Happy Holidays from our family to yours!

From the Speak Up National Research Project, to our Tomorrow’s Teachers Initiative, to ground-breaking Innovation in Education Programs, Project Tomorrow continues to serve its mission with a legacy of improving the lives of children through enhanced educational opportunities. The work we do is a reflection of the company we keep: our impressive cadre of community partners, generous corporate sponsors, committed board of directors, and the talented and deserving students who are the reason our work enhances communities and changes lives.

Won’t YOU 'Speak Up?'

Since 2003, over 3.7 million parents, students, teachers, principals, technology leaders, librarians and district administrators have been sharing their views on technology in education by embracing the opportunity to “Speak Up”. The Speak Up data represents the largest collection of authentic, unfiltered stakeholder voices regarding digital learning. In addition, we summarize and share both the local and the national findings with education and policy leaders in districts, states, and in Washington D.C. Won’t you share your thoughts on technology in education and “Speak Up?” Take the online survey at: www.tomorrow.org/speakup

Project Tomorrow Events and Milestones in 2014:

• Speak Up National Research Project launches 12th annual survey reaching over 400,000 students, parents, teachers, librarians, technology leaders and administrators.

• Project Tomorrow announced as 100Kin10 partner joining national effort of best in class organizations working to recruit the next generation of STEM teachers.

• Tomorrow’s Teachers Initiative empowers local students to explore careers in teaching, is named a partner in Orange County Teacher Preparation Pathway.

• 160 Orange County students participate in 5th annual “Youth Leadership Summit for Math and Science”, a regional STEM career event.

• Second Annual California Future Teachers Conference serves a packed house at Saddleback College.
Youth Leadership Summit for Math and Science

On October 25th, 2014, Project Tomorrow held its fifth annual Leading the Way: Youth Leadership Summit for Math and Science, at Edwards Lifesciences Worldwide Headquarters in Irvine, California. With over 200 students, parents, and community leaders in attendance, the event provided an opportunity for high school students to explore careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields and to learn about how math and science proficiency is increasingly a critical skill for current and future jobs.

This conference-style event kicked off with a creative student presentation of Orange County business trends, followed by a panel discussion from industry leaders focused on workforce skills. Next, students attended career-specific breakout sessions of their choice led by local business and education leaders, an engineering panel discussion featuring speakers from across the field, and tabletop exhibits introducing attendees to local STEM college programs. Students enjoyed a continental breakfast and networking lunch at this free, half-day event, which concluded with a student raffle featuring gifts from regional businesses and community partners.

Project Tomorrow would like to extend a very special thank you to all of our guest speakers, volunteers, participating local colleges, sponsors, and partners for their time and generous contributions, without which this event would not be possible.

2014 Innovation in Education Awards

On October 9, 2014, Project Tomorrow presented its 9th Annual Innovation in Education Awards at the OC Tech Alliance High Tech Awards Gala at the Westin South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa. The awards were presented to finalists in three categories: Innovative School Program, High Impact Teacher, and Emerging Student Innovator, recognizing schools and individuals throughout Orange County who are engaged in science, math and technology programs that make a difference in their communities.

2014 represents the ninth year that Project Tomorrow has enjoyed the generous sponsorship of Emulex Corporation and the first year the Microsemi Corporation has supported the Innovation in Education Awards program. This year’s shining stars were:

Innovative School Program
Jose Sepulveda Elementary School

High Impact Teacher
Ed Hernandez- Tustin High School

Emerging Student Innovator
Samantha Langit- Aliso Niguel High School
Project Tomorrow Research Initiatives

Beyond our large scale, national Speak Up research, we also continued this year to develop and expand other research initiatives around three key digital learning solutions: mobile devices, digital content and blended learning. Our three year National Science Foundation grant examining the readiness of math and science teachers to use digital content within instruction was extended for a fourth year to allow for a more in-depth study of some of our findings. In addition, last spring we worked with 62 colleges and universities nationwide to study how Cengage Learning’s digital content and online tools impacted student achievement and instructor effectiveness. This school year, we are again working with Cengage in an exploration of the role of online resources in three private schools in the Philadelphia area. Leveraging our expertise in the evaluation of mobile learning projects, we are now in the third year of a study in Chicago Public Schools evaluating the impact of tablets and home Internet access on the literacy development of 5th graders with limited English proficiency, and just started two new evaluation studies in Onslow County Schools (NC) – one with tablets in 6th grade, and another using laptops with 7th, 8th and 9th grade students. We continue to work closely with Qualcomm on their education efforts including the evaluation of new tools to support mobile learning in K-12 schools. Finally, one of our newest projects is an evaluation in conjunction with Fuel Education and six school districts on the academic outcomes of various blended learning models. We actively share the results of our research with the greater K-12 and higher education community to inform new initiatives in digital learning – and use the findings to support all of our school based programs including Speak Up and the Tomorrow’s Teachers Initiative.

Tomorrow’s Teachers Initiative

The Tomorrow’s Teachers Initiative, which seeks to meet the need for the next generation of math and science teachers in California, consists of YouthTEACH2Learn (YT2L) and California Future Educators Association (CFEA). YT2L is a high-impact science and math education program in which high school students are enrolled in a full year elective class at their school to learn about teaching math and science. As part of the class, the students develop a series of hands-on science and math lessons and in turn, teach these standards-based lessons in local elementary school classrooms. In addition to running YT2L, Project Tomorrow is the state affiliate for the national Future Educators Association. Participation in CFEA’s co-curricular, after school chapters provides high school students with information and experiential learning opportunities to support their exploration of a teaching career, particularly in teaching science and math.

In 2014, participation in CFEA has increased over 400%, and next year we are on pace to double the number of students in YouthTEACH2Learn. Also this year, Project Tomorrow was named a partner in the Orange County Teacher Preparation Pathway (OCTPP) grant. OCTPP is a regional consortium of community colleges, CSU Fullerton, several school districts, and non-profit, business, and community partners funded by the California Department of Education to produce a more qualified and more diverse teacher workforce, especially in the fields of math and science. Finally, with funding from the Annenberg Foundation, Project Tomorrow has developed an environmental science YT2L curriculum, which will be piloted in 2015-2016, and likely attract more students to the teaching profession.

“I can remember learning from high school students in the YouthTEACH2Learn program when I was little, and after being in the program, I truly understand how great the class is. This program was the key factor in my choosing teaching as my career path. I am beginning school at Cal State Fullerton as a Math major, in hopes of becoming a high school math teacher.”

-Recent YT2L graduate

A Message From Julie Evans

I am proud of what Project Tomorrow has accomplished this year – the highlights that you read here really only scratch the surface – but it seems that every day there is another reminder that more needs to be done to prepare today’s students with the science and technology knowledge and skills that they will need to succeed in the future.

Whether it is the recent Business Roundtable report citing the lack of qualified STEM workers for the over 1 million new jobs they will need to fill in the next five years, or the nearly constant reports of the deepening shortage of STEM teachers in our nation’s schools, Project Tomorrow’s work of researching, promoting, and rewarding innovative approaches to STEM education is more relevant now than ever. Fortunately, Project Tomorrow has a proven set of programs to recruit the next generation of teachers and STEM professionals.

With your help, we are preparing today’s students to be tomorrow’s innovators, leaders, and engaged citizens. I hope that you will continue to help us make a difference for the future by making a donation to Project Tomorrow; your support may very well inspire the next great math teacher to graduate from YouthTEACH2Learn!

Make a Donation!

Holiday 2014, Volume 2, Issue 1, Project Tomorrow (949)609-4660 www.tomorrow.org