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*No Borders on Student Success:
Global Learning in Agriculture*

Using Service Learning to Build our Communities

by John C. Ewing

The FFA Motto states very plainly that our members of the organization are “Living to Serve”. I believe our students of agricultural education have been serving in their communities for decades, and will continue to do so for many years to come. However, I believe we are now becoming more aware of how this service to our community can be “taken to the next level”, and truly make connections for all involved. Has there always been benefit to conducting community service? Sure. However, as you will see in

several of the articles in this issue, there is much more to be gained by taking what may have started as a community service project and turning it into a service learning project. Your students have so much to ’t get me wrong, I had no idea that we were conducting service learning, and yes, I know that we were missing parts of the overall model. However, the project of working with my high school students to teach “bike safety” to the elementary students went beyond the basic definition of community service. Yes, some of the student teachers that were conducting projects may have been more agri-

culturally focused, but most were



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Editor

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Agriculture: An Opening to World-Wide Conversations

by Melanie Miller Foster and Daniel D. Foster

We were so excited to work with your colleagues to curate this issue of The Agricultural Education Magazine! Our goal was to develop a reusable learning object that you could use with colleagues and students. Here are the **learning objectives** that drove our issue:

1. What is global learning and why is it important?
2. How can we achieve global learning outcomes domestically?
3. How are global learning outcomes achieved through other immersion experiences?

This issue is presented to you in three sections with each section addressing a different objectives through the lens and perspective of secondary agriculture teachers, postsecondary faculty and other stakeholders of school-based agricultural education. Truly, it is amazing how many people have a vested interest in ensuring we are providing opportunities for young people to receive the education necessary to be productive members of the global agricultural society.

Each section is introduced with a reflection prompt for you to consider as you read those articles, as well as a digital resource to help you immediately apply the concepts. We hope you enjoy the issue. As we continue to work with the PSU Global Teach Ag! Initiative, we hope to see you at our second online Global Learning in Agriculture Conference (#GLAG17) and consider joining us in Belize in June of 2017! For more information on both, visit: <http://aese.psu.edu/teachag/global>

Yours in quality global education,

Melanie Miller Foster

Daniel D. Foster



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Daniel D. Foster is the Innovation Specialist for the PSU Global Teach Ag! Initiative.

Section 1: What is Global Learning and Why is it Important?

Reflective Prompts:

- How can I connect with other CTE Programs and Partners?
- How does global learning align with my students' careers and college aspirations?

Articles:

- Making the Case for Globally Competent Students and Teachers? by Heather Singmaster and Jennifer Manise
- Why Does Higher Education Care about Global Learning? by Samantha Alvis
- What are the Perspectives of our Secondary Agriculture Students Regarding International Agriculture? by Nathan Connor, Seth Heinert and Grady Roberts
- What is a Culturally-Responsive Educator? by Jeremy Elliot-Engel and Donna Westfall-Rudd

Key Digital Resource:

Asia Society Global Competency Handbook

<https://asiasociety.org/files/book-globalcompetence.pdf>



Making the Case for Globally Competent Students and Teachers

by Heather Singmaster and Jennifer Manise

To be able to fully take advantage of global market opportunities, companies must hire workers with global competence. In part, this is because millions of existing and future jobs depend on international trade. States are no longer competing with the state next door—but rather with the world. Not only are nearly 40 million U.S. jobs tied to trade, but three-quarters of the world’s purchasing power and 95 percent of consumers lie outside of U.S. borders. Therefore it should be no surprise that there is a growing demand for workers with global competencies in agriculture and beyond. Consider these facts:

- Eighty percent of 800 U.S. executives agree that their businesses would increase if staff had international experience.
- An Association of American Colleges and Universities study found that 97 percent of business executives identified intercultural skills, or being “comfortable working with colleagues, customers, and/or clients from diverse cultural backgrounds,” as important. And 91 percent agree “all students should have educational experiences that teach them how to solve problems with people whose views are different from their own.”

- A survey of agriculture teachers in the U.S. conducted by Asia Society and the Longview Foundation for Education in World Affairs & International Understanding found that 94% of the respondents feel that a global perspective should be taught in agriculture classrooms. Yet well over half of those teachers do not explicitly teach with a global perspective, feeling they do not have the resources to fully integrate global issues and skills into their classrooms.

What do we mean when we talk about global competence?

According to a definition written by Asia Society and the Council of Chief State School Officers, which was then later officially adopted by the U.S. Department of Education, the four pillars of global competence include:

- Investigate the World: Students must be interested in the world and how it works. They must be able to ask globally significant questions, analyze evidence from multiple sources and develop an argument that draws defensible conclusions.
- Recognize Perspectives: Students must recognize that they have a perspective and someone else may or may not share it. They should be able to examine both sides and from that, create a new point of

view.

- Communicate Ideas: Students should be able to effectively communicate their ideas with diverse audiences – including through the use of technology. While English is the language of business, speaking another language is important to collaborating across borders.
- Take Action: By applying what they have learned, students can translate their ideas into appropriate actions to improve conditions locally and globally.

What does this mean for Agriculture Pathways?

Students not graduating with a skill set that includes cultural competence will find challenges in whatever position they aspire to, whether it is working for a multinational agri-business company or for a family farm where it is critical to understand the ramifications international events can have on import/export markets and therefore crop prices.

Agriculture teachers who prepare students for the myriad career pathways within AFNR need to regularly integrate global perspectives into their classrooms in meaningful, relatable ways. We must ensure that CTE educator preparation programs and ongoing professional development lead to globally-minded agricultural education teachers:

- is open to new perspectives and attitudes from students and others
- easily introduces global examples with authority and understanding
- has an awareness of current global events with the ability to connect them to students in a relevant way
- models awareness of national and international news and events and how those events have a local impact
- practice and urge students to develop skills that translate to the real world
- put into place activities that promote both critical thinking and collaboration among a variety of cultures when possible.

This fall, Asia Society will pilot a new CTE professional development course and accompanying toolkit filled with resources to help educators get started with integrating global into what they are already teaching. Some examples of effective strategies include:

- Embedding global competencies into lesson plans, assignments, or capstone projects.
- Using <http://mappingthenation.net> to understand and make local/global connections in your community.
- Establishing partnerships with international companies to facilitate speakers and presentations by students to real business audiences.

- Enabling internships and apprenticeships with a global focus.
- Building a partnership with a school or classroom abroad to engage in substantive, technology-based collaborative projects.
- Incorporating world language study as part of a student's program of study.
- Encouraging and aiding students to study abroad, which takes them out of their comfort zone and is an excellent way to expose them to different cultures. If travel isn't possible, there are many ways to use technology to connect with classrooms abroad.

Educators can begin by assessing where they have already integrated global into their classroom and looking for initial opportunities to further update or revise their units of study. Celebrate successes and share your learning as well as that of your students with peers in your school, district, or state. Finally, pause and reflect on what is working and regularly seek new opportunities for professional growth. The world is waiting for you!



Heather Singmaster is the assistant director at the Asia Society.



Jennifer Manise is the executive director for the Longview Foundation.

Why Should Higher Education Care About Global Learning?

