

### Summary

The Air & Space Forces Association, Wright Memorial Chapter (AFA WMC), supports STEM education that impacts individual development, workforce readiness, and national progress. Encouraging STEM education at the K-12 level fosters a pipeline of future scientists, engineers, and inventors who contribute to technological advancements and economic prosperity. Our targeted support ensures that students of all backgrounds have the chance to develop skills that lead to upward mobility and lifelong success.

In the following article, Carl “Shof” Shofner, AFA WMC’s VP for Aerospace Education, chronicles his visit to the Northridge school district and how they used the STEM grant we provided – and it’s a pretty compelling story of how a \$1,000 grant can have such a major impact.

These grants would not be possible without the amazing support of our corporate and AFA WMC corporate community sponsors – an exceptional group of businesses listed on our [AFA WMC Website](#).

Enjoy!

### STEM Grants – Having a Positive Impact (Again)

by Carl “Shof” Shofner

I spent an afternoon with Kim Puckett, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction at Northridge Local Schools, visiting Northridge Middle and High School, a recipient of WMC212’s STEM grant. Kim walked me through the schools (where I took a picture in the robotics class with STEM teacher Kim Dubbs).



What was really cool is when we walked through their STEM and careers annex. This is where WMC212's STEM grant had the most impact as the students competed in WPAFB's trebuchet pumpkin chucking contest. Pictured below is the milling device with Joe Miller where the team experimented with different size levers to drive their trebuchet pictured on the right.



They had a very robust welding lab. On the left is a welding training device and on the right is their welding training facility. There were 3 active teams while I was there.



## STEM Grants Having A Successful Impact

Here is Kim posing with some of their 3-D printing machines. Lastly, and this is a little personal for me, Northridge also has a Parks and Recreation Agriculture program that included a very unique skill, hydroponics. The hydroponic growing stations are used to demonstrate the skills and knowledge for potential food production. The vegetables grown are used in our school lunch program. I'm seen here posing with some of their new equipment. This trade is special to me because an airman that worked for me, tragically died and I learned his father has a pond management company. I'd never heard of such a thing. In the aftermath of this Airman's death I've visited and learned a lot about his family, and the unique and critical science of hydroponics. So when I saw these aeration devices it brought back a lot of memories.



***Many thanks to Northridge Schools and Kim Puckett for her time to escort me around and showcase how AFA WMC's STEM grant made a difference!!***