

# aspiring innovators!

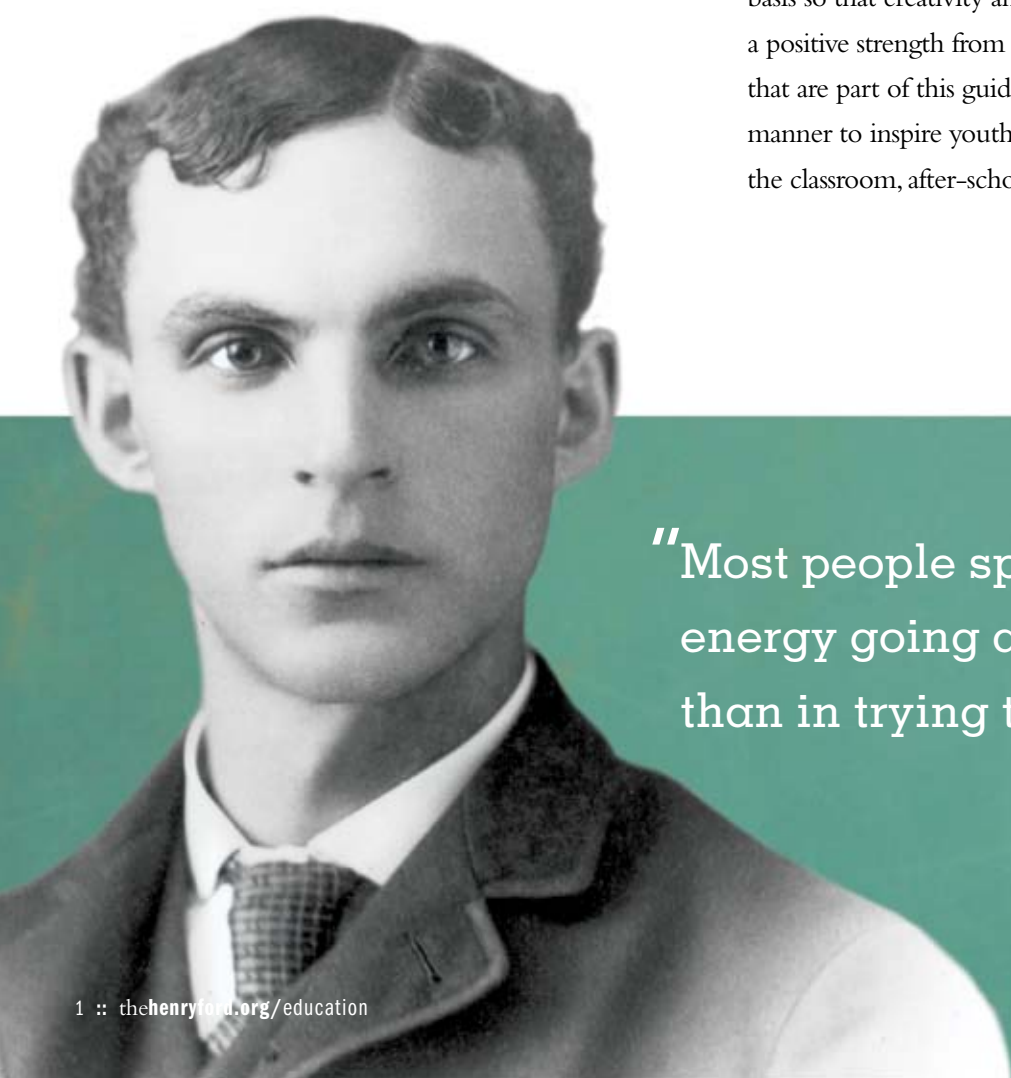
A resource guide to **inspire a culture of creativity and innovation** in the classroom and...beyond!



In the 21st century, probably more than ever before, there is a dire need to rekindle the spirit of creativity and innovation among our youth.

The world today faces many challenges, including global interconnectedness, rapid technological change, human conflict and environmental sustainability. As educators and community stakeholders, we strive to prepare our youth to become successful adults who can have a positive impact on the world. Creativity, the ability or power to imagine and express something new, and innovation, a radical improvement or change that can benefit others, will allow our youth to make, interact, adapt and ultimately change the world.

