



# Fontana Unified School District

Every Student Successful, Engaging Schools, Empowered Communities

9680 Citrus Avenue | Fontana, CA 92335 | Phone: (909) 357-5000 | [www.fusd.net](http://www.fusd.net)

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Nov. 14, 2023

**CONTACT:** Andrew Shortall

(909) 204-6013

## Fontana Unified Celebrates Grand Opening of Dynamic ‘Innovation Empire’ Learning Space

**FONTANA, CA** – Fontana Unified School District commemorated the grand opening of its one-of-a-kind Innovation Empire with a pair of celebrations that included tours of the dynamic learning environment stocked with tools and technology to inspire curiosity, experimentation and entrepreneurship for District students of all ages.

The Innovation Empire is made up by a two-building complex that includes a Makerspace and collaborative space that are designed to serve as a hub for students to get hands-on experience and training in machine and design software, robotics, programming and entrepreneurship. Elected officials and distinguished guests attended a soft opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony on Nov. 7, which was followed by the center’s official grand opening for the public on Nov. 9.

“The vision for this space is something we know is going to make history,” Fontana Unified Superintendent Miki R. Inbody said. “There is no limit for our Fontana Unified students who want to push their boundaries for creativity and channel their entrepreneurial spirit as they come over and help launch the Innovation Empire this school year.”

Among the esteemed dignitaries who attended the Nov. 7 ribbon-cutting ceremony were City of Fontana Mayor Acquanetta Warren, City Councilmembers John B. Roberts and Jesus “Jesse” Sandoval and Treasurer Janet Koehler-Brooks; San Bernardino County Board of Education Trustee Laura Mancha; Fontana Unified Board of Education President Marcelino “Mars” Serna, Board members Dr. Jennifer Quezada and Mary Sandoval; and representatives from the offices of Congresswoman Norma Torres, San Bernardino County Supervisor Jesse Armendarez and San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools Ted Alejandro.

North Tamarind Elementary School sixth grader Cristian Covarrubias was one of many Fontana Unified students who took a tour of the Innovation Empire and learned about everything it has to offer.

“It is amazing and I like how the Innovation Empire teaches kids about business and allows students to unleash their creativity on projects,” Covarrubias said. “It would be cool if our next school field trip would be to the Innovation Empire. There are a bunch of cool things I want to learn about here.”

The Innovation Empire is a creative hub where Fontana Unified students can take a project from idea to reality. Fontana Unified Strategic Innovations Facilitator Gibran Carter leads the Innovation Empire’s collaborative think tank space for student groups using project-based learning to spur creativity. Josh Brown is the Makerspace Manager and oversees a fleet of state-of-the-art 3D, laser and ultra-violet

printers, a water cutter and CNC mill that offer a number of possibilities, from theatre prop production and laser engraving to metal part fabrication and 3D object re-creation.

“This building is the only one of its kind in the Inland Empire and is going to be a pillar in our community,” Serna said. “The goal is for our students to be able to use all of these machines to create, innovate and take not only Fontana but this entire region to another level.”

#### **PHOTO CAPTIONS:**

**FUSD\_INNOVATION1:** From left to right, Fontana Unified Board of Education members Dr. Jennifer Quezada, Mary Sandoval, District Superintendent Miki R. Inbody and Board President Marcelino “Mars” Serna cut the Innovation Empire’s ceremonial ribbon during a soft opening of the dynamic learning environment on Nov. 7.

**FUSD\_INNOVATION2:** A Fontana Unified student tours the District’s Innovation Empire, a creative learning environment where District students of all ages can take a project from idea to reality, during its official grand opening on Nov. 9. The Innovation Empire is a creative hub where Fontana Unified students can take a project from idea to reality.

**FUSD\_INNOVATION3:** Fontana Unified Innovation Empire Makerspace Manager Josh Brown takes a group on a tour during a soft opening on Nov. 7. The Innovation Empire Makerspace is equipped with a fleet of state-of-the-art 3D, laser and ultra-violet printers, a water cutter and CNC mill that offer a number of possibilities from theatre prop production and laser engraving to metal part fabrication and 3D object re-creation.

#### **VIDEO FILE:**

Raw video highlights of Fontana Unified School District’s grand opening for the Innovation Empire can be found and downloaded [here](#).

###