

Environmental Consortium of Hudson Valley Colleges & Universities

River Summer Task Force Report

Steering Committee Meeting 9 September, 2006

Summary

River Summer 2006 ran from July 6 to July 29th. When all was said and done, 64 individuals from 44 different institutions and organizations had participated (see list at the end of the report. My feeling was that RS06 was a huge success, and many changes that we implemented between 2005 and 2006 had the desired impacts. Evaluations were quite positive, and the majority of participants indicated that they would use some aspect of our program in the classroom.

Program

We decided to schedule fewer activities in the evenings to allow for data/information processing, laboratory analyses, discussions, etc. This was a very positive and successful change, and I would say a defining feature of RS06. An important comment from RS05 was the lack of sufficient time for these activities. The community aspect of the group discussing an issue, completing an activity-related exercise, or working on samples and data (often late into the evening) not only formed stronger bonds within the group, but gave us a significant amount of data, presentations, interpretations that will form a record of RS06. We are currently working on assembling this information in the form of a cruise report. Ultimately, this information will find its way into posters and curricular activities.

I think we achieved even better interdisciplinarity with RS06. Each module was well balanced, with multiple disciplines represented. There was better continuity between modules, which was a function of several individuals participating in more than one module, the routine science sampling (conducted modules 1 through 4), and several activities that were repeated in more than one module (e.g., Lee Paddock's environmental law activity in modules 1 and 4), Ted Eismier's political economic activity in modules 3 and 5). Where I might have rated some modules more successful than others last year, I would say that this year each one was equally successful.

We extended each module to Noon of the final day (rather than 9:00 AM) to take advantage of ship-time and allow for final presentations/discussions of the information/data that we had collected, it also gave us extra time to have a general wrap-up discussion. This worked very well and we made use of every minute.

Place- Based Education

Dian Dittrick is researching the topic of place-based education (see figure) and has drafted a white paper. The final version available as a resource on River Summer web page. This is designed to explore the pedagogical underpinnings for the success/appeal of River Summer.

Recording River Summer

We recorded audio (iPod) and video (Hatcam) as well as a large number of digital photographs. We have ~15GB of digital photos and iPod video and 40+ hours of video footage. We are in the process of organizing and archiving this information

This Fall and Spring

As part of our NYSDEC grant, we will be developing several of the River Summer activities as stand alone Hudson based curricular components. We are currently in the process of identifying the topic and contacting faculty.

We are planning a ½ day workshop entitled “***Meaningful feedback and assessment of student learning: Tools to improve your teaching***”. This will be given by Ryan Kelsey, our program evaluator. We initially planned to hold this on 9/23. We are trying to reschedule this for sometime in October, which should coincide with our next RS Task Force meeting

Ryan will also be getting in contact with River summer participants and discussing with them their plans to use River Summer activities in their classrooms.

The spring poster session is still in the works, but little has been done to date. We are tentatively thinking of holding this in April.

River Summer 2007

Although the RS Task Force has not met since the end of this summer’s program, at this point, there are only a few changes that I would suggest for next years program. Going offshore was very successful, and I would repeat this. We also are exploring a way to extend our program into the upper Hudson between Albany and Fort Edwards, which would also be quite interesting. The Seawolf is already scheduled from July 5 – July 25th, and we will reserve the AEC facilities in the next few weeks.

Please feel free to contact Margie or me, if you have any questions or comments.

River Summer 2006 Final Participant List

Participant	Institution/Organization
Susan Fox-Rogers	Bard College
Gautam Sethi	Bard College
Xhixi Li	Barnard summer intern
Brian Mailloux	Barnard College
Martin Stute	Barnard College
Elizabeth Hutchinson	Barnard College
Stephanie Pfirman	Barnard College
Suzanne Young	Barnard summer intern
Mackenzie Haberman	Barnard Undergraduate
Bonnie Barton	Barton Garnett Mines
Lani Ulrich	CAP 21 Program, Old Forge NY
John Dunne	City of Beacon, City Planner
Ian McDoughall	City of Newburgh Planning Dept.
Bruce Selleck	Colgate University
Brian Jensen	College of St. Rose
Ryan Kelsey	Columbia University
Eric Lind	Consitution Marsh Audubon Society
Roger Panetta	Fordham University/ Marymount College
Ted Eismeier	Hamilton College
Mickey Cohen	High School Administrator
John Mylod	Hudson River Estuary Advisory Board
Peter Groffman	Institute of Ecosystem Studies
Alan Berkowitz	Institute of Ecosystem Studies
Meryl Nadel	Iona College
Frank Nitsche	Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory
Tim Kenna	Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory
Margie Turrin	Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory
Dorothy Peteet	Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory
Angela Slagle	Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory
Victor DeTroy	LDEO Summer intern
Josh Weston	Liberty Science Center Board Member
Kevin Farley	Manhattan College
Carl Hoegler	Marymount College
Kelsey Jordhal	Marymount Manhattan College
Philip Meyers	Marymount Manhattan College
Bob Cassidy	Mercy College Natural Sciences
Tim Scarlett	Michigan Technology University
Jack Reilly	Mount St. Mary College
Ward Stone	New York State DEC
Steve Stanne	NYS DEC
Daniel Farkas	Pace University
Paulette Muller-Girard	Pace University
John Cronin	Pace University & the Beacon Institute for Rivers & Estuaries
Lee Paddock	Pace University Law School
Tom Mullane	Pearl River High School Science Teacher
Alan Molof	Polytechnic University
Banny Ackermann	Radner Middle School