This Aspiring Innovators guide is aimed at helping teachers, after-school providers and parents to create a culture that can foster creativity and innovation among youth on an everyday basis so that creativity and innovation become habits of mind and a positive strength from within. Ideas, tips, tools and resources that are part of this guide are designed to be used in a flexible manner to inspire youth with a can-do attitude whether it is in the classroom, after-school programs or at home.



“Most people spend more time and energy going around problems than in trying to solve them.”

— Henry Ford

# How to implement Aspiring Innovators in the classroom, home or after school

Build up excitement and interest by creating a **mini-environment** that can ignite and nurture creativity!

1. Start by dedicating a space in your classroom, home or community center that says something like: Tinker Station for Aspiring Innovators, or Mrs. J's Creativity Corner.
2. Place a computer with a looping slide show of quotes from aspiring innovators. At the start of each day, ask youth to share something they read that is inspirational.
3. Put up posters/photographs in the area of past and present innovators and creators. Let the youth guess or want to know who these people are. Change posters of innovators and makers to keep triggering interest. Make sure you include less famous people like local inventors.

4. Put up a poster with the list of current and future world issues that need solutions to provide a framework of need.



5. Place a creativity kit with supplies and drawing papers for kids to sit, ideate and create on their own.
6. Every week have a quick 15-minute show-and-tell or informal discussion so that youth start to think about creativity and innovation in their daily lives instead of as a temporary disconnected project.

# How to inspire Aspiring Innovators

EMPOWER

WITH  
Innovation 101  
Reading Inspiration

ENGAGE

WITH  
Innovators/Makers  
Creative Projects

ENLIGHTEN

WITH  
Events to share and celebrate creativity  
America Invents online portal

CREATE A CULTURE  
OF CREATIVITY  
AND INNOVATION

GRADES  
2-5

## Elementary Unit Plan

# Week 1.

## Setting the Context

Contextual stories of creative people or innovators, their successes and their failures will bring relevance to learning and help make the connection about the “why” before the “how.” These learning hooks also help motivate youth with a spirit to make a difference in the world, and give them hope and empowerment that they can contribute in solving larger problems.

**The Henry Ford** has created some 21st-century educational tools like the Innovation 101 curriculum and Reading Inspiration: The Henry Ford Story program that can help set this essential context for youth before they begin their hands-on creative projects. Here are some suggested unit plans for elementary-age children as well as for high school-age youth that use these context-setting educational resources.

45  
min.

Each daily activity should take approximately 45 minutes.

### DAY 1.

Introduction:  
What is Innovation?  
Who was Henry Ford and  
what did he innovate?

Reading Inspiration:  
The Henry Ford Story (pages 1-6)

What are some modern  
innovations? What are some  
of the problems today, and  
how can you solve them?

Brainstorming activity

### DAY 3.

Does innovation happen  
overnight?

Reading Inspiration: Moments  
Make History? (pages 9-10)

Keys to Innovation. List and  
discuss the keys to innovation.

Reading Inspiration (pages 11-12)

Is there a process of  
Innovation?

Reading Inspiration (page 16)

### DAY 5.

Can You Be an Innovator?  
Ask the students if they think  
they can be an innovator like  
Henry Ford. Why or why not?

Reading Inspiration:  
The Henry Ford Story (pages 15-17)

### DAY 2.

Introduction:  
What are the traits of  
an Innovator?

Reading Inspiration: My Innovation  
Word List (pages 7-8)

Innovation and  
21st-Century Skills

Hands-on activity

### DAY 4.

Who are some of the  
legendary Innovators?

Reading Inspiration:  
The Henry Ford Story (pages 13-14)

Who are some of today's  
innovators? Visit Oninnovation.com and show the clip from <http://www.oninnovation.com/about/about-oninnovation.aspx>.

Student activity and resource sheets  
from Innovation 101 Lesson Plan 1.

Reading Inspiration:  
The Henry Ford Story  
(page 18)



GRADES  
6-12

# Secondary Unit Plan

## DAY 1.

Innovation 101 –  
Lesson One:  
What is Innovation?

