looks forward to the challenges of the new school and expects to have a successful year!

## Vanir Foundation's Awards of Excellence



Each year, the Vanir Foundation recognizes outstanding academic achievement through Awards of Excellence.

Below are the Class of 2014 award recipients.

### Mother of Sorrows School



Cidney Perez was recognized as the Valedictorian of the Class of 2014. In addition to the honor of Valedictorian, Cidney also received an award for Outstanding Performance in Language Arts. She earned this award by achieving the top Language Arts score in her graduating class.

During her 9 years at Mother of Sorrows, she illustrated a consistent commitment to academics, a love for

## Designing Parachutes



As part of the Vanir Foundation's focus on STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) education, 15 fifth grade students from St. Philomene School participated in an engineering class, which introduced them to aerospace engineering through the planning, designing and testing of parachutes. Vanir Construction Management Project Engineer, Jake DePierre led the class. DePierre later stated, "It was a wonderful experience to be with a group of kids who were so enthusiastic to learn. They really enjoyed a curriculum that related to real life experiences."

The class introduced students to how aerospace engineers use their knowledge of astronomy to design space technologies. As their project, the students used low-cost materials such as trash bags, cotton, coffee filters and tissue, and their creativity to build a parachute. The students tested their parachute by dropping it from a second story to see if it would make it to the bottom while keeping the fruit contained inside safe, the slowest to hit the ground won a prize.

## Thinking Inside the Box

The Vanir Foundation supports technology and engineering at Mother of Sorrows School.

A group of fifth grade students participated in an after-school class, which introduced students to the field of package engineering. Cristina Bernardini volunteered to lead the class once a week for two months. Ms. Bernardini is a Project Manager for Vanir Construction Management and stated "I really enjoyed working with the students and having them apply hands-on skills to learn about technology and engineering".



reading and great talent with visual arts. Sidney's teachers agree, she is gifted, mature beyond her years, and able to articulate ideas and emotions in writing in a manner that surpasses high school standards.

## Bret Harte Elementary School



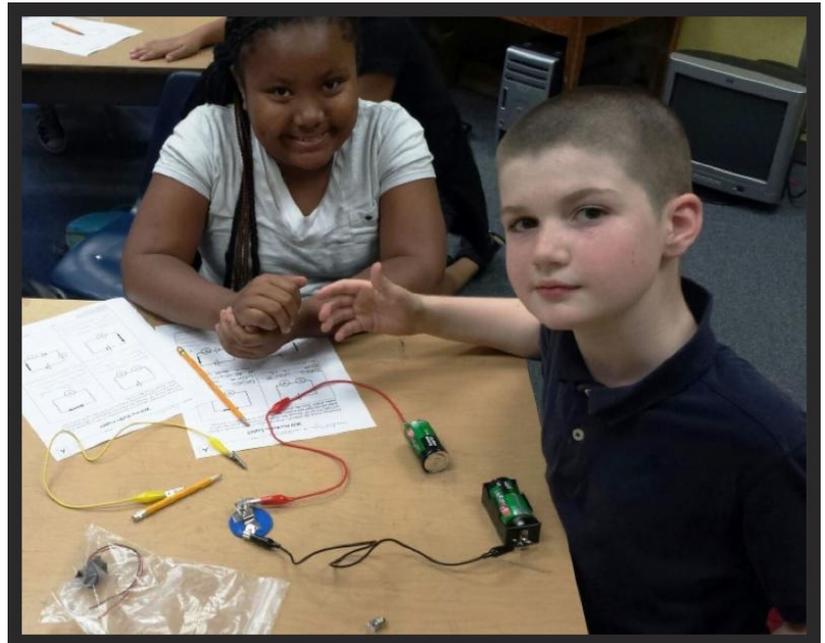
Bret Harte students, Alejandro Garcia and Tran Hoang (pictured above with Vanir Ambassador Jordi Rodriguez and Vanir Foundation President, Adrienne Cisneros-Selekman) took home the Outstanding Overall award for their academic dedication and work ethic.

According to their teachers, Alejandro and Tran were both well liked by their peers, excellent role models, and dedicated to academia. Tran is interested in pursuing science and math, while Alejandro would like to pursue math, engineering and music.

