

Dear All,

Below please find information about the Texas A&M University System Education Collaborative at the rural elementary school in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. Included is the project overview provided by Dr. Eddie Henderson - Dean of the College of Education & Social Sciences at West Texas A&M University. The report does not include the project summary for the Summer 2019 program, but I will be happy to pass it along as soon as it is published.

- Receipts for the books donated are not necessary, and thus used books can be accepted.

- In terms of getting the books to the Hacienda, the specifics are still being discussed but the books will likely be brought in increments by Texas A&M University (College Station) groups that visit Hacienda Santa Clara, all depending on the quantity of books.

- The community library will accept books throughout the year, as it is not limited by school calendar schedules. An option would be three drives throughout the year, in December, maybe around Easter time, and a "back to school" drive aligning with school starting again in August would be a possibility.

- We discussed a possible pen-pal program, and after discussing with the community and parents in Clavellinas, we have received positive feedback about that project as well.

Below I have written some background information on Hacienda Santa Clara, the Education Collaborative, and how the library is an extension of the project.

The Hacienda Santa Clara Education and Research Center is a Signature Partner study abroad center for Texas A&M University and the TAMU System universities in the historic town of San Miguel de Allende in the state of Guanajuato, Mexico. The Center provides academic focused international field experiences for different colleges at Texas A&M, including agriculture, liberal arts, engineering, and education. Part of the mission of the Center is to provide cultural immersion for visiting students and to offer service-learning experiences. The Center is managed by Pablo Marvin '66 and his family who have close ties to Texas A&M and College Station.

The Hacienda Santa Clara Center participates in an innovative program called the Texas A&M University System Education Collaborative in a marginalized, rural elementary public school outside the city center of San Miguel de Allende. The Hacienda officially "adopted" the school in the Clavellinas community through the state government education program. This mechanism permits the school to host a ten-week summer academic enrichment program offered to the school children by nine Colleges of Education from participating TAMU System universities. The school program successfully finished its third summer program in 2019.

One goal of the Education Collaborative is to provide preservice teachers in Texas the opportunity to teach English to Spanish speaking children in a classroom in Mexico with curriculum centered on literacy, math, science, as well as social & emotional learning, physical fitness and leadership, all with the supervision of their professors. Another goal of the project is to provide the local community with programs that the school does not have available to them, like special education, school counseling or adult literacy programs. By participating in a program at Hacienda Santa Clara, visiting students develop their global fluency by being immersed in the art, history, language and culture of Mexico. Texas students meet and work with Mexican university students who also contribute to the Education Collaborative by helping with class management at the school and translation. By participating in the Education Collaborative, our Texas students build on their education career skills and develop their sensitivity to cultural diversity.

The village of Clavellinas is the host community of the Education Collaborative. It has a population of almost 3,500. It's a community that lacks paved roads, a reliable water well, sewage system, and a medical facility. The elementary school in Clavellinas was selected for the Education Collaborative with the hope that our presence there would help shine a light on its many needs and remedy its situation. Fortunately, as a result of the Collaborative and our partnership with the government, the private sector, a group of parents in the village, and Non-Government Organizations, the school now has a water fountain for the 187 students, bathrooms have been built and maintained, classrooms have had been repaired, electricity has been restored to all classes, windows and doors have been replaced, flooding issues have been addressed, the school has been cleaned and painted, and a few structures have been built to provide roof areas for the children to eat their lunch. The village suffers from food insecurity and malnutrition and, therefore, has a kitchen in the school provided by Feed the Hungry San Miguel, a local NGO. However, the school still lacks much and needs a proper dining room, for example, because there are no tables and chairs and children must sit on the concrete basketball court and small walls on the premises with only limited roof protection. It is a work in progress where a team continues to seek solutions to impact the lives of the children and community.

One important development of the Education Collaborative in the village is the building of a community library. Texas university students who have participated in the Education Collaborative the past three years donated over 400 books to the school. However, the need for a community library to open beyond school hours was identified as the school day in Clavellinas is from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. A small new building is being built in front of the community soccer field and is nearing completion. The library will be run by a committee of mothers in the village. Adult literacy programs will be a component of the library, as well as a small computer training center. The Collaborative seeks donations for the library as the transformative power of literacy and education to change people's lives is a shared value.

On the weekend of November 8th, 2019, the TAMU System Education Collaborative met at the Hacienda Santa Clara Center in San Miguel de Allende for the summer 2020 planning session. This Collaborative is the first program where the Colleges of Education in the Texas A&M University System have worked together in such an initiative to help better prepare teachers to teach in Texas. Last week Texas A&M University, Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, Texas A&M-Commerce, Tarleton State University, West Texas A&M University, Texas A&M-San Antonio, Texas A&M-Kingsville, Texas A&M- Texarkana, and St. Edward's University of Austin, Texas were represented at the conference. The fourth year of the Collaborative will focus on the environment as the curriculum for the ten-week program with each university focused on different themes, such as the oceans, mountains, deserts, and urban landscapes. Texas A&M University will assess the children at the school for their English language proficiency at the beginning of the summer 2020 program and then at the end to provide more metrics for the Collaborative. Another important goal of the Collaborative is to scale this English teaching program to other schools with the funding of foundations once enough data is collected.

After the Collaborative conference on November 8th, Dr. Eddie Henderson, Dean of the College of Education of Social Sciences of West Texas A&M University, Pablo, and Barbara Marvin met with the Director of the Secretary of Public Education of the State of Guanajuato at their offices to give an update of the Education Collaborative summer 2019 program and to inform them of the summer 2020 program as well. The academic enrichment program of the Collaborative has resulted in the children at the Clavellinas elementary school with improved math standardized testing scores. Further, the children who have had the most exposure to the program for the past 3 years are building on their English abilities. It was the parents of the community that directed us to teaching their children English, as they saw it as an important skill set for better job opportunities.

Overall, the Collaborative and its programs are proving to be a win/win for all the stakeholders in the project, beginning with the students directly involved- the visiting Texas university students, and the elementary school children in the village.

Any contribution by our St. Thomas community in terms of time, talent, and resources would be appreciated. This is a team effort and all who contribute are making a big difference in the lives of this community.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sophia Marvin