



## Post Fellowship Reporting - Project Summary

**Report Title:** Expeditionary India: Creating an International Environmental Expedition  
**Name:** Marty Frazier

**Other Team Members:**

**Program:** EL Education Program  
**Trip Dates:** 06/18/2012 - 07/12/2012  
**Location Visited:** Delhi, India; Chandigarh, India; Shimla, India; Jaipur, India; Jodhpur, India; Udaipur, India; Agra, India

**Post Fellowship Reporting Template:** PFR Template 02

**Project Summary:** In our inaugural year as an Expeditionary Learning school, our 6th graders investigated the causes and effects of the global water crisis, using India as one case study. Although students used primary sources, videos, and photographs to learn about the crisis, they had little direct connection with the people or places they were studying. The goal of my FFT project was to connect my students in Cleveland with students in India to form a collaboration that would allow both groups to investigate global environmental issues together, in the hopes of creating solutions and developing further cross-cultural understanding. Along with forming these partnerships, I documented relevant events related to the water crisis and interviewed non-profit leaders and business owners about the effects of the crisis.

My project began in Delhi, where I worked with The Heritage School and The Vasant Valley School, two independent schools that agreed to collaborate with my own school in Cleveland. We determined that my 6th grade students would continue to research India and its environmental challenges, and that Indian students from these participating schools would evaluate their research and proposals for potential solutions to the water crisis. Likewise, Indian students would research some of the environmental and economic challenges facing Cleveland and provide ideas on how we can improve our own water systems here. These exchanges will take place through blogs, Skype, and other social media services.

Beyond collaborating with schools, I also sought to complete my own research on the topic. I traveled through 5 different states in India documenting the environmental challenges and improvements while speaking with a wide range of citizens connected to the issue of water management and sanitation. I asked almost everyone I spoke to how the water crisis was affecting them, and each person reacted strongly with concern about the difficulty of obtaining sanitary water on a regular basis. I was inspired by the fortitude of those who walked miles to pump their daily water from wells or who worked tirelessly to bring healthy water systems to those in need. Through this journey, I collected hundreds of photographs and interviews and wrote a blog entitled "Expeditionary India." I hope that the stories and connections I bring back will inspire a thoughtful and meaningful international collaboration.

**Career Impact:** Navigating India for the first time was as bewildering as it was rewarding. The most challenging adventures usually involved traveling Indian roads, which operate in a state of managed chaos. Animals, rickshaws, cars, bikes, mopeds, and pedestrians all vie for space on increasingly crowded roadways, and I rarely had a seat belt. After a few frightening moments, I adjusted relatively well and found myself enjoying life from the backseat of a "tuk-tuk," an enhanced golf cart perfect for quick and harrowing drives through town.

Luckily, braving the roads granted me unparalleled opportunities to have first-hand experience with the material I present to my sixth grade students. Last year, I used newspapers and the internet to gather material; this year, I'm using interviews, photographs, and videos I took myself in the very places we're studying. Even after reading about the environmental degradation of the Yamuna River for months, it was still jarring to see it with my own eyes. I hope that my films and recordings will bring my students as close to the subjects they're studying as possible.

**Classroom/Community Impact:** Though students usually see me as a teacher, this opportunity has highlighted my role as a learner. Since my return to school, students have been asking me what I learned and how I felt about my experience, and I'm delighted that they see my desire to continue learning and growing despite not technically being a student. I know my students respect me for taking the risk to travel far away to explore my interests, and I hope to instill in them that same desire to take academic risks. My fellowship has also allowed me to connect two very geographically and culturally different locations: Cleveland and Delhi. My students will be getting to know students thousands of miles away and learning from their unique and diverse perspectives. The environmental challenges that we face as a planet require us to work together to create solutions for all, regardless of where we live, and my fellowship is helping to do just that.

**Open Response:** After sharing my fellowship with staff members at my school, I know that many of them are considering applying for a grant. I know that my blog ([www.expeditionaryindia.tumblr.com](http://www.expeditionaryindia.tumblr.com)) was widely read by students and staff members, I am continuing to

us it as a reference point for those interested in my trip and research. I have made contact with a wide variety of NGOs and community activists in India, and I am in touch with them to continue planning ways my school can be supportive in their efforts in India.

**Quote:** Each day of my fellowship I kept saying, "I read about that with my students!" and there it was, right in front of me.

Photos:



Interviewing a local textile merchant about water shortages.



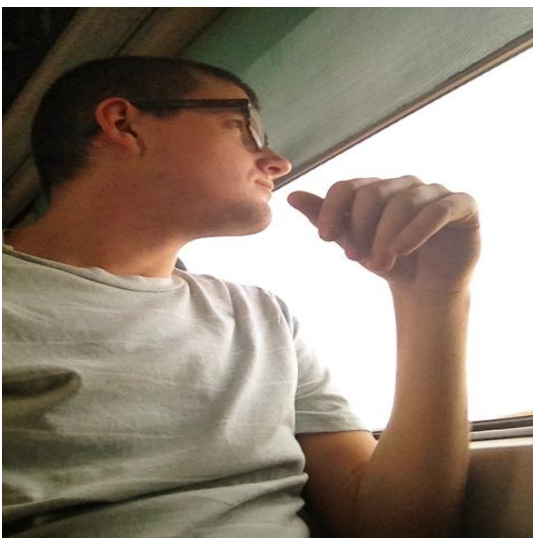
View of Jodhpur, a city that sits on the Thar Desert and faces drought.



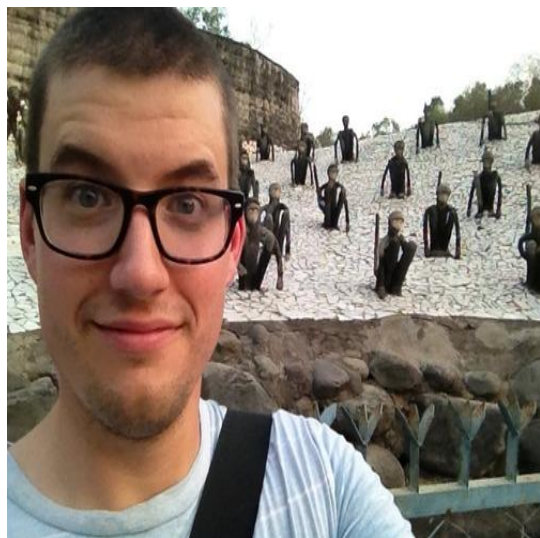
Jaipur; I went here to learn how the water crisis affects the textile industry.



Meeting other tourists outside the Bhawan Palace in Jodhpur



Peering out an Indian train as the countryside rolls by.



Surrounded by ceramic monkeys at the Chandigarh Rock Garden.



Standing by the Yamuna River, one of India's most polluted.



Enjoying one of Udaipur's many lakes.