By Samantha Alvis

In the current socio-political climate, it's more important than ever before that universities create global learning opportunities for students. We must produce students who are global citizens, who have understanding of people and cultures beyond their comfort zone and who are able to work across the globe, even if that means never leaving their state, on matters that affect our global, knowledge-driven economy.

Many universities acknowledge the need for their teaching, research and engagement missions to reach beyond the boundary of the classroom, city or state in which the institution resides. In a recent survey of senior international officers at institutions that are members of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), over two thirds of the institutions who responded said that international activities are a part of their university's vision, mission and/or strategic plan. A well-known example of this is the "Wisconsin Idea." The Wisconsin Idea guides the work of the University of Wisconsin system, not only for the benefit of the residents of the state of Wisconsin, but also for their efforts throughout the world.

But what does it mean to create a global learning experience for every student?

Does every student have to cross a border and stamp their passport to have a global learning experience?

Our most traditional example of a global learning experience is to study abroad. But even the traditional model of study abroad is being examined for new ideas. Can students gain global competencies and understanding in a short-term experience, or do they need a full semester? I was lucky enough during my time at Texas A&M to be part of teams who took students abroad to Namibia and Costa Rica. Two very different experiences, neither of which were longer than 4 weeks, but which I believe had an impact on many of the students who participated.

Is study abroad the only way to gain global knowledge?

According to the most recent Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange, only 10% of US undergraduate students study abroad. Even if those rates double, it means only 20% of US University students will study globally...what happens to the other 80 percent?

Can a student have a global learning experience without leaving their campus, or the country? It think the answer is yes! Can it completely replace an out-of-the-country learning experience, maybe not, but it's also not guaranteed that a student studying in another country will leave with more cul-

tural understanding, especially if they spend their entire time surrounded by fellow Americans.

How else can global learning activities be created in higher education?

A short list:

- Through technology: Cost effective ways exist to participate in Globally Networked Learning (GNL), like that done through the SUNY Center for Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL). Students from around the globe participate in collaborative online courses. Other opportunities for virtual exchanges, such as the type that exist with Soliya, allows students to connect around the world.
- Through International Students: In 2014-15, nearly 1 million international students studied in the United States (according to Open Doors). Many universities celebrate their international students, like at North Carolina State University, where an international zone has been created during the annual Packapalooza event.
- Through Service Learning: Many university campuses have immigrant and refugee communities near their campuses. Opportunities can be created for service learning opportunities.

The challenge with global learning, as with many other things, is how do you measure it? How do you measure the impact of having an international student as a roommate on your cultural competencies? This is a challenge the higher education community is struggling with, and is why APLU, along with NAFSA: The Association of International Educators, is working on a new project called Getting to 100, harnessing the collective power of public universities to prepare all students for a complex world. We hope these efforts will establish ways to measure this learning that move well beyond counting participation rates.

You don't have to wait for your students to be at a university to encourage them gain global competencies. Invite a returned Peace Corps volunteer to speak to your classes. Use Skype for Educators to connect with educators around the world. Talk to the universities in your state about learning about their international work and to connect to their international students, faculty and staff.



Samantha Alvis is currently Assistant Director of International Programs and Development at APLU.

Globalizing your Agricultural Classroom

by Nathan Conner, Seth Heinert,
and Grady Roberts

Wander down the grocery store aisle, turn on the news, or listen to a commodities report and soon you will realize the agriculture industry operates in a globalized system. Topics from labor issues, trade, food safety, and food security are just a few that are buzzing with global connotations for agriculture. As agricultural educators prepare students for careers in the food, fiber, and natural resources industries, many are asking themselves how they can incorporate a global dimension to their students' educational experience.

Students are interested in learning about agriculture in other countries. A series of studies spanning over a decade and incorporating six states found students have positive attitudes and beliefs toward global agricultural concepts (Heinert, Conner, & Roberts, 2016). Yet, many school-based agricultural educators are left scratching their heads and wondering just how to begin. The task may seem daunting, especially when "global" by definition is quite a large dimension. Based on a few studies and a lot of practical experience, we will propose a few methods to consider, and close with topics (concepts) to incorporate into your classroom. From the outset, we would propose that "global" is a dimension, and likely best worked into existing curricula. However, practices and

concepts described could be developed into a standalone course.

Practices to globalize your students' experience

Globalizing your students' experience may be easier than you thought. Colleges of agriculture in many states have been working to do the same thing to their curriculum in order to offer college-aged students a more globalized experience. Secondary teachers can look here for ideas. Heinert and Roberts (2016) interviewed several faculty members from colleges of agriculture to determine what they were doing to globalize their students' experiences and found the experiences could be thought of along a continuum. Using experiential learning as the foundation, they found experiences to globalize the curriculum to range from watching a short video clip and discussing it to doing a class project with a global focus to doing a full-blown study abroad. The experiences could range from short to long term, from abstract to more concrete in nature; from formal to informal to non-formal; and from understanding to internalizing the concept, all depending on the dimension of experience you might be concerned with. Table 1 shows the range and dimensions of some of the experiences that Heinert and Roberts identified. An important thing to take from this research is teachers do not necessarily need to begin with a big activity like a study-abroad trip to globalize their classroom. A series of experiences, such as discussing current events, may be very impactful

for students and help them gain a global perspective in an existing class such as animal science. We suggest you begin small and work to develop more advanced global programming.

Concepts to globalize your classroom

Now that we have discussed specific experiences/activities to globalize your classroom, we will look at some concepts you should consider for including in a globalized agricultural classroom. Conner, Gates, and Strippling (2016) identified five categories and 24 concepts that should be used in a globalized agriculture classroom. As a starting place, we selected ten concepts most of you will find appropriate for you to use when globalizing your classroom. We suggest that you combine the practices with the identified concepts, and remember to start off slow and focus in impacting students.

Review and close

Globalizing your classroom may not be as tough as you once thought. Using the activities and concepts presented in this article can give you a great place to start. You and your students will enjoy a richer learning experience. Your students will have a global perspective when describing agriculture. Their experience will be much different than a non-globalized classroom because global dimensions connect to other disciplines, such as geography and other social sciences. Per-

Table 1. Scope and Contextual Dimensions of International Educational Experiences Identified by Faculty (Modified from Heinert and Roberts, 2016)

Experience	Level	Duration	Intended Outcome	Setting
Using pictures and videos in class	Abstract	Minutes to Hours	Exposure	Formal
Using case studies in class	Abstract	Minutes to Hours	Exposure	Formal
Using scenarios in class	Abstract	Minutes to Hours	Exposure	Formal
Using guest speaker(s) in class	Abstract	Minutes to Hours	Exposure	Formal
Using reusable learning object (video or pictures) in class	Abstract	Minutes to Hours	Exposure	Formal
Using current world events in class	Abstract	Minutes to Hours	Exposure	Formal
Relevant examples from a more “internationalized” instructor’s perspective	Abstract	Minutes to Hours	Exposure	Formal
Individual international course	Abstract	Months	Exposure	Formal
Interacting with international students	Concrete	Minutes to hours	Participation	Informal
Clubs	Concrete	Days	Participation / Identification	Non-formal
World Food Prize	Concrete	Days	Participation /	Non-formal

Table 2. Categories and Concepts for a Globalized Agricultural Classroom (Modified from Conner, Gates, and Stripling, 2016)

Category	Concepts
Production	1. Challenges of food distribution
Business	2. World agricultural commodity production
	3. How free trade agreements impact U.S. Agriculture
Culture	4. Impact of imports and exports on U.S. Economy
	5. Cultural effects on trade
	6. Cultural effects on marketing
Environment	7. Global role of water use in agriculture
	8. Impact of the world food demand on the environment
Miscellaneous	9. Overview of world hunger
	10. Differences of developed and developing countries

haps most importantly, they will be better equipped to enter and be leaders in a global agricultural workforce. If we are truly preparing our students to be ready for the agricultural industry, we owe it to them to add global dimensions to their curricula. We have given you some basic tools to begin this process. We challenge you to take the first step and see how your students respond. As you gain more skills in this area, we also challenge you to share what you learned with your colleagues.

