



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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Local Teacher Named Riverside Innovation Honoree of the Month

City of Riverside recognizes Michael Martin for guiding students to engineering careers

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Michael Martin, a teacher at Martin Luther King High School in Riverside who has spent more than a decade successfully encouraging local students to pursue careers in engineering, has been named the City of Riverside’s Innovation Honoree of the Month.

Martin was recognized by Riverside Mayor Rusty Bailey and Technology Ombudsman Gregory Lee at a City Council meeting on July 23.

“Michael Martin embodies the kind of innovative teaching methods that will help our local schools prepare students for the next wave of educational success,” said Mayor Bailey, who was a teacher before being elected Mayor. “Programs like Project Lead the Way are crucial to bringing the spirit of innovation into the schools.”

The Innovation Honoree program is designed to recognize people or groups in the City of Riverside that exemplify Riverside’s motto as a City of Arts & Innovation. Martin is the sixth individual to receive the designation.

Martin is a Project Lead the Way teacher at King, introducing high school students to engineering and preparing them for careers. His program at King was recognized as a national Project Lead the Way model in 2008 and was honored by Riverside County as a “Model School of Excellence” in 2009.

Martin has trained other teachers in Project Lead the Way every summer since 2006, and he travels throughout California to teach robotics. Martin has taught at King High School since it opened in 1999 and started the Project Lead the Way program in 2000, making it the oldest such program in California. He also has taught science and has coached baseball, basketball, and golf in his 29-year public school career.

“We know that there are good jobs in Riverside, the state and the nation waiting for students who study the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields,” Mayor Bailey said. “Michael Martin is an example of the kind of innovative teaching we need to prepare young people for those jobs.”

There are about 4,700 Project Lead the Way programs across the U.S. More than 95 percent of students who complete the program go on to study engineering in college.

Project Lead the Way launched in 1997 in 12 high schools in New York as a program designed to address the shortage of engineering students at the college level. The non-profit organization is the leading provider of rigorous and innovative STEM education programs for schools.