## DAY 2.

Innovation 101 –  
Lesson Two:  
Traits of an Innovator

## DAY 3.

Innovation 101 –  
Lesson Three:  
Process of Innovation

## DAY 4.

Innovation 101 –  
Lesson Four:  
Keys to Innovation

## DAY 5.

Innovation 101 –  
Lesson Five:  
Intellectual Property  
Rights and More!



“One of the greatest discoveries a man makes, one of his great surprises, is to find he can do what he was afraid he couldn't do.”  
– Henry Ford

# Week 2.

## Project-Based Learning: Time to be creative and innovative!



### DAY 1.

Invite a local innovator or maker from your community to be a guest speaker in your classroom.

Have the person discuss his or her innovations and background and how he or she got started.

Invite the students to ask questions of the guest speaker.

If you are unable to bring someone into the classroom, you can tap the Oninnovation website and America Invents section to show inspirational videos of successful innovators or creative makers.

### Tips

Innovator/maker visit to the classroom/after-school program

Tap your own local network to find an innovator or maker.

Contact the innovator or maker at least one month before starting the Aspiring Innovator project.

Get approval from principal for visit.

Discuss with the innovator or maker about voluntary participation in this project.

Schedule date and time in advance for the visit.

Plan and schedule context-setting lesson, and ensure there is enough time to finish lesson before innovator/maker visits.

Request parent volunteers if needed to assist in hands-on project.

Determine materials or technological needs beforehand.

Be prepared! Understand the maker's topic; do research and deliver pre-visit lesson so students have background.

### Questions

Provide to guest/innovator/maker or to students

What or who motivated you to be an innovator or maker?

Did you have a creative family? Did your family encourage your creativity or stifle it?

Did you have a mentor?

What are the key materials you use? Where do you obtain your materials?

Explain some of the frustrations you've experienced. How did you overcome them?

Do you consider your creative work a hobby or your primary job?

Where do you get your ideas?

What were you like in school?

When did you really find your niche with creating innovating or making?

What inspires you?

Do you network with other innovators or makers? Can you give a few examples?

What were your favorite toys when you were little?

Do you thrive in structure or chaos? Why?

What's the coolest thing you've ever made?

What is your ideal dream project?

How many projects do you have going at any given time?

Where do you come up with your best ideas (The shower? The bed? In the car?)

Please bring examples of your work to show in the class.



## DAY 2.

“Vision without execution is hallucination.”

—Thomas Edison

### Introduction: Challenges of today’s world

- Brainstorm challenges the world faces today.
- You may want to categorize them in a graphic organizer, under one of the four categories of world challenges (global interconnectedness, rapid technological change, human conflict or environmental sustainability).

### Activity 1

Have the students brainstorm innovations they could create to help solve one of the world’s challenges.

### Activity 2

Have each student choose one innovation and make a visual representation of what they wish to make.

45 min.

Each daily activity should take approximately 45 minutes.

## DAY 3.

“Determine that the thing can and shall be done and then we shall find the way.”

— Abraham Lincoln

Create a timeline that outlines the steps you will take to create a prototype of your innovation or something you want to create.

Develop a list of materials you will need to create your prototype.

Keep a daily journal of your progress. Be sure to explain the following things in your journal:

- Explain your creative process. What steps are you taking to develop your innovation?
- What are some of the problems and frustrations that you are encountering along the way? What worked? What didn't work?
- How could you improve your innovation?
- What type of people would adopt your innovation?
- How would your innovation impact the world?

Provide supplies for the students to start working on their 3-D prototypes of their innovations. Students can work in teams or individually.

## DAYS 4. + 5.

“Genius is one part inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration.”

— Thomas Edison

Give students time to finish their 3-D prototypes.





# Glossary of Terms

## Culminating Sharing and Celebration of Creativity and Innovation:

Allow time as needed for students to present their innovations in the classroom, school or another venue.

Have each student/group present and discuss their innovations in front of the class.

Have a classroom exhibition event or creativity parade, where the students/groups could present their innovations to the teacher and the rest of the class.

Record their presentations using a flip camera to submit to America Invents on the OnInnovation site. Directions on format, etc., are available at <http://www.oninnovation.com/america-invents.aspx>.