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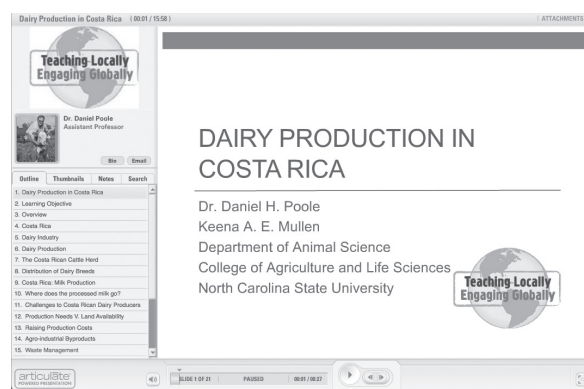
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Picture 1. Example video “Tilapia Aquaculture in Belize” available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c01Wy5PeMHY>



Picture 2. Example reusable learning object “Dairy Production in Costa Rica” available at <http://globaleducationlab.org/education.shtml>



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What is a Culturally-Responsive Educator?

by Jeremy Elliot-Engel and Donna Westfall-Rudd

By the age of eight, “disparities between the cultural values and patterns of communication of the home and the school can diminish the desire of young people to learn and to believe in their own capacity to learn. Some students come to see schooling as detrimental to their own language, culture, and identity. In this historical and contemporary context Culturally Responsive Teaching is looked to as a potential solution to this seemingly entrenched racialized differential” (Vavrus, 2008, p. 50). Our communities, schools and agricultural education classroom demographics are changing and adapting. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, by 2020 more than 50% of the babies born in the United States will be in the minority ethnicity or race category. Of-course that turning point did not happen in isolation, today our minority youth population is in the 40% range. These changes are occurring in inner-cities, suburbs and the most rural communities in our country.

Daily as we enter the classroom we do not leave culture, history and context outside, it walks in with us, the teacher, and with each of our students. Culture is embedded in our very fabric, conscious and subconscious. A culturally-responsive educator acknowledges individuals have different backgrounds, different experiences, and that these experiences influence culture. Differences

in culture allow individuals to experience the same thing through different lenses. Students may not feel that their history, experiences, and daily life is reflected in the classroom, regardless of the educator. However, when an educator accepts fundamental cultural differences the education for all students improves and becomes richer.

Culturally-responsive teaching (CRT; Vavrus 2008) is a student-centered strategy that embraces a learning community model for the organization of a classroom. CRT is a strategy to build an inclusive and welcoming classroom for all students. CRT recognizes and brings into the classroom cultural knowledge and assets of historically marginalized students and their communities and families. This approach rests on an equity pedagogy designed to rectify educational conditions that have fallen short of facilitating the learning of many students from racially, culturally, and economically diverse groups. Equity pedagogy encompasses teaching strategies and learning environments that facilitate equitable learning outcomes from diverse racial, cultural, and ethnic groups. These teaching strategies and practices include:

Positive perspectives on parents and families. Seek a relationship with participating as well as non-participating students and parents and try to understand their fears, hopes, dreams and expectations.

Communication of high expectations. Clear expectations should be communicated that all students are expected to attain high standards. Genuine praise should be given when expectations are achieved.

Learning within the context of culture. Children whose home language and culture differ significantly from the school learning are at a disadvantage, they may become alienated and feel disengaged from school. Recommended teaching strategies to handle this disconnect are: use cooperative learning, use role-playing strategies, assign students projects with topics that focus on issues focusing on students community and culture. And, bridge differences across cultures through effective communication.

Student-centered instruction. Students develop cognitively by interacting with both adults and more knowledgeable peers, because they are able to explore hypotheses and then experiment with new ideas, while receiving feedback. Student-centered instruction differs from teacher-centered instruction because of the student-tled cooperative and collaborative learning process. Many agriculture classrooms have been structured around student-centered instruction by engaging students.

Culturally mediated instruction. Knowledge is not experienced the same in each individual, because of how we experience the world, it is through the many lenses

es of culture, context and history. Culturally mediated instruction takes place in an environment that acknowledges and integrates diverse ways of knowing and accepts different student's perspectives in the classroom. Students and teacher need to understand that there is more than one way to interpret actions, events and statements.

Reshaping the curriculum. Using students lived and real world experiences allows them to build new skills and knowledge out of personal experience. Teachers make meaningful connections between school and real-life situations. Teachers can do this by using resources beyond the textbook in the classroom, examples being: have students research aspects of a topic within their community, have students interview community members with expertise in the community, and provide students with resources that have alternative viewpoints. The curriculum issues and topics relate to the students' background and culture.

Teacher as facilitator. Teachers' role is important to facilitate a learning environment that is reflective and relevant to the students. The instructor mentors, guides and advocates for the students, helping to effectively connect their culturally and community-based knowledge to the classroom.

Agricultural education has an innate advantage in implementing many of the components of culturally-responsive teaching. Many of the components are fundamental aspects of the agricultural education classroom, such as applicable projects, community engage-

ment, and peer-to-peer teaching and support. Agriculture teachers frequently attend community meetings and see students in their community activities. Numerous agriculture teachers have success stories of students from diverse cultural backgrounds who had been placed in agriculture classes for a myriad of reasons and ended up thriving and striving.

References

- Vavrus, M. (2008). Culturally responsive teaching. *21st century education: A reference handbook*, 2, 49-57.



Jeremy Elliot-Engel is graduate student at Virginia Polytechnic Institute.



Donna Westfall-Rudd is an associate professor at Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

Section 2:

How Can We Achieve Global Learning Outcomes Domestically?

Reflective Prompt:

- How can you learn about the world in your own backyard (or ag classroom?)

Articles

- How a “Domestic Study Away” can Help Prepare Teachers? by Meagan Slates, Jillian Gordon, Janae Herr McMichael and Nathan Repetz
- Hmm...Integrating the World Food Prize Institutes into my school-based agricultural education program! by Dana Wise
- Maximizing conference time: Agricultural Around the World as a youth workshop! by Nathan Glenn and Anna Glenn

Key Digital Resource

- Ox FamHunger Banquet Toolkit (which can be downloaded for free online here: <https://www.oxfamamerica.org/take-action/events/hunger-banquet/>).



