

## Troxell brings STEM playground event to Cajon Valley School District

 [Rebecca Jefferis Williamson](#)  **Wed September 20, 2017 05:52pm**



Liz Loether posed the question “How can a robot fit into an English class?” Terra Norine, an account executive with Troxell, conceived of Troxell’s STEM Playground event, held on Sept. 14. The STEM Playground event helped to answer that question held on the Cajon Valley Union School District’s El Cajon office complex, where Loether is Director of Learning Support Services. STEM is a curriculum based on the idea of educating students in science, technology, engineering, and math.

“It was conceived by Troxell for us, as a part of their make-a-roadshow” said Loether. Terra Norine with Troxell said, “Many of the schools I visited had innovative technologies, but did not have strategies for incorporating those technologies into the classroom. Today you have a unique opportunity to experience the latest STEM tools on the market, direct access to STEM consultants, manufacturers, and Troxell representatives.”

CVUSD’s STEM Playground was on Thursday with similar events held earlier in the week in Escondido, Poway, Sweetwater, and Southbay. Breakout sessions with topics covering 3D printing, robotics, and microcontrollers had classrooms filled with teachers, a vendor’s tradeshow area, and some scientific themed snacks created by Your Mind’s Eye. All these components helped to complete this inaugural event held from 2 – 6 p.m.

“Our job as educators is to not only teach reading and writing but to introduce this technology to students to explore future careers,” said second grade teacher at Jamacha Elementary, Shannon Savinon. Her students currently work on Chromebook laptops and use Google Classroom among other programs.

Vendor pi-top’s account executive, Bre Podgorski, highlighted what their build-a-laptop computers offer to students.

Podgorski said. “It’s a build it yourself laptop that teaches kids how to code and work with physical computing. This is the next generation of the STEM platform.” Pi-top teaches kids how to build the hardware. Many programs only teach software production. “If we don’t up the hardware, we have nowhere to go,” she said.

Boxlight Mimico’s Debbie Dotson, Regional Manager, was showcasing a portable data logger named Labdisc - genesis. She noted that the portable data logger allows students to do their testing on a playground or in a classroom. Dotson explained, “Twelve years ago it was interactive white boards but now interactive flat panels are starting to take their place” - she noted with how technology has changed in the classroom.



Presenters Linda Henneberg, Susan Wells, and Christine Bell plus headed breakout classroom sessions in balanced instruction and blended learning, digital natives - facts vs. myth, Makerspace 101, and more.

Karen Clark-Mejia, governing board member for the CVUSD said, "This is an opportunity for our teachers to see what is out there. It's not a sales pitch but how to work within our STEM program." Clark-Mejia noted they already teach computer coding at Rios Elementary School- the nation's first elementary computer magnet school.

A drone circled above the lawn, robotic Lego dogs jumped, and companies like Polaroid, MakerBot, Google, Kodak, Pai Technology plus displayed and taught about the latest products for the tens of teachers, teachers aids, and administrators in attendance to see and learn about. Implementing these products into the classroom was a main theme.

Troxell is a national end-to-end solution provider for technology and collaborative solutions in K-12, higher education, government, and corporate.