Determine how your students can present their work at a local innovation event or at the Detroit Maker Faire.<sup>®</sup>

Visit The Henry Ford website at <http://www.thehenryford.org/events/makerFaire.aspx> to learn how to fill out an application to be a youth maker at the Detroit Maker Faire that's held in July every year.

### **Adapt –**

To adjust oneself to different conditions or to make suitable to requirements or conditions.

### **Antiestablishment –**

Opposed to or working against the existing power structure or mores, as of society or government.

### **Apprentice –**

A person who is learning a trade or art by experience under a skilled worker.

### **Believe –**

To have faith or confidence in the existence or worth of something.

### **Collaborate –**

To cooperate or work with others.

### **Connectivity –**

The quality, state or capability of being connected.

### **Creative –**

The quality of having the ability or power to create.

### **Curiosity –**

A desire for learning.

### **Determination –**

A firm or fixed intention to achieve a desired end or action.

### **Discovery –**

The act or process of discovering or exploring.

### **Entrepreneur –**

One who organizes, manages and assumes the risks of business or is enterprising.

### **Experiment –**

To try out new procedures, ideas or activities.

### **Exploration –**

The act of searching or examining something.

### **Failure –**

An omission of occurrence or performance; failing to perform a duty or expectation.



**Genius –**

A very gifted person.

**Hacker –**

A person who takes something and alters or changes it for a new purpose.

**Ideation –**

The act of forming or entertaining ideas.

**Ignite –**

To set something in motion.

**Imaginative –**

Being able to form a mental image of something not present to the senses or never before wholly perceived in reality.

**Innovation –**

- 1.) An invention, idea or improvement adopted by society.
- 2.) The introduction of something new, or a new idea, method, device or method of doing something.

**Innovative –**

Having the power or ability to introduce something new, or a new idea, method, device or method of doing something.

**Inspire –**

To move the intellect or emotions.

**Invention –**

A product, device, contrivance or process originated after study and experiment.

**Maker –**

A person who makes or produces something.

**Mentor –**

A trusted counselor or guide.

**Persistence –**

The action or fact of persisting; going on resolutely or stubbornly in spite of opposition, importunity or warning.

**Perseverance –**

Being unwilling to give up, even when things are difficult.

**Prototype –**

An original model on which something is patterned; a first full-scale functional form of a new type or design of a construction.

**Serendipity –**

The gift of finding valuable things when one is not looking for them.

**Spark –**

To cause to get going.

**Tinkerer –**

A person who repairs or adjusts something in an experimental manner.

**Unintended consequence –**

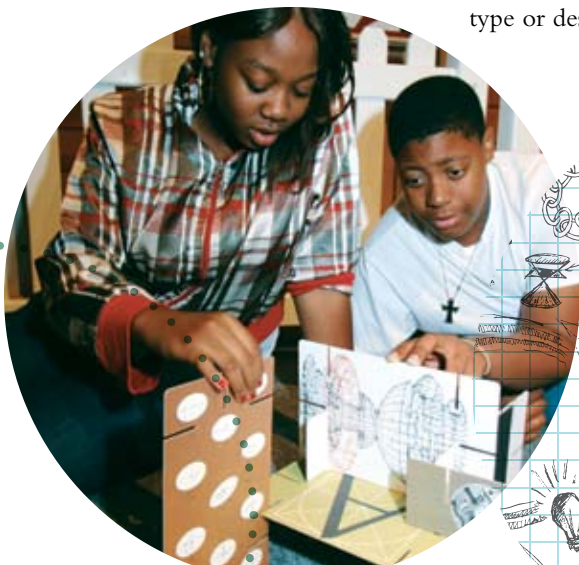
An action's unexpected effects.

**Vision –**

An idea or plan for the future.

**Visualize –**

To see or form a mental image of something.