- World Food Prize Youth Programs http://www.worldfoodprize.org/en/youth_programs/



How a “Domestic Study Away” can Help Prepare Teachers

A New Teacher Perspective

by Meagan Slates, 2014 PSU Graduate

It is no secret that most agriculture education programs at the secondary level are rural based with most students spending much of their outside-of-school time helping to run the family farm. Their agriculture classes are mostly based on teaching skills to help them be successful after graduation if returning to the family farm, entering the workforce, or seeking further education. Sure, these classes also encourage students to improve soft skills by practicing resume writing and public speaking, but in today’s diverse society is this enough to really help students be successful?

I didn’t quite understand the importance of including teaching cultural differences within the classroom until I traveled with thirteen other teacher candidates during my undergraduate career to Arizona. We visited six agriscience programs and two National Parks along our nine-hundred mile journey. We, as educators, need to ensure that we are giving students more than information to pass a test or the skills needed for the job. Students must understand and appreciate the value of human relationships. I was amazed how easy it was to relate with the students from

Monument Valley High School (A school noted by Time Magazine Schools that Work) while on the trip.

With the Internet making the world easier to access why not integrate this cultural competency training into your classroom? With schools becoming increasingly diverse and jobs becoming more demanding with communication breaching several platforms, we must break down the uncomfortable barriers and give our students the skills they need to strengthen cultural consciousness and help prevent prejudice and discrimination. The Domestic Study Away added a tool to my teacher toolbox and reinforced the importance of taking the time to add current events to lessons.



Meagan Slates is a third year agriscience teacher at Penn Manor High School in Millersville, PA.

???? of Colorado

by Jillian Gordon, 2015 PSU Graduate

Pennsylvania, Arizona, Colorado, Ohio, and now Georgia. As a 24 year old graduate student, one year in, I can confidently speak about agricultural education in not one, not two, but in five different states. Shifting from undergraduate career into academia has not only put a change on my sleep schedule and the amount of coffee I consume, but also on the way that I think. Every new piece of information turns into a question.



“Why are things done this way? What is working and what isn’t?” I have gone from not only a learner, but a researcher, and having the opportunity to experience agricultural education has allowed me to position my research in ways that someone with less agricultural education experience. This experience can be credited to the learning experiences contained in the Domestic Study Away.

I remember as an agricultural education student myself, I never thought about what other schools and programs might be doing until I met someone from another school at another competition.



As a state officer, I never thought about what other Agricultural Education programs might be doing in another state. And finally as a college student, I never thought about how other states prepared their agricultural education teachers until I traveled with the PSU Domestic Study Away. In graduate school at the University of Georgia, I have been able to take this knowledge and apply it to many situations.



Jillian Gordon is a first year agriscience teacher at Clarke Central High School in Georgia.

Recent Graduate Perspective

*by. Janae (Herr) McMichael,
2016 PSU Graduate*

I've covered a lot of ground, all in the name of agriculture education. My experiences in a white 15-passenger van full of some of my favorite individuals, storming across states from one high school to another on the Domestic Study Away (DSA) have given me a lot of precious memories. More than that, I've gained a better under-



standing of the power of a nationwide, professional network of agriculture educators, the close-knit family that Penn State Teach Ag! provides, and that I, without a shadow of a doubt, picked the best profession.

I was privileged to coordinate the 2015 Domestic Study Away to Mississippi focusing on Financial Literacy in Rural Appalachia primarily in the area of Supervised Agricultural Experiences. As a recent graduate of the Agricultural and Extension Education program at The Pennsylvania State University, I covet the incredible lessons gained on this particular DSA experience. I learned the art of creatively raising funds for my organization, meeting school and university regulations, organizing schedules, communicating with

stakeholders and successfully navigating a group through the airport.

But, I would argue it didn't stop there. Trips like the DSA are incredibly refreshing and remind me of the importance to continually cultivate my passion for the future of agriculture. During these trips, I spent several cumulative hours with teachers who cared immensely about the professional development of a group of students they barely knew and were so willing to share their heart and love for their profession in true, authentic ways. These conversations challenged me to look closely at they ways that I am preparing myself to enter and continue my career as a school-based agricultural educator.



Janae Herr is a first year agriscience teacher at Lampeter-Strasburg High School in Lampeter, PA.

Soon to be Teacher Perspective

by Nathan J Repetz, 2017 PSU Student Teacher

“Why would you choose to become a teacher if you don’t enter a classroom until your last semester? What if you don’t like it? How are you preparing to teach students about a global industry sitting in a collegiate classroom?” These questions came up recently at a family gathering this summer. They are valid questions facing any student teacher candidate, but I am thankful to have a secret weapon in my teacher toolbox: the Domestic Study Away (DSA) program.



I was fortunate enough to participate in three DSA trips so far in my teaching journey, but it wasn’t until the long van ride home from the Volunteer State that I truly realized the impact they had on me.

DSA is a cultural experience. The agriculture industry, and those who are involved in it, vary greatly in each state. I was able to broaden my perspective of what it means to be an agriscience teacher. You do not need a passport to experience a different culture and see what it takes to teach in it. I re-

alized that the people and subjects may differ but the mission of creating future leaders stays the same

DSA is networking. I have a stack of business cards that represent everything from a unique lesson idea to a potential job reference.

DSA is a concrete teaching experience. Through those I have met, I learned what it really takes to teach agriculture. Also, I was able to prepare and deliver lessons before student teaching.

The DSA experience allowed me to answer my family’s questions with ease. I am going into student teaching knowing for a fact that teaching agriculture is what I was meant to do.



Nathan Repetz is preparing to complete his student teaching internship at The Pennsylvania State University.

Integrating the World Food Prize Youth Institute Into a School-Based Agricultural Program

by Dana Wise

I believe that if we want our children to understand the world beyond their classroom, we must bring the world into their classroom. ~ Queen Rania of Jordan

As agriculture educators, we understand the importance of not only educating our students about local agriculture, but also expanding their knowledge base to understand the agricultural aspects of the world outside of our communities. The question is: How can we introduce our students to global agriculture in a rich and meaningful way without having to leave the classroom?

After participating in Penn State's online professional development for Global Learning in Agriculture (#GLAG16) in January, I began to research how I could involve my students in similar educational development, and be able to tie it into all of my agricultural curriculum including (animal science, equine science, and horticulture., etc.) Within moments of searching I found a link to The World Food Prize Youth Institutes, and specifically the North Carolina Youth Institute.

The North Carolina Youth Institute provided a platform for students to experience global agricultural issues within my school-based program, but it also pro-

vides extended experiences for students through The World Food Prize Borlaug Institute where the top students at the North Carolina Youth Institute will be competitively selected to represent the State of North Carolina as delegates at the Global Youth Institute, held in Des Moines, Iowa. There, they will join 400 other outstanding high school students and teachers from across the United States and around the world for a three-day program to interact with Nobel and World Food Prize Laureates and the more than 1,000 global leaders from 65 countries attending the World Food Prize's annual international symposium.