## Tyrrell Elementary School

Students were introduced to the idea that engineers design technology and were tasked to use their knowledge of plants and their creativity to design a package that can keep a plant alive and healthy for several days. The final products were packaged plants designed and engineered by the students. They took their design from paper to 3-D by building a package that would host their plant. Among the materials used were orange juice cartons, two-liter bottles, aluminum papers and transparency. The students presented their final product to a group of teachers and were able to explain the design and functionality of their packaged plant.

## All About Circuits



Bret Harte Elementary School launched their first after-school engineering class, which got students thinking like electrical engineers. The class of 24 third and fourth graders was led by Principal Lorena Carrillo and Vanir Ambassador, Jordi Rodriguez. Mr. Rodriguez is a Project Director with Vanir Construction Management and was able to bring his engineering knowledge to the classroom. Students were tasked with planning, designing and creating their very own alarm clock. When asked about his experience leading the class, Mr. Rodriguez stated, "Making a difference in someone's life is such a rewarding experience... Priceless."

As their final project, the students applied their knowledge of electrical engineering to aide them in planning and creating an alarm circuit. The class helped to reinforce science concepts including conductors and insulators, schematic diagrams and circuits. Through the Vanir Foundation's programs Principal Carrillo hopes to bring more engineering classes to Bret Harte so that more students can participate. Principal Carrillo stated "many students at Bret Harte have trouble with arriving to school in time,



Sixth grader Jose Perez, pictured above receiving his award from Vanir Ambassador Teri Cruz and Tyrrell Principal, Stacey Vidal, has attended Tyrrell since he was in kindergarten. Although Jose's favorite subject is math, he is always excited to study any subject. This year he participated in the school's Science Fair and took second place!

Those who know him will attest to his hard work and dedication to succeed. It is his dream to study at Stanford University, with the goal of becoming an architect.

so this engineering class was a fun and creative way to address this problem".

## Robotics Program



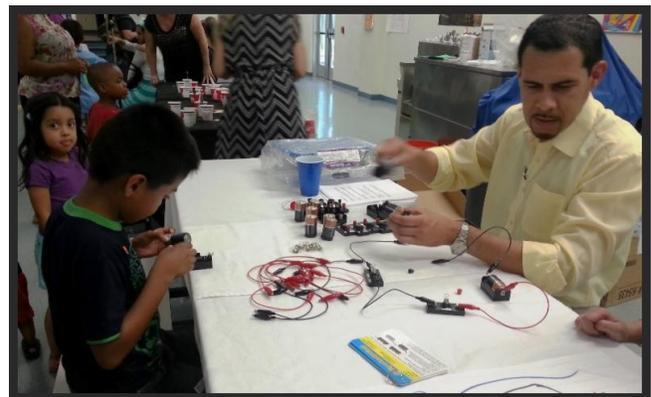
The Vanir Foundation is proud to announce that new partner school, Laurel Elementary School will launch its first full year robotics program with the start of the 2014-2015 school year. Laurel has chosen the The LEGO® Education Robotics program as a way to integrate STEM into its curriculum.

Laurel will use the robotics program to inspire students' interest in science and technology. Further, the program will provide the students with full exposure to all aspects of STEM. Working as a team, students will apply software engineering, instrumentation, and mechanics, coupled with the scientific process, as they discover answers to questions and problems presented while gaining self-confidence, developing people skills, and possibly discovering a career path.

## Science & Engineering Night

Norton Elementary hosted their first annual Science and Engineering Night on May 17, 2014. Led by sixth grade teachers, Ms. Arrellano and Mr. Lefort, the event sought to bring hands-on learning to students and parents in this San Bernardino community. Over 100 students from Kindergarten to sixth grade participated in this fun-filled event.

Over the course of two hours, students rotated between three different STEM stations. The grade-specific activities included make-your-own lip gloss, slime and electrical current. In addition, students learned about the moon using oreos and about catapults using marshmallows. Principal Elizabeth Benoit stated "we need to bring STEM learning to the hands of our students in a fun way, and this event was the perfect way to do that."



The Vanir Foundation served as the lead sponsor for this event. To get involved and support these types of endeavors, please [click here](#).

# SAVE THE DATE

## Pathways to Success Benefit Fundraiser

### October 25, 2014 - Sacramento, CA

[www.VanirFoundation.org](http://www.VanirFoundation.org)

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