# Suggested Resources



- [www.thehenryford.org/events/makerFaire.aspx](http://www.thehenryford.org/events/makerFaire.aspx)
- [www.iskme.givezooks.com](http://www.iskme.givezooks.com)
- [www.oercommons.org](http://www.oercommons.org)
- [www.iskme.givezooks.com/campaigns/iskme-big-ideas-fest-2009](http://www.iskme.givezooks.com/campaigns/iskme-big-ideas-fest-2009)
- [www.i3detroit.com](http://www.i3detroit.com)
- [www.omnicorpdetroit.com](http://www.omnicorpdetroit.com)
- [www.hackerspaces.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Hacker\\_Spaces](http://www.hackerspaces.org/wiki/List_of_Hacker_Spaces)
- [www.curiositytech.com](http://www.curiositytech.com)

## Online Resources

Explore the following and other sites that provide free and open source access to many creative ideas and resources:

- [www.incite-focus.org/Home.html](http://www.incite-focus.org/Home.html)
- [www.sites.google.com/site/mcstemhs/](http://www.sites.google.com/site/mcstemhs/)
- [www.exploratorium.edu](http://www.exploratorium.edu)
- [www.partsandcrafts.org](http://www.partsandcrafts.org)
- [www.workshophouston.org](http://www.workshophouston.org)
- [www.makezine.com](http://www.makezine.com)
- [www.makeprojects.com](http://www.makeprojects.com)
- [www.instructables.com](http://www.instructables.com)
- [www.howtoons.com](http://www.howtoons.com)
- [www.inventables.com](http://www.inventables.com)
- [www.ifixit.com](http://www.ifixit.com)
- [www.mtelliottmakerspace.com](http://www.mtelliottmakerspace.com)
- [www.oninnovation.com](http://www.oninnovation.com)
- [www.oninnovation.com/education/innovation-101.aspx](http://www.oninnovation.com/education/innovation-101.aspx)

## Books

- Nomad Press, Build It Yourself Series, <http://www.nomadpress.net/series/build>
- Nelson, David Erik. *Snip, Burn, Solder, Shred: Seriously Geeky Stuff to Make with Your Kids*. San Francisco, CA: No Starch Press, 2011.
- Gabrielson, Curt. *Stomp Rockets, Catapults, and Kaleidoscopes: 30+ Amazing Science Projects You Can Build for Less Than \$1*. Chicago, IL: Chicago Review Press, 2008.
- Roberts, Dustyn. *Making Things Move: DIY Mechanisms for Inventors, Hobbyists, and Artists*. McGraw-Hill, 2010.
- Fraunfelder, Mark. *The Best of MAKE: 75 Projects from the Pages of MAKE*. O'Reilly Media / Make: 2007.



# Inspiring Quotes from Henry Ford

"Don't find fault, find a remedy."

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"Even a mistake may turn out to be the one thing necessary to a worthwhile achievement."