Hmm... Integrating the World Food Prize Youth Institute into my school-based agriculture program would provide not only a great platform for my students to learn about global agriculture, but would also offer them SAE hours in non-experimental research, teach them to prepare a college level research paper using APA format, and allow them to collaborate with other students and professionals regarding their interests in specific global agriculture issues.

Each student in my three agriculture classes were required to write a three-page paper in APA format on a global issue. Students were permitted to choose a country and a critical global challenge from the institute guidelines that

they would like to research. Some countries and global challenges my students chose include: water sanitation in Zimbabwe; sustainable agriculture in Costa Rica; and population growth and urbanization in Japan. My students were to propose their own solution to the challenge in a country of their choice, discover career paths and opportunities in STEM, food, agriculture, and public policy, and analyze how global trends affect a country and its people, economy, environment, health, and way of life.

My students worked on their research both in class, and out of class for approximately a month. Throughout their research and writing process, students consulted with their peers, parents, me, and other teachers about their topic, which allowed them to gain a deeper understanding through sharing, as well as allowed others to be exposed to global agricultural issues. The culminating activity for their research project was to present their research to the class.

Ten of my students were chosen through a competitive process based on meeting standards set forth in the rubric for the research paper, as well as the thoroughness of their research and its relation to food security, to attend the North Carolina Youth Institute, hosted by Dr. Lori Snyder of North Carolina State University's Department of Crop Science.

At this exciting day-long event, students had the opportunity to:

- Present their research and recommendations on how to solve key global challenges in a short speech and small group discussions with international experts;
- Connect with other student leaders from North Carolina to share ideas, identify solutions to these problems and build lasting friendships; and
- Interact with global leaders in science, industry and policy through lecture and hands on activities.

Throughout the day, students attended workshops and seminars on issues related to global agriculture as well as a seminar by the author of the book, *The End of Plenty: A Race to Feed a Crowded World*, Joel K. Bourne, Jr. Mr. Bourne intrigued the students with his vast knowledge of other countries and particularly their agricultural needs. He expanded on what agricultural processes would need to be improved to feed the estimated 9 (plus) billion people that will populate our world by the year 2020. After his seminar, students were able to go back to their meeting room to have individual and small group talk with Mr. Bourne, and share their thoughts on helping to heal the agricultural deficiencies in the world. This was an invaluable experience for students, because Mr. Bourne provided real-world experiences and let students know that they will be the leaders in solving global issues.

The World Food Prize Organization continues to invest in its scholars through internships and fellowships after the initial youth institutes.

Students participating in the North Carolina Youth Institute, as well as other individual state Youth Institutes are eligible for the Wallace-Carver Fellowship: a paid two-month research or policy placement at a U.S. Department of Agriculture laboratory or field office, or at USDA headquarters in Washington D.C. Wallace-Carver Fellows intern at USDA, analyzing agricultural and economic policy; assisting in the management of food, nutrition and rural development programs; and taking part in groundbreaking field and laboratory-based research.

Through the Global Youth Institute, students are also eligible to participate in the Borlaug-Ruan International Internship, which is an all-expenses-paid, eight-week, hands-on experience for high school students to work with world-renowned scientists and policymakers at leading research centers in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East to get a firsthand view of pressing food security and nutritional problems in poverty-stricken areas and take part in ground-breaking research.

The World Food Prize Youth Institutes are open to all students in grades 9-12 in each of the fifty states.

Please visit: http://www.worldfoodprize.org/en/youth_programs/ to see the requirements and deadlines for each individual state.

You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make. ~ Jane Goodall



Dana Wise is a former North Carolina agriscience teacher and current Texas A&M graduate student.

Agriculture Around the World: How to Help Your Students Become Leaders of Change

by Anna Glenn and Nathan Glenn

It was an exciting first day at the 88th Maryland FFA State Convention. The convention center was bursting with energy as the FFA'ers from all over the state joined together for the first time in an entire year. They were bustling through the hallways, shouting out at old friends they hadn't seen in a while, and straightening up their jackets one last time before entering the judges' rooms. The excitement in the air was palpable and we were ready to harness it into a discussion about food security and poverty.

We almost felt a little bit guilty as we welcomed the students into our workshop "Agriculture around the World: How to Become a Leader of Change" because we knew the little trick that we had up our sleeves. As they sat down in their seats we told them that they would all be getting snacks and of course the excitement level rose, even more. As the FFA state officers began passing out the bags of snacks we could see there was some confusion and obvious disappointment in the FFA'ers faces as some of them held up clear plastic baggies filled with a measly three tortilla chips or a dull rice cake and others held full unopened individually packaged bags of Doritos and Cheetos. They wondered aloud why some got better snacks than others.

As the commotion surrounding the unjust distribution of the snacks settled, we asked those with full bags of packaged snacks to please stand. About 20% of the room stood up. We told everyone that these students standing represented those people in our world who are considered to be living a "high income" lifestyle and that to be considered part of this group you only needed to earn above \$6,000 per year. We went on to describe the lavish lifestyle that people in this income group lived which could include luxuries such as a variety of food, a roof over their heads, an ability to pursue many years of post-secondary education, and access to affordable quality health care. On the screen behind us there were pictures of families in developed countries posing next to a week's worth of groceries. Many different kinds of sodas, packaged snacks, carry out food, fruits, vegetables, meat, and dairy were lavished on to the table in front of them.



Next we asked those with a rice cake in their bag to stand and about 30% of the room stood up. We told everyone that these students represented those in the mid-

dle-income group who made anywhere from \$1,032 to \$6,000 per year. Life for those living in this income group varied greatly from country to country, but for most, they were always living on the edge fully aware that they could easily slip into poverty if there was one bad illness in the family or one terrible storm that knocked out an entire year's harvest. Those living in this income group could most likely find enough food to eat and a shelter over their heads to keep them dry, but their family's access to education and healthcare was limited. On the screen behind us there were pictures of families posing next to their weeks' worth of groceries. The families in this group were bigger, and yet the level of food was about the same or less as what was shown in the previous group, but with far less variety.

Lastly, we asked those with three tortilla chips in their bag to please stand. About 50% of the room stood. We told them that for those living in this low-income group "everyday was most likely a struggle to meet [their] family's basic needs" and that they would most likely spend the entire day "searching for food, water, and shelter." (OXFAM, 2015). We looked at the young girls who were standing in this group and told them that that if they were a woman living in this group it was very likely that by this age they would already have at least one

child, and they would be spending hours each day caring for that child each day, cooking, cleaning, fetching water, and working in the fields. Their access to adequate health care was out of the question and the potential that they would attend school after elementary age was extremely unlikely. Even if they as males or female were lucky enough to get a job as a tenant farmer, they would have to give 75% of their harvest to their landowner as payment for the land. It was clear to see that this struck a chord with many of the young agricultural professionals in the room. On the screen behind us sat a family posing in front of their tent-home, whose weekly groceries consisted of spices and three burlap bags, one filled with grains and the other two filled with beans.



