



## Post Fellowship Reporting - Project Summary

**Report Title:** Panama: Bridge of the World, Heart of the Universe      **Name:** Suzannah Taylor

**Other Team Members:**

**Program:** New York City Program

**Trip Dates:** 11/30/-0001 - 11/30/-0001

**Location Visited:** Panama

**Post Fellowship Reporting Template:** PFR Template 01

**Project Summary:** The people of Panama proudly describe their country as the "Bridge of the World, Heart of the Universe". Panama is a crossroads where cultures collide. It is for this reason that I chose to visit Panama in order to explore aspects of cultural diffusion. The 9th and 10th grade Global History curriculum investigates cultural diffusion through lenses of religion, music, trade and disease. Visiting Panama provided me with an opportunity to gather stories, evidence and real-life examples of cultural diffusion through interviews, photography and writing. By developing curriculum with these materials, I was also able to bring my experiences back into my classroom. Additionally, I enhanced my teaching practice by taking a month of Spanish classes while living in a Panamanian homestay. This language learning experience was especially valuable because I work with English Language Learners who also deal with cultural immersion and linguistic isolation. I was reminded that, like myself, each has a different language acquisition style. Understanding their challenges first-hand afforded me perspective that will shape my teaching in years to come.

**Career Impact:** \*Studied Spanish and reflected on personal language learning style

\*Used language learning experience to shape language aspect of curriculum development for English Language Learners

\*Explored history and culture of Panama through lens of cultural diffusion

\*Enhanced and improved existing Global History curriculum

\*Investigated diverse group of local schools (both rural and urban) in Panama to gain perspective on education outside the U.S.

**Classroom/Community Impact:**\*Enhanced curriculum, designed with English Language Learners in mind

\*Personal growth during immersion experience allows stronger teaching practice for immigrant students

\*Authentic examples (music, photos and interviews) of cultural diffusion added to curriculum

\*Curriculum shared with colleagues through collaborative planning

**Open Response:** \*A photographic essay of education in Panama

\*A photographic essay of the Panama Canal

\*Language development enhancement of Global History curriculum

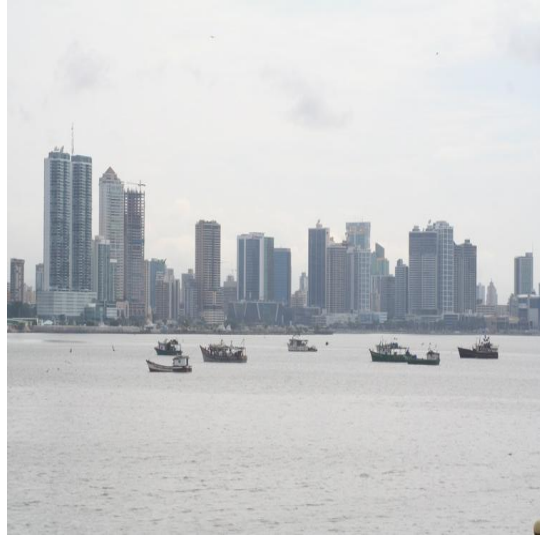
\*A week-long teaching example piece about Panama, added to the current cultural diffusion unit

**Quote:** Puente del Mundo, Corazón del Universo

Photos:



Visiting 6th grade students in a public school in Panama City



Skyline view of Panama City



A ship exiting Miraflores Locks at the Panama Canal



A scenic overlook on the Sendero los Quetzales



An explanation of how coffee grows



Workers inspecting coffee beans for Cafe Ruiz



A Kuna man sells local crafts in the Comarca de San Blas



A sunrise view from a village in the Comarca Ngobe-Bugle