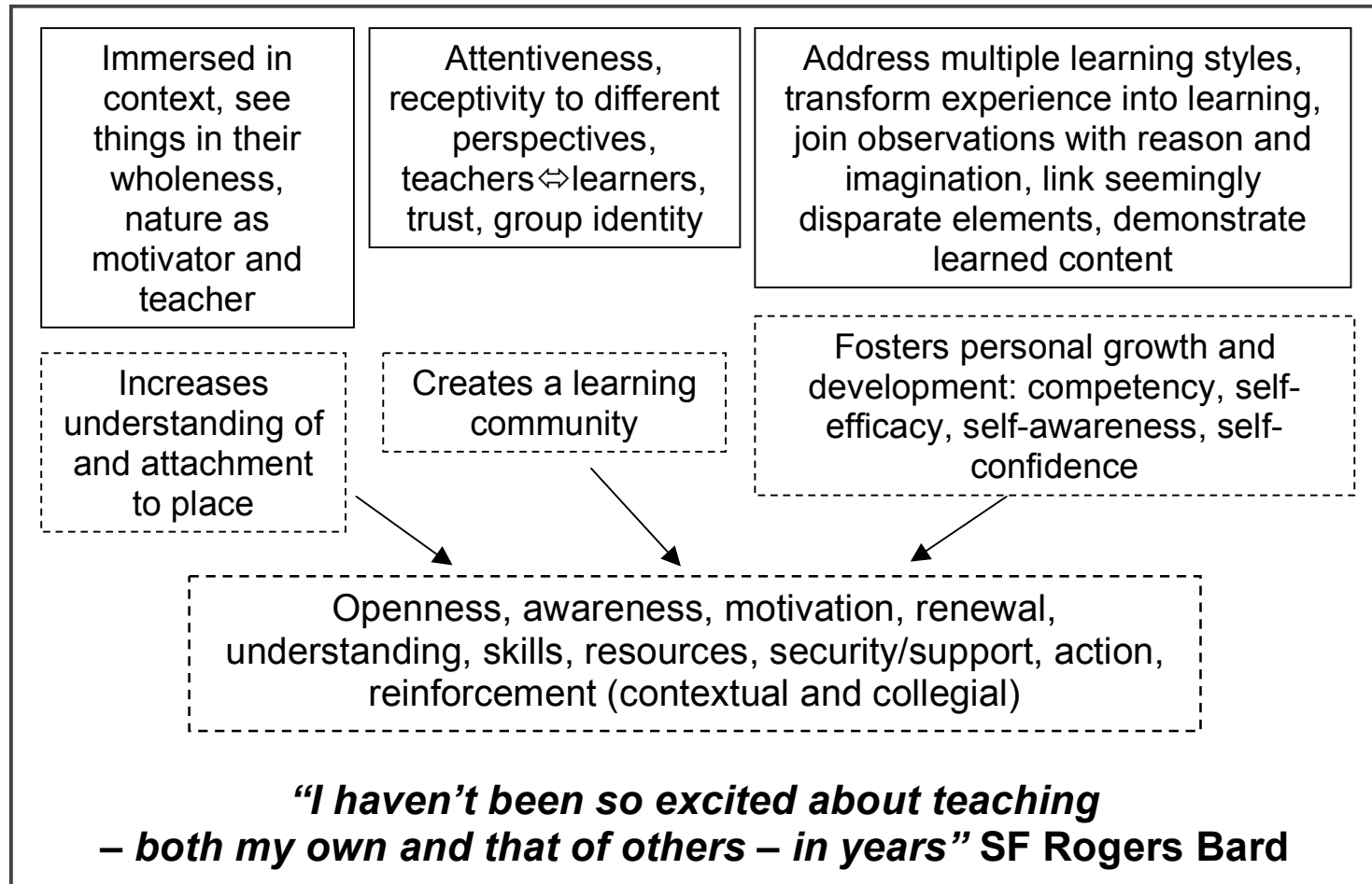
Susan Scher	Ramapo College
Sandra Neizwicki Bauer	Rensselaer Polytechnical Institute
Melissa Everett	Rensselaer Polytechnical Institute
Peter Rona	Rutgers University of New Jersey
Brent Turrin	Rutgers University of New Jersey
Marilyn Power	Sarah Lawrence College
Jim Booker	Sienna College
Karl Kehde	Smart Land Use
Paul Hai	SUNY ESF AEC
Matt Domser	SUNY ESF AEC
Ray Masters	SUNY ESF AEC and the Newcomb Historical Society
Carol Reitsma	SUNY New Paltz
Steven Schimmrich	SUNY Ulster
Tom Lake	SUNY Ulster College Adjunct
Christa Flores	The Calhoun School
Shane Riordan	The Harbor School HS science teacher
Lucy Johnson	Vassar College

Place-Based Education

PLACE

COMMUNITY

INDIVIDUAL



Adapted by Dittrick and Pfirman from Powers, A.L. (2004).
An Evaluation of Four Place-Based Education Programs.
The Journal of Environmental Education, 2004