After we had talked about each income group and showed pictures of typical families living within each group, we had a discussion about what the students had just seen and heard and we talked about how it made them feel. We asked them what differences they saw in the pictures depicting each income group in terms of the house, type of food, and amount of food. We asked them why the world was divided this way and if they thought it was fair. We discussed the many different causes

that lead people to hunger such as war, corruption, climate changes, lack of resources, and lack of access to education (agricultural education in particular). This then led into a discussion about what they as future leaders in the agricultural industry could do to make an impact on addressing some of our world's greatest challenges such as food security and poverty. We talked about volunteer programs, collecting donations, and sending agricultural textbooks to people who need them the most.

Through this experience the students had a brief taste of the injustices and inequalities faced by the majority of our world's population. When we asked them to share what they had learned at the end, a few raised their hands and said that they didn't realize that the number of hungry people in the world was so high. This then led another student to comment on the enormous role that agriculture and education could have on helping to bring people out of poverty. As the students talked they repeatedly used the word "we" which told us that they understood that they too could be a part of the solution and could make an impact on their world.

*This activity with the unequal distribution of snacks was a modified version of the popular OXFAM Hunger Banquet which is an event that FFA chapters can host for their community to help raise awareness about food security. In the original version of the banquet, the host organization (perhaps an FFA chapter or 4-H group) would host a dinner to raise money and awareness about world

hunger and poverty. At the dinner, participants would be divided into groups as they were above and would receive varying levels of meals that would serve to represent the inequality in the world. More information on how to host a banquet can be found here: The resources used to host this "mini-banquet" were drawn from the OXFAM Hunger Banquet Toolkit (which can be downloaded for free online here: <https://www.oxfamamerica.org/take-action/events/hunger-banquet/>).

Oxford Committee for Famine Relief [OXFAM] (2015). How to Host an OXFAM America Hunger Banquet: Directions and Tools. Retrieved from: www.oxfamamerica.org



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Section 3:

How are Global Learning Outcomes Achieved Through Other Immersion Experiences?

Reflective Prompts:

- How can I further my own professional development to be a world-wide positive agent of change?
- How can my FFA Chapter explore the world?

Articles

- How Can a Short Term Farmer-to-Farmer Program Help Me as an Agriculture Teacher? by Zachary Rada
- A Global Classroom: How Teaching in Ghana Gave Me Appreciation for U.S Education, Professional Development, and a Global Agricultural Perspective by Haley Clement
- YOU TOOK YOUR STUDENTS WHERE??? From Minnesota to South Africa by Eric Swatzke
- Building Global Competency Through #FFA2Haiti Service Learning Project by Bradley Aronson, Anna Ehlers, Corren Olson, and Melanie Bloom

Key Digital Resource

Edutopia Teacher Grant and Fellowship Programs

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/teacher-travel-grants-resources-matt-davis>



How Can a Short Term Farmer-to-Farmer Program Experience Help Me as an Agriculture Teacher?

by Zachary Rada

As a kid, Africa was a place I never thought I would visit. I knew where it was, where some of the countries were located, and a little bit about the people. Otherwise, it seemed like a very distant place and that I had no way of helping anyone. However, as I got older and started my career in agriculture education, a desire grew to help people in other areas of the world. I took three mission trips to Ukraine and learned a lot, but that made my desire even stronger. It wasn't until after I attended a workshop at the NAAE Conference in Nashville that I learned about the NAAE Farmer-to-Farmer Program held in partnership with Catholic Relief Services. I applied and the next thing I knew I had a plane ticket to Tanzania!

My assignment in Tanzania allowed me to teach basic record keeping, budgeting, and marketing. I worked with 74 farmers in the Boheloi and Bombo Maliwati villages in the Lushoto District (near Mt. Kilimanjaro). The farmers of these villages grow many different fruits and vegetables including tomatoes, potatoes, cabbage, white corn, snow peas, beans, peppers, bananas, and passion fruit. In 2014, two volunteers were sent to work with the same farmers to teach better production practices and implementing an integrated pest management

(IPM) system. A challenge is: are they making money? They want to make a profit, but were never taught how to find out if they are profitable or how to make even more money. In the past, they planted crops because that's what they always planted. They never really looked at their expenses and income to determine whether they made a profit or not. My assignment was to help them get beyond that and think of farming as a business.

One of my lessons in Tanzania was on budgeting all expenses and income per crop to determine which ones will be the most profitable. We worked through four examples and found one crop was budgeting a loss. I saw the "aha" moment in several of their faces. It was by far the neatest single experience of the whole trip. Another lesson was on marketing. Farmers in Tanzania are really limited in how they can market. They have no way to store the crop they produce and usually have to sell it right off the field. Their negotiating power is next to zero. My lessons revolved around marketing and working together. As a single farm, they have fewer options and cannot meet the buyer's needs. If they work together and sell as a collective unit, they might be able to gain market share and meet a buyer's need.

I have often thought of this experience to Africa and how I can

use it to make me a better agriculture teacher. My job at Ridgewater College in Willmar, MN, allows me to work one on one with farmers who are actively farming. I teach them record keeping, business analysis, cash flow planning, cost of production calculations, marketing, and more. What I did in Tanzania was a simpler version of what I do at home with my students. What really sticks with me is that we all start with a knowledge base of zero. We might be an expert in something now, but somewhere along the line someone taught us and we gained experiences to make us an expert. What would have happened if no one took the time to teach us? What if we never gained on the job experience? Would we have even found our career without some help? I think of this as I drive down a farm family's driveway to meet with a student. I think of the more basic topics that I take for granted and make sure I cover them in my lessons. It drives me to teach them everything I can while we are together. If I do that, they will be more equipped to better manage their farm and keep the lifestyle they desire for their family.

My experience in Tanzania also really made me appreciate all aspects of our agricultural education system here in the United States. We are able to reach students at any age to provide the education they need as they choose their career. A system like this is

not available everywhere. I may be biased, but we have an incredible system and an amazing family of teachers and supporters to make sure it stays strong.

So, how can a short term Farmer-to-Farmer Program experience help you as an agriculture teacher? Definitely for some of the reasons I already discussed, but it will also help you give an international experience to your students. It will help you appreciate the basics that we take for granted, but that many of our students want and need. It will also re-energize you to help every student you can!

If anyone is interested in a similar assignment, you can find more information on the NAAE website at www.naae.org. Click on “Professional Development” in the upper right hand corner and you will see information on the Farmer-to-Farmer Program in East Africa. You will be in for a wonderful adventure!



Zachary Rada is an agriculture teacher at Ridgewater College in Minnesota.

A Global Classroom: How Teaching in Ghana Gave Me Appreciation for U.S. Education, Professional Development, and a Global Agricultural Perspective

by Haley Clement

On a sticky September morning, I found myself in front of fourteen Ghanaian students between the ages of 20 and 30. They entered the dusty classroom and took a seat at a desk, an old wooden chair with a 1' x 2' piece of plywood that sat atop the armrests. Their belongings consisted of a single hand-stitched notebook, a pen and their "textbook" (a forty page homemade spiral-bound handbook filled with the course lecture notes). I stood in front of them, filled with anticipation and nerves. The humidity and nonexistent wind made my legs and back sticky although it was not noticeable in my traditional Ghanaian dress. Will they listen to me? Will they understand my accent? Will my American teaching methods work? Will they respond to my classroom routines and procedures? These questions racked my brain as they continued to trickle in. This was not my familiar classroom back at Liberty Ranch High School in California. I had no welcoming Pandora music as students walk in an air-conditioned room. There was no wall-controlled volume or overhead projector. There were no cabinets filled with brightly colored paper, sophisticated equipment, or art materials. I had no clickers, no lab station, no chemical demonstrations, no computer lab, and no exciting posters on the wall. And yet, as the lesson progressed, I some-

how managed to connect with my students, capture their attention, and involve them in hands-on activities. It simply took a little more imagination.

