

Incline Middle School awarded \$50k grant, begins new robotics class

News | Feb 7, 2023

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INCLINE VILLAGE, Nev. — Incline Village Middle School has been awarded a \$49,559 grant from the Governor's Office to build a state-of-the-art robotics course for the campus.

The grant will allow social studies teacher Kevin Edwards to teach students to code and operate robots, drones, submersible claws, and to develop their STEM skills to track, find, and recover trash that is left in and around the basin.

"What I wanted to do is bring in robotics and drones and computer science and those things to the middle school, because we don't have any of those resources," said Edwards.

Initially, Edwards began with applying for the [Samsung Solve for Tomorrow](#) STEM competition, where the school was named a state finalist. From there, Edwards reached out to the Incline Education Fund to get more help with his initial application for a drone light show. When they asked him what his biggest goal was of the school, the topic of growing the robotics program was brought up.

"The elementary school has a great teacher ... and a great program set up and the high school has a lot of resources and the middle school doesn't have anything," said Edwards. "And so it was kind of to bridge the gap so that we could have kids go from elementary to middle to high school with some sort of STEM resources."

Incline Education Fund then put together an application for the middle school. The OSIT grant, which stands for the Office of Science, Innovation, and Technology, was only made possible for the middle school through the help of the Incline Education Fund.

"They found it, they applied for it," said Edwards. "They did a lot of the work for getting the OSIT grant for us. Because we're a public school, we don't have much funding for things like this."

The robotics class made possible by the OSIT grant began in January of this year, and is going well so far. According to Edwards, his students are currently working on creating their 'perfect robot' with a 3D printer.

In addition, Edwards better refined the Samsung STEM application in order to make it better for the final round of judging.

"The Samsung grant opportunity is to buy drones in which we can fly around Incline Village, around the lake, like Sand Harbor, to where you can program the drone to identify the color of the sand and the dirt," said Edwards. "But if a color is unnatural, that drone will stop and alert that there's trash or debris, and then the kids will clean it up."

Edwards wants to take it to the next step by being able to afford a submersible drone that can go through the lake and collect trash. The trash collected by students would then be given to a few artists who would then turn it into public art.

"The art will kind of be like a steward for saying let's protect our area," said Edwards.

Edwards was inspired by Jane Goodall's visit to Incline Village in 2019, where she spoke about working locally to make a large impact.

"My dream vision is that we can kind of live Jane Goodall's vision for protecting the lake, doing what it takes to raise awareness of how fragile our ecosystem is, and to bring the community together."

The middle school will know if they are awarded the grant from Samsung in mid-February.