

ADVANCING HUMANITY in SAN MATEO, BELIZE

2010 - 2011 Learning Community

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Aubrie Ridinger, scholar, working with students at Holy Cross School

Blake Ruffer, scholar, helping a student at Holy Cross School



TRAINING TEACHERS IN SAN MATEO

Robin Kratzer, McMaster Fellow, San Mateo, Belize 2010 - 2011

My project worked with the Ministry of Education and schools in Belize to provide training to teachers. The work this year focused on assisting teachers at Holy Cross Anglican School (HCAS) in the village of San Mateo, located on the Amber Gris Caye off the coast of Belize. The short term goal was to help HCAS create a technology curriculum and provide training for technology integration. The long-term goals include having this curriculum and training serve as a prototype for other schools and teachers in Belize.

Nicole Grim, McMaster Scholar, San Mateo, Belize 2010 - 2011

The purpose of my project was to work with teachers at the Holy Cross Anglican School (HCAS) with methods of engaging students in learning about science through science experiments. I worked with the teacher of a Standard 3 class (equivalent to 4th Grade in the U.S.) at HCAS. I provided detailed and easy-to-follow lesson plans and activities emphasizing experiments that can be conducted using available materials. Experimenting with the concepts that the students are learning will instill a greater interest towards education and their academic career.

The new instructional strategies I presented will allow HCAS teachers both to have more options for engaging students and accommodating different learning styles beyond direct instruction.

Rachael Lange, McMaster Scholar, San Mateo, Belize 2010 - 2011

The purpose of this project was to help implement active learning and hands-on instructional strategy science lessons into the classrooms at Holy Cross Anglican School in Belize. This was done by reviewing their curriculum, choosing topics, and then using resources such as science books and internet sources and developing hands-on lessons for their classrooms. Materials for each lesson were also collected. The definition, process, and examples of hands-on lessons were provided to the teachers in a booklet.

While on the ground in Belize, I worked with teachers Mr. Jones and Ms. Jones in the Standard 5 classrooms. I observed how their classrooms worked and the different strategies they used to teach. Hands-on instruction was used with their science lesson for the week to demonstrate to the teachers how this type of strategy could be used in their classrooms. Both teachers were very receptive to this teaching style. By demonstrating the strategy, providing example lessons, and providing materials, I was able to encourage these teachers at Holy Cross Anglican School to use hands-on lessons while teaching.

Aubrie Ridinger, McMaster Scholar, San Mateo, Belize 2010 - 2011

The purpose of this project was to provide the teachers at Holy Cross Anglican School with active learning instructional strategies for the subject area of social studies. Through the use of new active learning instructional strategies by means of collaborative learning, the teachers at the school will be able to further develop pedagogical skills. Teachers will benefit from being able to use new instructional strategies in the classroom because they can engage the students and enable the students to more readily retain the information presented in a lesson. The active learning method can be implemented in many of the lesson plans in contrast to the common "chalk talk." These active learning strategies involve the use of visual aids, collaborative processes, and inquiry teaching in comparison to direct instruction which is commonly used not only in the subject area but also the school. The lesson plans were modeled in Ms. Helen Melendez's Standard Four classroom at the Holy Cross Anglican School.

Tyler Thomas, McMaster Scholar, San Mateo, Belize 2010 - 2011

The purpose of this project was to provide teachers of Belize, specifically the teachers at Holy Cross Anglican School in San Mateo, with pedagogy for teaching mathematics. This came as a direct request from our community partners at Holy Cross Anglican School. Many teachers at Holy Cross Anglican School (HCAS), and throughout Belize, are not trained in the area of instructional strategies for teaching mathematics through the use of manipulatives and technology, and therefore they struggle to be effective in the classroom.

Blake Ruffer, McMaster Scholar, San Mateo, Belize 2010 - 2011 also worked on the above project.