The scene above describes one of the first lessons I taught in Ghana during my eleven month service as an AgriCorps Fellow. After spending five years as a high school agriculture teacher in California, the thought of teaching biochemistry at an agriculture training college in West Africa seemed daunting at best. Prior to the 7,397-mile journey, I wasn't sure if my skills would transfer to a different country, a different culture, a different world. Yet, as the weeks passed, and I adjusted to the unreliable electricity and the occasional chicken entering my classroom, I came to realize that the pedagogical strategies I had been taught during my teacher preparation in the U.S. were applicable to students not only in a tiny cow town in California, but to young adults studying agriculture in Domeabra, Ghana. They may have looked different, had funny accents, and thought that being on time meant arriving thirty minutes late, the fail-safe teaching strategies that are used in the Agriculture Education world were just as effective in this foreign setting. The realization that good teaching has no borders is one realization I had while serving as an AgriCorps Fellow in Ghana this past year.

When I first broke the news to my friends and family about joining AgriCorps, I was met with a lot of skepticism. Who would voluntarily give up a salary, health insurance, and a tenured teaching position to spend a year teaching in a country without running water? I knew it would be a challenge and yet, the opportunity summoned me. Now, as I readjust to a world with an entire aisle at the grocery store dedicated to condiments, turning lanes on neatly paved roads, and boneless meat options, I reflect on how my fellowship with AgriCorps has served as an incredible professional development experience. Without the pressure of state testing, new standards, or the stress of how to juggle project visits, speech practice, and updating grades in one afternoon, I was able to deeply reflect on my teaching, learning, and assessment practices. Although the "ah ha" moments are too numerous to put on paper, there are three key lessons I learned that I will use as I continue my journey of teaching and learning.

Lesson 1: Question your methods

As agriculture teachers, we seldom have time to flip through *Teach Like a Champion*, or experiment with alternative ways to motivate our students. Our days are filled with emails, purchase orders, and judging practices. However, the slow pace of Ghana and the opportunities I had as an

AgriCorps Fellow (ACF) allowed much time for reflection, observation, and experimentation. A unique aspect of my role as an ACF was to design and implement three-day teacher training conferences. During these conferences, participants often questioned my methods of lesson delivery (student-centered as opposed to teacher-centered) and classroom management (behavior management as opposed to corporal punishment). These questions forced me to research, reflect and then teach topics on modern learning theory, emotional intelligences, and human behavior, concepts I hadn't explored since college. Through these trainings, I not only learned valuable lessons about education in our country vs. Ghana, but also discovered that I want to pursue teacher education as a career.

Lesson 2: New culture, new students

As teachers (particularly at the high school level), we quickly master the art of explaining difficult concepts in ways that our students understand. In college classes or staff meetings, we hear about how important it is to make the learning relevant and relatable to our students, scaffolding on prior knowledge. However, this task becomes much more difficult when you're teaching protein synthesis to a group of Ghanaian college students. Gone were the days where I could make an analogy using Miley Cyrus or *The Walking Dead*. I couldn't use idioms, catch phrases, slang, metaphors, or pop culture references. However difficult this was, it encouraged me to explore other

ways to deliver content, utilize culturally relevant examples, speak using clear and accurate English, and employ peer teaching as a means to clarify and review.

Lesson 3: A global perspective

It's often said that a trip overseas or a study abroad experience brings a sense of global awareness to the individual. Although seemingly cliché, it holds true for my experience as an ACF. I remember teaching about agriculture trade in my Agriculture Economics and Government class just over a year ago. We discussed how supply and demand for agriculture goods across the world altered prices as well as industry trends. We even mentioned the struggle for many African nations to compete with low American prices. Looking back, I admit the naivety I had about the complexity of the issue. During this past year I learned of the seemingly impossible task to create markets, boost employment, and encourage entrepreneurship in a nation where education is expensive and government corruption rampant. Although I by no means have all the answers, my experience in Ghana has opened my eyes to struggles as well as opportunities of international agriculture, the benefits and pitfalls of foreign aid, and just how different our world, and its people, can be.

As I gear up for my next journey, I look forward to a vacuumed office, smart classroom, and ubiquitous Wi-Fi. Yet, I'll never forget the students who sat in those rickety wooden chairs, their polished shoes and eager faces ready to learn from

the strange American who taught and spoke differently. I won't forget the lessons I learned and the people I met that made my experience as an AgriCorps Fellow memorable.



Haley Clement is a retired AgriCorps fellow and will begin a doctoral graduate teaching assistantship at Oregon State University in the fall.

YOU TOOK YOUR STUDENTS WHERE?

From Minnesota to South Africa

by Eric Swatzke

In the summer of 2015, a group of eleven FFA members from the Dassel-Cokato FFA Chapter took an adventure of a lifetime as they boarded a plane headed for Johannesburg, South Africa to spend two weeks learning about agriculture and the history of this country nestled on the other side of the globe. At this point, many people reading this article may already have assumed that this trip took an incredible amount of planning and added stress on an already hectic schedule of an agriculture teacher. I'm happy to say that with the right connections and support group, that just wasn't the case for this trip and doesn't need to be the case for agriculture programs across the nation.

During a tour of South Africa in 2013 for agriculture teachers, a relationship with the University of Fort Hare, South Africa, was made in which they expressed interest in hosting high school agriculture students. An Agriculture Economics professor and his secretary from Fort Hare, who had previous connections with the University of Minnesota, agreed to create an entire program for the students from the moment they arrived until the day they left South Africa. These two supporters organized tours, planned out all meals, reserved hotels, and made sure that all plans were in place so that the students would have an excellent experience.

Finding that direct connection to interested supporters within a university was the key factor that led to this trip ever coming to fruition. As agriculture teachers think about how to incorporate international trips it can be highly beneficial to contact land-grant universities to see if their international departments have any good connections overseas that could lead to a similar experience. These connections can help set up meaningful experiences as opposed to paying a travel company who may end up only focusing on more routine tourist attractions and charge much higher prices for their services.

Upon arrival, the eleven students and five adult chaperones participated in an intense tour of the country focusing on the history, especially of the Apartheid era, and the agricultural systems. The members had the incredible opportunity to visit Nelson Mandela's home village, his home in Soweto, his college alma mater, and even his final resting place.

Students visited the University of Fort Hare and Fort Cox College. They also spent two days touring high schools that taught agriculture and even helped clean up a chicken barn on the school farm with the new shovels and wheelbarrows that they donated to the school! The students also toured citrus farms and a wool auction house while they were in a coastal town.

