

Eta Chi 2023-24 Anne Gillespie Innovative Learning Grant Winners

In December, members of the Innovative Learning Grant Committee presented checks to this year's recipients: Amy Costello – Abraxas High School – PUSD Adult Transition Program and Lisa Smedley – Del Norte High School- Marine Science – 11 & 12 Grade. We look forward to learning more about their innovative projects.



L to R: Kristie Szentesi, Amy Costello, and Pam Klevesahl

Amy Costello, PUSD Adult Transition Program Teacher at Abraxas High School for 18–22-year-old students with moderate to severe disabilities, received her \$750 check from Eta Chi members Pam Klevesahl and Kristie Szentesi. Amy and her colleagues have created classroom businesses in which other students and staff participate. As a result, students benefit from experiencing real life and transferable skills such as applying for employment, interviewing, and being responsible for planning, organizing, and running a business. Amy's classroom is a restaurant business, called "Ciao Down," and Eta Chi's funding will provide necessary materials for the restaurant.

Congratulations to **Lisa Smedley**, Del Norte High School Marine Science Teacher, our other winner of Eta Chi's Anne Gillespie Innovative Learning Grant for \$750. Lisa and her teammates have launched a new marine science course for 11th and 12th graders, which has already expanded to six sections. Grant funding will allow for the purchase of fish tank equipment and local flora and fauna for teaching students how to care, feed, and maintain appropriate chemistry for a thriving intertidal community in a tank. In addition to meeting NCSS standards in Earth, Physics, and Chemistry, this project will help to instill a love and respect for our oceans by monitoring weekly chemical and biological changes, as well as bringing physical science to life.



The Anne Gillespie Innovative Learning Grant supports two purposes of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International- to promote the professional and personal growth of women educators, as well as excellence in education. Anne Gillespie designed and presented innovative lessons to engage her students and enhance their learning during her 32-year teaching career with the Poway Unified School District. Because she always brought innovation into her teaching, Eta Chi chose to name the Innovative Learning Grant in her honor.