



NSHSS
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NSHSS awarded ten Advanced Placement educators with grants to be used for educational purposes in 2015, the inaugural year of the NSHSS Advanced Placement Grant. Since then, NSHSS has increased the number of educators receiving the AP Grant each year and awarded twenty-five AP educators in 2016 and 2017. To date, the AP Grant recipients represent twenty-four different states across the nation. The AP Grant recipients instruct an array of topics, including AP Physics, AP French Language and Culture, AP Statistics, AP European History, and AP Chinese Language and Culture to name a few.

Please join us in recognizing this year's twenty-five AP Grant recipients below!



Lee Alexander, AP Social Studies
Enka High School, Candler, NC

Mr. Alexander values offering his AP Human Geography students experiential learning opportunities. He explains that he aims to teach students how a local river “has led to economic development, how humans have altered the physical geography of the river, and the partnerships between the business community and the outdoor recreation community.” He will use the AP Grant to fund a river plant tour led by a Duke Energy operations manager for his students. Following the river plant tour, Mr. Alexander’s students will participate in a whitewater kayak tour and visit a kayak manufacturing plant.

Mircea Arsenie, AP Environmental Science
Carl Schurz High School, Chicago, IL

Mr. Arsenie will take his students on a series of field trips to local orchards and farms using his AP Grant funding. In previous years, Mr. Arsenie has enjoyed taking his students to local parks and rivers to conduct experiments for his course. He explains that these hands-on experiences often inspire students to pursue college majors and careers in the sciences. When discussing his students, Mr. Arsenie hopes to “spark a dream, a hope, an activist bone in their future selves.”



Mike Avara, AP Chemistry/Physics
Dupo High School, Dupo, IL

Each year, Mr. Avara takes his students to the CICI Chemical Career Conference in Chicago, IL. The trip allows many of his students to envision themselves pursuing the study of chemistry and physics during collegiate study. Mr. Avara will use his AP Grant funding to continue inspiring the next generation of chemists each year. Mr. Avara

plans to “bolster student enrollment in AP Chemistry and AP Physics” and provide information about “career paths and the advantages of pursuing a degree in chemistry.”

**Luisa Barrios-Cremonesi, AP Spanish Literature/Language and Culture
Celebration High School, Celebration, FL**



Mrs. Barrios-Cremonesi will use her AP Grant funding to sponsor a trip for her school’s AP Language, Literature, and Culture students to visit the Dali Museum in St. Petersburg, FL. Mrs. Barrios-Cremonesi explains that the trip will deepen students’ comprehension by exposing them to the work of artists studied in her course.



**Gregory Dykhous, AP European History
Black River Public School, Holland, MI**

Dr. Dykhous will utilize his AP Grant to assist with the expenses associated with taking his students to the University of Michigan’s Museum of Art. His students have previously benefitted from opportunities to learn outside of the classroom. Dr. Dykhous explains that 83% of his school’s AP European History, Art History, and Studio Art students have scored 3 or higher on the AP exam and 58% have scored 4 or higher.

**Antonios Ekatomatis, AP Physics
Northwest High School, Germantown, MD**



Mr. Ekatomatis will use his AP Grant funding to purchase lab equipment and materials. He explains that he will also “design alternative assessments that actively engage students, such as laboratory practicals where students rotate through stations to collect and analyze data.” Mr. Ekatomatis desires to equip his students with the technical skills required while studying and working in STEM fields.



**Jason Hall, AP Physics
Academy of Holy Angels, Richfield, MN**

Mr. Hall will purchase a few Vernier Circuit Boards for his AP Physics II courses using his AP Grant funding. He explains that the circuit boards allow students to connect to LabQuest 2 interfaces to more easily connect to data acquisition. Students taking other science courses will also benefit from access to the school’s new Vernier Circuit Boards.

**Jennifer Hunter, AP Language & Composition Teacher
Rising Sun High School, North East, MD**



Mrs. Hunter explains that she plans to “pilot a new text book.” She continues, “This grant money can help me and my school district make a fundamental change that will meaningfully expand our AP English program.” Mrs. Hunter writes that the AP Grant will aid her in giving students “an edge that will directly influence their development and performance in college-level critical reading and writing.”



**Zachary Itzkowitz, AP Environmental Science
Pelham Preparatory Academy, Bronx, NY**

Mr. Itzkowitz is using his AP Grant funding to take his AP Environmental Science students on a rowboat trip down the Bronx River. His students will work with a local organization to perform water quality tests. Mr. Itzkowitz hopes that the trip “will help create a sense of teamwork and community” in his course.

**Eric Kincaid, AP Biology
Morgantown High School, Morgantown, WV**



Mr. Kincaid will purchase materials relating to the study of biotechnology and genetic analysis. He explains, “It is expensive to deliver a laboratory based program at the academic level which I and my students expect. I am always on the lookout for additions to my curriculum that will enhance the learning environment or provide additional, meaningful laboratory experience.”