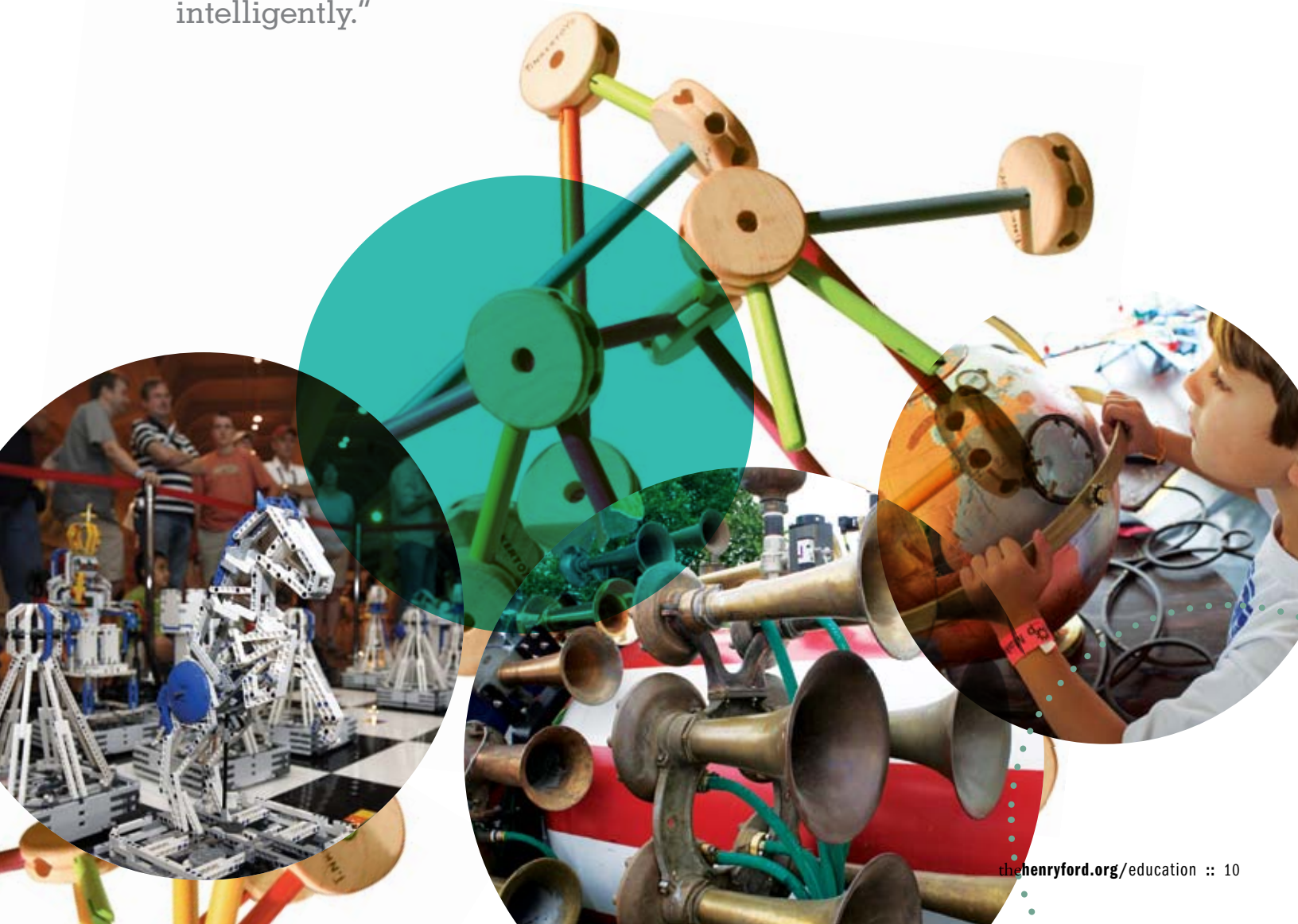
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"Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently."

"I cannot discover that anyone knows enough to say definitely what is and what is not possible."

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"Whether you think that you can, or that you can't, you are usually right."



Aspiring Innovators is a project of **The Henry Ford**, funded in part by the New Economy Initiative for Southeastern Michigan. We wish to thank the following individuals whose contributions made this resource guide possible.

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### Teacher Advisory Committee Members

**Mary Ann Dreske**

Novi High School,  
Novi Community School District

**Andrew Christopherson**

Redford Union High School,  
Redford Union School District

**La Trelle Pierre**

Bates Academy, Detroit Public Schools

**Allyson Jones**

Nataki Talibah Schoolhouse of Detroit

**Monica Nick**

Jefferson Elementary School,  
South Redford School District

**Shirley Hazlett**

Lansing School District

**Tara Robinson**

Northwest Elementary School,  
Northwest Community Schools

**Manal Kadry**

Henry Ford Academy School  
for Creative Studies

To learn about how some of the early innovation adopter teachers are implementing the Aspiring Innovators project in their classrooms.

Visit <http://www.oninnovation.com/america-invents.aspx>

### Detroit-Area Maker Advisers

**Conan Heiselt**

**Jane Reiter**

**Jeff Sturges**

**David Erik Nelson**

### Project Coordination

**Christopher Hemler**

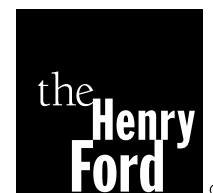
### Project Concept and Direction

**Paula Gangopadhyay**

Director of Education, **The Henry Ford**

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For questions/comments or suggestions, please contact Paula Gangopadhyay, Director of Education at [PaulaG@thehenryford.org](mailto:PaulaG@thehenryford.org) or call 313.982.6063.



20900 Oakwood Boulevard  
Dearborn, MI 48124-5029

[thehenryford.org/education](http://thehenryford.org/education)