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CONTACT: Lauren Creiman, (909) 833-9853

Bonita Unified Teachers Receive Rotary Club Mini-Grants for Innovative Classroom Projects

SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE – Two Bonita Unified elementary school teachers received mini-grants from the Rotary Club of La Verne to support innovative classroom projects that inspire students to develop a love of learning and provide additional resources so that the students can thrive academically.

Rotary Club of La Verne president James R. Ranells presented mini-grants totaling \$900 to Roynon Elementary kindergarten teacher Monica Serna Johnson and Oak Mesa Elementary transitional kindergarten (TK) teacher Heather Hoynes during the Dec. 18 Board of Education meeting.

“The Rotary Club mini-grants are a testament to the power of collaboration and the Club’s commitment to education in our local community,” Ranells said. “Teachers ignite curiosity, inspire creativity, and build the foundation for lifelong learning. With these mini-grants, the Rotary is not just providing funding, but empowering teachers to create rich learning experiences.”

Hoynes received \$400 to create a multi-sensory learning center where students will use sensory items such as Play-Doh, Legos or cubes to construct letters, numbers and shapes in order to better develop their sensory skill sets through repetition, while also enhancing their creative and critical thinking skills.

Hoynes will also use the money to replenish an immersive butterfly garden with milkweed plants to attract migrant butterflies. The butterfly garden, which was created through a previous Rotary Club mini-grant, was recently improved by a local Eagle Scout, who created a fence and footpath to provide easier access so that all Oak Mesa students can enjoy the garden.

“The multi-sensory learning center benefits students by helping them master concepts at much higher rates than traditional methods,” Hoynes said. “Multi-sensory opportunities help to build foundational concepts for reading and math. They also give students the space to learn valuable social concepts for lasting friendships in play-based learning, as well as be good citizens.”

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NEWS RELEASE

Johnson received \$500 to purchase an array of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) building toys to encourage her kindergarten students to be creative and problem-solve through the power of play.

“STEM building toys are entertaining toys that develop children’s cognitive skills, problem-solving skills, and decision-making skills,” Johnson said. “Creative thinking and memory are also developed through the use of these building toys and children feel successful when they build something tangible with their own hands, using their creativity.”

PHOTO:

BUSD_LV_MINIGRANTS: Rotary Club of La Verne presents two Bonita Unified teachers with mini-grants during the Dec. 18 Board of Education meeting. From left to right: Rotary Club members Deborah Deacy and Craig Rubin, Roynon Elementary teacher Monica Serna Johnson, Oak Mesa Elementary teacher Heather Hoynes, and Rotary Club president James R. Ranells.

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