**Lisa Laustsen, AP English Language and Composition Teacher
Holy Cross Lutheran Academy, Sanford, FL**

Mrs. Laustsen is “passionate about the value of reading and writing.” She will use her AP Grant funding to purchase materials for her AP Language course and to prepare for the AP Literature course her school will offer next year. Mrs. Laustsen also plans to use a portion of the AP Grant funds for a field trip to the Orlando Shakespeare Theater.

**Marla James, AP U.S. Government/AP European History
Union Catholic Regional High School, Scotch Plains, NJ**



Mrs. James will take 24 juniors and seniors to The Conference House in Staten Island, New York, using her AP Grant funding. She explains, “This trip will take my students

out of their 21st century comfort zone and into a historical setting to further develop their knowledge of the foundations of U.S. government. They will benefit not only from the interactive activities of The Conference House's educational programs but also from the enrichment of having been exposed to artifacts and other tangible pieces of the past."



**Norma Marsh, AP U.S. History/AP World History
Runnels High School, Baton Rouge, LA**

Each year, Ms. Marsh takes her students to Chicago. She explains that her students "become immersed in the history of the Gilded Age, touring key landmarks with the Chicago Architectural Institute from the skyscrapers to the site of the 1893 Chicago World's Fair." Ms. Marsh continues, "We also spend entire days at the excellent museums, the Chicago Art Institute, the Field Museum, and the Museum of Science and Industry, where students are immersed in our nation's culture from the art of Lichtenstein to navigating the belly of a German U-boat." The AP Grant funding will aid in funding Ms. Marsh's annual field trip to Chicago.

**Rebecca Nelson, AP English
Oswego East High School, Oswego, IL**



Mrs. Nelson explains that her AP Research course "requires that each student complete an academic essay of 4,000 to 5,000 words and an approximately 20-minute presentation and oral defense." Mrs. Nelson will use her AP Grant funding to purchase equipment to improve the video recordings of each presentation that is submitted to the College Board. Mrs. Nelson's goal is to assist her students in successfully delivering a professional presentation.



**Jessica Paxson, AP Language and Composition
James Bowie High School, Arlington, TX**

Mrs. Paxson explains, "there is something about a shared experience with a book that deepens your understanding and raises the level of interest." Her goal is to use her AP Grant funding to create an in-class book club. Mrs. Paxson continues to describe the importance of reading and thinking critically during AP exams, "In a quest to pinpoint meaning and argument, students who have not seen meaning and argument in a myriad of ways by their own choosing will be unsuccessful."

Adam Quaal, AP Physics
John W. North High School, Riverside, CA



Mr. Quaal will purchase PocketLab sensors with his AP Grant funding so that he may “introduce an independent investigation to gauge [his] students’ ability to plan and carry out investigations.” Mr. Quaal’s goal is to enable students to “gain a deeper understanding of how to design an experiment and choose appropriate data acquisition methods.”



Vickie Reed, AP Chemistry
Irma Rangel Young Women's Leadership School, Dallas, TX

Ms. Reed is eager to assist her students in “being as fluent and productive in physics as they can be.” She will use her AP Grant funding to purchase a Thermodynamics-Enthalpy of Reactions and Hess’s Law Kit, a calorimeter kit, timers, burets, and thermometers for laboratory experiments. Ms. Reed explains that “educators create a foundation that will not spark intelligence, but create brilliance that will lead to innovation to take science to the next level beyond where we could ever imagine it could travel.”

Gregory Russick, AP U.S. History
Pittston Area High School, Pittston/Yatesville, PA



Mr. Russick uses “an original collection of daguerreotypes, tintypes, ambrotypes, albumen prints and cyanotypes” in his lessons about “the development of photography in the United States during the Industrial Revolution.” Mr. Russick writes that the AP Grant will “allow [him] to obtain the supplies necessary to demonstrate antiquated technology, create images, and teach about the history of science and technology in a classroom activity.”



Eileen Virden, AP Language and Composition
Blanchet Catholic School, Salem, OR

Over 25% of Mrs. Virden’s students are of Asian or Latino descent, and she would like to diversify her curriculum which currently consist of mostly Western European authors. Mrs. Virden would also like to use her AP Grant to take a group of students to a lecture by author Viet Thanh Nguyen followed by dinner.

**Jody Zepp, AP U.S. Government and Politics
Long Reach High School, Columbia, MD**



Ms. Zepp aims to educate her students about “the value of participatory democracy and their worth as a student voice.” She will use her AP Grant towards guest speakers and materials that further inform her students about the democratic process. Ms. Zepp looks forward to providing her students “a pathway toward civic engagement and respect for democratic ideals.”