



Fontana Unified School District

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NEWS RELEASE

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Fontana Unified Students Design Devices to Impact Community, Earn Semifinalist Honors in Prestigious Competition

FONTANA, CA – Fontana High School students are utilizing their science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) skills to create adaptive and assistive living devices as part of the International Technology and Engineering Educators' (ITEEA) REACH Challenge, resulting in two Fontana High teams earning semifinalist honors and a third receiving special recognition in the competition.

The REACH Challenge is a nationwide design thinking project that tasks students with creating a viable technological solution to help members of their community thrive. All three Fontana High teams were offered discounted registration to ITEEA's 86th Annual Conference on March 6-9 in Memphis.

The REACH Challenge students are all enrolled in Fontana High's Bio-Animatronic and Neuroprosthetic career technical education pathway, a two-part program that teaches students advanced STEM skills and gives them hands-on experience in the bio-technology and prosthetics fields.

"In our pathway, we always tell our students that they have the power to make a change in the world," Bio-Animatronic and Neuroprosthetic teacher Diann Bravo said. "The most moving and impactful part of the REACH Challenge is that my students can take the skillsets they have learned in class and apply them to make someone else's quality of life better."

Team SpongeBob Alert System (S.A.S.) created a device that would allow Veloz's parents to leave his brother unsupervised for a short amount of time when needed. The two-part device detects sounds from the user and issues an alert if it hears something odd, such as a choking sound. The device allows Veloz's parents to step away from their son momentarily and complete other tasks without worry.

"It's a huge accomplishment for my team and I to be able to assist caregivers and be named semifinalists with our device," Fontana High senior Gabriel Veloz said. "My brother has cerebral palsy so it meant a lot for me to create a device for my brother and be able to assist my parents in taking care of him."

The second Fontana High team to advance to the semifinals, Drift Stand, created an innovative solution to an issue faced by one of their peers. The team's classmate, who is paralyzed in one arm, often faces difficulty in completing schoolwork independently due to his inability to hold a paper down and write at the same time. To combat this issue, Drift Stand designed a clipboard-like device that uses a magnetic system to keep papers held down while the user writes, allowing them to complete their classwork and homework independently.

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“For me, being named a semifinalist of the REACH Challenge means that all of our hard work paid off,” Fontana High senior Stefania Alvarado said. “Now I’m able to use what I learned in class in the real world and express my creativity through our projects.”

Team Attachable Table, the third Fontana High REACH Challenge team, received special recognition for its device that allows an active man with a prosthetic leg to carry more things on his walker without the risk of them falling off. The team’s extended attachable table for the user’s walker can easily be added and removed, allowing for easy utilization.

Fontana High’s two semifinalist teams will have the opportunity to demonstrate their devices during a STEM Showcase at the ITEEA Conference in March. All three FOHI teams also received banners and \$100 Harbor Freight gift cards for their achievements.

“To have two Fontana High School teams be named semifinalists and a third receive special recognition in this prestigious competition in just our first year of participating in the REACH Challenge is an enormous achievement,” Superintendent Miki R. Inbody said. “These students are a perfect representation of the academic excellence that is prevalent across our District.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

FUSD_REACH1: Senior Jacob Garcia works on a project in Fontana High’s Neuroprosthetic career technical education class. Garcia and Team Attachable Table earned special recognition in the International Technology and Engineering Educators’ (ITEEA) REACH Challenge.

FUSD_REACH2: Alexis Alvarez, a senior, was one of several Fontana High students to earn special recognition in the International Technology and Engineering Educators’ (ITEEA) REACH Challenge with Team Attachable Table. The REACH Challenge is a nationwide design thinking project that tasks students with creating a viable technological solution to help members of their community thrive.

FUSD_REACH3: Fontana High seniors Gabriel Veloz, left, and Miguel Sanchez created adaptive and assistive living devices as part of the International Technology and Engineering Educators’ (ITEEA) REACH Challenge. Veloz and Sanchez earned semifinalist honors in the REACH Challenge with Team SpongeBob Alert System and Drift Stand, respectively.

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