Of course a trip to South Africa wouldn't be complete without some wildlife adventures! The group toured a cheetah rehabilitation center, went on a half-day safari, and interacted with wild monkeys and baboons in the mountainous areas of the Eastern Cape. They also watched the sunrise over the Indian Ocean and made a stop to visit a penguin colony along the coast.

Logistically, there are three key planning components to this trip. The first is the travel agenda including meals, hotels, and stops throughout each day. If you are able to find someone from your host country to organize this portion of the trip, then you are in for a very smooth experience while you are there! The second is organizing fundraisers to help cover the cost of the trip. Work with parents to organize a group of leaders who can develop and execute a fundraising plan. This should not be something led by the agriculture teacher as it takes far too much time and energy away from the classroom and other FFA responsibilities. Trust the fundraising group, but be sure that they keep you informed of all plans ahead of time.

Finally, as you prepare to travel with students you must ensure that you can get your students to their destination. Check with the U.S. Department of State to ensure that the country is safe to travel to. You will also need to use the De-

partment of State website to determine if there are any laws related to traveling with a minor. For example, in June of 2015 it became much more difficult to travel to South Africa with anyone under the age of 18. The Dassel-Cokato students had to provide a notarized permission form, a copy of both parents' driver's license, and an itinerary of the entire trip. Enroll your group in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (S.T.E.P.) so that the U.S. government knows your whereabouts in case of an emergency.

International travel builds confidence, self awareness, and opens eyes to new perspectives. Agriculture students are going to be working in a global economy and they must gain an appreciation and understanding of the world around them at an early age in order that they can be prepared to handle the challenges of the world that awaits them.

If you would like to read and see more about the Dassel-Cokato FFA trip to South Africa go to www.dasselcokatoffa.com and click on the "Archives" page



Eric Swatzke is an agriscience teacher at Dassel-Cokato High School in Minnesota.

Building Global Competency Through #FFA2Haiti Service Learning Project

by Bradley Aronson, Anna Ehlers, Corren Olson, and Melanie Bloom

January 12, 2010. A magnitude 7.0 earthquake and ensuing aftershocks rock the poorest nation in the western hemisphere. Hundreds of thousands Haitians die. Nearly one-third of the country's population was displaced (Pallardy, 2016). Due to the crumbling infrastructure, aid could not make it to rural areas. Compounding the already destitute circumstances of the majority of the country's population, Haitians resorted to living as squatters, in squalid conditions, burying their dead in mass graves, among deadly disease outbreaks, and overcrowding. The number of orphans skyrocketed, and the government couldn't handle the backlog of cases.

In the Beginning

Laurens, Iowa farmer Ken DeYoung begins mercy missions with a personal aircraft. In 2011 he and colleagues formed GoServe Global (formerly Global Compassion Network) as a faith-based disaster relief organization. In 2012, local GoServe Global leader and Rebel FFA Alumni member Dennis Anderson, contacted the Sioux Central FFA chapter, looking for donations towards a Sukup Safe T HomeR for the Village of Hope in Haiti. At the next officer meeting, chapter officers decided to not only purchase an entire Safe T HomeR, but to build it with their own hands. Four members trav-

eled to Haiti for a life-changing experience, the beginning of the FFA2Haiti project.

Where We Have Been

In the second year of the FFA-2Haiti campaign, three members led 17 FFA members from seven states comprising three more teams to the Village of Hope to construct Safe T HomesR. During these trips, members experienced agriculture outside of U.S. borders, and grew in their faith. Two of these FFA members later became National FFA Officers. Continuing the momentum of FFA2Haiti, three more teams including 17 FFA members from around the country traveled in 2014, 2015, and 2016.

The major work was to provide shelter. During the experience, students also had the opportunity to observe the variety of agriculture systems and experiments conducted by an agricultural missionary, Les and Catherine DeRoos, also originally from Iowa. The food production advances benefit children at two orphanages, residents in a widows and orphans' village, a school, and a prison.

Sioux Central FFA members fully intend to continue their partnership with GoServe Global. GoServe also has a domestic disaster relief arm which provides aid in the aftermath of natural disasters such as tornadoes, in addition to projects in Peru, India, and Guatemala.

Project Impact

According to Anderson, about 15 Safe T HomesR have been built by FFA2Haiti teams in the Village of Hope and Camp Perrin. These homes function as guard houses, storerooms, a general store, many orphan dormitories and nurseries, family homes, and kitchens. These projects provide community sanitation facilities and potable water. Many times while building Safe T HomesR, team members worked alongside orphans and community members eager to work. Even children see the value of giving and working hard. During the hours it takes to, build one structure, volunteers trust and friendship are forged through the labor.

FFA members have also worked on agricultural projects as well as maintenance projects at orphanages and a school. One member relates the following:



“From the plane ride to the five-hour drive to Les Cayes, Haiti, our team of FFA members viewed the contrasting culture of this country recovering from several natural disasters. As a third world country,

we noticed adults and children carrying containers of water on their heads, crops planted on the side of mountains, as well as livestock tied on a rope to graze along the roadway.”

“For many FFA families in the U.S. farming is important, but in Haiti, people are just trying to survive.

“The resources are limited, the practices are inefficient, but no matter how well their crop may have turned out, the need is still great.”

“It was really important for our teams to see how Haitians were farming and raising their animals, not only for us to compare to what we know agriculture is like in the U.S. but also to truly appreciate the developments Les DeRoos has accomplished in effort to provide a reliable food source (rabbit, poultry, plantain fields, aquaponics garden).”



In addition to the actual travel and service work, the Sioux Central students also gain career skills as they have been the primary organizers, including developing the application process, planning travel itineraries, organizing travel

guides and check sheets for travel planning, creating and maintaining a social media presence, mentoring new travelers, and handling financial responsibilities for the project.

Living to Serve

How can teachers improve their global literacy to become confident positive agents of change?

As an agricultural education teacher always on the lookout to add meaningful “Living to Serve” opportunities for students, the GoServe Global partnership seemed invaluable. The result has been beneficial not only the students who travel, but also their peers who hear the stories and are affected by the experiences related. Other teachers at Sioux Central commented on the enrichment of class discussion as a result of the service project.

Simply be open to opportunities. Become a “yes man.” One powerful thought is, “you can find an excuse not to, or you can find a reason to make something happen.”

How can FFA chapters explore the world?

Sioux Central FFA members recommend interacting with the FFAToHaiti Facebook and Twitter accounts. Members interested in taking part can apply to participate. Travel is not required, though. To develop a local project of your own, research environment/humanitarian needs of other countries that match up with the abilities and passions of students in the FFA Chapter.

Partnerships may assist in providing a stable product, service, training, or knowledge to prepare students. Acknowledge the resources, talents, contacts and potential of your chapter to create your own agriculture-related service learning trip or similar effort. The Sioux Central members followed the Service Learning in Action process found on the National FFA Organization website.

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Bradley Aronson, Anna Ehlers, and Corren Olson are all Sioux Central FFA members in Iowa. All three were agriscience students of Melaine Bloom, current CASE team member.

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