

The James and Ursula Williams Teacher Grants Program

Resource Page

The James and Ursula Williams Family Fund Grant Program is designed to provide public school teachers in the Vallejo City Unified School District (VCUSD) with much-needed financial support to enhance their classrooms, promote hands-on learning, and foster innovation in education. Whether it's taking students on field trips, enriching the curriculum with arts and STEM projects, or securing necessary classroom materials, these grants are intended to help teachers create lasting educational experiences.

The James & Ursula Williams Family Fund (JUWFF), honors this loving couple who were dedicated community activist and longstanding residents of Vallejo. Their legacy of persistence, dedication, and commitment to education, inspires this fund.

We believe that empowering teachers with resources allows them to unlock the potential of their students. Below are the different grant categories, resources, and guidelines to help you get started!

Grant Categories and Eligible Activities

1. Field Trip/Excursion Grants (Up to \$1,000)

Field trips are an invaluable tool for experiential learning, giving students exposure to real-world experiences that enhance their understanding of classroom lessons. The Field Trip/Excursion Grants are designed to fund not just the destination fees but also transportation costs, making it easier for educators to take their students on impactful educational trips. Below are some great options for field trips:

- [Vallejo Flood & Wastewater District](#): Offers free educational programs that teach students about water treatment and environmental conservation. Great for science or environmental studies classes.
- [The Exploratorium \(San Francisco\)](#): Title 1 schools (TK–12th grade) can apply for free admission, allowing grant funds to be used for transportation costs like ferry rides from Vallejo to San Francisco. Learn more here.
- [California Railroad Museum \(Sacramento\)](#): Offers free admission and tailored programs for specific grade levels, focusing on transportation history and innovation.
- [Dunnell Nature Center \(Fairfield\)](#): A free, two-hour nature-based learning experience where students explore local water resources in an outdoor setting. This trip can complement earth science or environmental studies.

- [Rush Ranch \(Suisun City\)](#): A working ranch that offers free docent-led field trips focused on wildlife, history, and geography. Great for interdisciplinary projects that combine science, history, and geography.
 - **Vallejo Naval & Historical Museum**: Learn about Vallejo's maritime and historical significance through interactive exhibits. [Vallejo Museum Contact](#).
 - [Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park \(Richmond\)](#): Learn about the contributions of women and minorities during World War II in a historical setting.
 - **Benicia Capitol State Historic Park (Benicia, CA)**: Explore California's historic capital through immersive educational programs. [Benicia Capitol Park](#).
 - [Travis Air Force Base Aviation Museum](#): Located northeast of Suisun City, this museum offers students a chance to explore aviation history and modern aerospace technology.
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2. Academics, Arts, and Culture Grants (Up to \$500)

Our Arts and Culture Grants offer an excellent opportunity for teachers to cultivate creativity and cultural appreciation among students. These funds can be used to enhance your classroom curriculum in subjects like history, geography, and literature; and in arts programs such as music, theater, dance, and visual arts. Suggested uses include:

- **California History Project**: Use funds to purchase, "[Alvin Coffey: The True Story of an African American Forty Niner](#)". Alvin Coffey is the California Patriarch to many Vallejo residents, including Grace L. Patterson, the 1st black teacher in VCUSD. To purchase Alvin Coffey bookmarks (\$.15 each) for your students, contact the author, Nancy Leek at naleek@gmail.com
 - **Día de los Muertos Art Project**: Use funds to buy materials like paint, crayons, beads, or sequins for a **Day of the Dead** art project. Learn how to make a **Day of the Dead mask** here: [Day of the Dead Mask Guide](#).
 - **Visiting Artists or Cultural Presenters**: Invite a local artist or cultural expert to work with students on creating projects or exploring a specific cultural tradition.
 - **Cultural Heritage Celebrations**: Use the funds to purchase materials for celebrations like Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, or Lunar New Year, where students can create culturally significant art pieces.
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3. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Grants (Up to \$500)

The STEM Grants provide financial support for teachers to introduce or enhance science, technology, engineering, and mathematics projects in their classrooms. Some possibilities for these funds include:

- [IXL Math Workbooks](#): Purchase these comprehensive math workbooks for each student, tailored to their specific grade level (K–8). The workbooks cover a variety of

topics, making them a useful resource for students' daily math practice. Available on Amazon.

- **[STEM Challenge Kits](#)**: Purchase kits that provide hands-on learning experiences, such as building simple machines or coding projects.
- **[Green Science Kits](#)**: Encourage critical thinking by purchasing fun kits like the [Potato Clock Science Kit](#), available on Walmart or Amazon. These kits are excellent for interactive STEM lessons.
- **[Pumpkin Science Project](#)**: Purchase pumpkins or organize a trip to a local pumpkin patch. This grant can also be used to buy seeds and materials for a class project on growing pumpkins. Watch the YouTube video, *A Pumpkin Grows*, to supplement learning. [Pumpkin Patch Info](#).
- **[Hands-on Earth Science Projects](#)**: For 9th–12th grade classes, funds can be used to purchase containers, seeds, and soil for long-term projects like growing plants in a classroom setting. Focus on earth science lessons by teaching students about plant life cycles, soil composition, and sustainability.
- **[STEM Challenge Jr. Kit](#)**: Available on Amazon, this kit offers 30 science experiments tailored for younger students (ages 4–6), making it perfect for TK, Kindergarten, and 1st Grade.

Additional Resources

Philanthropic Ventures Foundation (PVF) Environmental Science Field Trip Grant

If your field trip has an environmental focus, you may also be eligible for a transportation grant through PVF. This grant can be used in conjunction with the Williams Family Fund to offset transportation costs for trips like the **Vallejo Flood & Wastewater District** or the **Dunnell Nature Center**. For more information, visit the PVF website: [PVF Environmental Science Grants](#)

VCUSD Transportation Services

Check with your school district to see if your field trip qualifies for transportation support through VCUSD's [2025 Transportation Plan](#).
