

## Pittsburg math teacher spends summer developing real-world curriculum for classroom

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PITTSBURG -- Hillview Junior High School teacher Harlan Levy didn't really have a summer vacation.

Instead, through an eight-week fellowship with Industry Initiatives for Science and Math Education, he worked for Synopsys in Mountain View developing a curriculum that connects real work experiences with the classroom.

IISME fellowships take math and science teachers out of school and into companies with ties to their relevant subjects. The partnership gives companies a qualified temporary work force and allows teachers to see how classroom skills apply to the real world.

In addition to gaining valuable insight into how their subjects are applied in modern industries, teachers are awarded \$1,000 IISME grants to create and implement curriculums based on their experience.

"It's a great program; the whole idea of trying to marry where kids will end up while articulating what will be expected of (them)," Levy said. "It's a

wonderful thing to be at the center of the tech industry."

Synopsys produces software, IP services and electronic design automation used for the manufacture of semiconductors. The company is best known for its compilers and processors, Levy said.

At his fellowship, Levy serves as an information technology analyst. He has recently been tasked with helping procure new products. His on-site mentor, Darryl Dyson, asked him to analyze products Synopsys uses at its campuses.

"He's been an excellent asset

to the program," Dyson said. "He's got an objective view of the project."

Levy primarily teaches remedial math at Hillview, but has also taught seventh- and eighth-grade algebra and pre-algebra. Next year will be his fifth at the school. He's been teaching in the East Bay for 13 years.

"I really enjoy working with kids who are coming out of elementary school, and helping them become more self-reliant as they head into the anonymity that is high school," he said, laughing. "I heard that all your sins are forgiven if you teach middle school."

Although the cost-benefit analysis Levy uses in procurement may be over the heads of middle-school remedial math students, he said he is in the process of creating a curriculum that will allow students to create their own business plans.

The curriculum is influenced as much by the

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fellowship as it is by Levy's background in business. Before becoming a teacher, Levy worked for Apple and Bristol-Myers Squibb. He also opened his own management consulting and import business, Levy and Associates, with which he is no longer affiliated.

"The biggest transfer (from my fellowship to the classroom) is letting kids know there are infinite possibilities to participate in ground zero of developing technology." Levy said. "Children need to be exposed to that, especially in Pittsburg."