



Media Contacts
Pati Urias
602.568.9763
psuprconsultants@gmail.com

Science Foundation Arizona P: 602.682.2800
400 E. Van Buren St. Ste 200 F: 602-682-2890
Phoenix, Arizona 85004

Terry Koch
Science Foundation Arizona
602.682.2800
tkoch@sfaz.org
www.sfaz.org

For Immediate Release

Sierra Vista Teacher is awarded a Science Foundation Arizona *Innovation Hero Award*

Award Commends Teachers, Students for Excellence in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Education

SIERRA VISTA, AZ – September 23, 2009 – Using pasta and life-sized graphs with human data points to teach concepts in pre-calculus and trigonometry are just two of the novel techniques employed by Buena High School math teacher, Sandra Trevino, to engage her students in learning. Her unique approaches to imparting critical math and science skills to students has earned her Science Foundation Arizona’s *Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education (STEM) Initiative Innovation Heroes Award*.

The *Innovation Heroes Award* program honors students and teachers who are using innovative approaches toward STEM academic excellence. The awards are co-sponsored by Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold, Intel Corporation, and the Rodel Charitable Foundation of Arizona. Winning teachers receive a \$500 gift card for supplies and students receive a \$1,000 savings bond for college.

Since 2006, Science Foundation’s K-12 education programs have helped educate more than 54,000 students in critical math and science skills statewide. Science Foundation recognizes the crucial importance of STEM competency and a highly skilled Arizona work force as the foundation for a 21st century knowledge-based, global economy.

“It is a pleasure to honor teachers like Sandra Trevino and many others who are incorporating highly interactive, hands-on learning in their classrooms,” said William C. Harris, president and CEO of Science Foundation Arizona. “STEM education provides Arizona students the fundamental skills and career pathways to excel in the global economy of the 21st century and Ms. Trevino is advancing this effort.”

In her nomination essay, Trevino described how she uses familiar items with cultural references to help students grasp new math concepts. She mentors students in constructing “sine spaghetti” graphs made of noodles, leads them in musical “pi walks” around a circle (similar to a cake walk) to learn trigonometry values, and tests their knowledge by having them author a trigonometry handbook in the final months of class.

“Teachers are implementing creative, interesting curriculum to help students grasp STEM concepts all over Arizona, and we are pleased to honor them,” said Darcy Renfro, executive director of Science Foundation’s STEM Initiative. “We know students learn better and retain more when subjects, such as math, have relevance to their daily lives.”

"Modern and future professions in most industries will need candidates who can use STEM problem-solving skills," said Richard Adkerson, president and CEO of Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold. "Whether in mining or any other sector, employers will seek workers who have mastered concepts in science and math."

"STEM competent students today who become high-paying, knowledge-based workers of tomorrow are imperative to our state's future," said state Representative Patricia Fleming (LD 25 - Sierra Vista). "Our students are our greatest resource and I am pleased to see teachers recognized for their efforts to teach important skills that will build interest and skill sets toward careers in science and technology."

"Intel is committed to inspiring the next generation of innovators and ensuring high quality education and high quality graduates for Arizona," said Cathleen Barton, education manager, Intel Corporation. "Approaches like Mrs. Trevino's demonstrate the creativity and commitment needed to engage all students in math and science."

Trevino was nominated by one of her former students, Haley Haros, who credited Trevino with making math fun and interesting by encouraging the class to use trigonometry to solve everyday problems. Haros is now a freshman at Arizona State University and plans to study elementary education.

The *Innovation Heroes Award* program is ongoing and statewide; educators, students and/or members of the community may submit nominations.

Major funding for the Science Foundation Arizona's STEM Initiative is provided by Freeport-McMoRan Copper and Gold.

###

About Science Foundation Arizona: Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization initiated in 2006 by the Greater Phoenix Leadership Inc., Southern Arizona Leadership Council and the Flagstaff Forty with the goal to build and strengthen the scientific and education infrastructure in areas of greatest strategic importance to Arizona's competitiveness in the global economy. These areas comprise advanced communications, biomedicine and sustainable systems that include renewable energies. The state has appropriated monies through the Arizona 21st Century Competitive Initiative Fund and these grants, totaling \$60 million in the first two years, leveraged an additional \$109.8 million in outside capital. SFAz continues to accelerate Arizona's students' competency and excellence in STEM education and has to date impacted 54,000 students statewide. SFAz serves as a facilitating bridge between industry and education that ensures a highly skilled Arizona work force as the foundation for a 21st century knowledge-based, global economy. Founding executive leadership groups are funding operating costs for SFAz through 2012, enabling public and philanthropic funds to be directly applied to foundation initiatives. For more information, visit www.sfaz.org

To learn more about the importance of STEM education in the 21st century economy and/or to nominate an Innovation Hero, visit www.sfaz.org.