

Bonner Global Village Network Conference

Bonner Global Village Conference | May 26 – June 2, 2012 | Orange Walk, Belize

Program Philosophy

“While Bonner participants will spend time at the conference engaged in planning sessions for the Bonner Global Village Network, they will also be putting curricula into practice in the local schools of Orange Walk. The curriculum, “Build Yourself, Build Belize” is designed to help students explore their personal values and potential using the Bonner Common Commitments as a guide. Through these exercises, youth will learn more about themselves and one another and will be encouraged to consider their place in the broader community. The aim of these conversations is to help Belizean youth identify their place in their communities as citizens, as contributors to the economy, and as activators of positive social change. With that knowledge, students will be equipped with the skills and ideas to develop social entrepreneurship platforms — ultimately, creating their own jobs rather than struggling to find them.

The aim of this curriculum is to inspire the youth to create a meaningful life and career that aligns with their personal values and goals, as well as the positive growth of their community. Our hope is to work through this curriculum on the ground and gauge its adaptability for other cultures and contexts, ideally to be used by Bonner Programs serving in communities around the world.” ~**Kelly Behrend, Bonner**

Foundation

For more information on the track, please contact Clay C. Grego, Bonner Scholar at Allegheny College (gregoc@allegheny.edu).

Disclaimer

It is recommended that the facilitators of this conference host a “Curriculum Review” session in order to plan in advance for the roles and materials that need accommodation. The quantity of materials listed in this program is intended to supply concurrent facilitation of each session among two classrooms—two in the morning, and, two in the afternoon. Lastly, first person voice used throughout the narrative is that of Clay C. Grego.

Special thanks are due to Amelia Lumpkin, Bonner Scholar of Davidson College, for without whose guidance, the intentionality behind the writing of this project would not have been possible.

Workshop Abstracts

1. Introduction: Build Yourself, Build Belize

“This first session of the conference provides a fun and friendly space for the Belizean student participants and the American Bonner facilitators to break the ice and become acquainted with one another. Starting the workshops with interactive games and fun exercises will set up a positive atmosphere for these two groups of people from differing cultural backgrounds.”

2. International Perspective

“Participation in this session is intentionally dedicated to “sharing” culture and “illustrating” tradition which allows two customarily different communities to conceptualize the “lenses” others use in order to categorize and make sense of everyday happenings such as: eating, traveling and dancing. The exercises in this session will challenge the participants to think of other cultural “happenings” that may not be so easily understood, such as: the role of women in society or to what degree the youth have a “voice” in their community.”

3. Diversity

“This session that focuses on the validation of self and others will help the students to recognize the power that lies within themselves and the tremendous value that there is in the collaboration of seemingly opposite identities.”

4. Spiritual Exploration

“Taking the time to think about their past, students will use symbols, colors, and other imagery to depict their life’s story thus far.”

5. Community Building

“Adding their creations to the greater classroom “River Story” will allow the Belizean students to understand their significant place as a contributor to the overall product of the group. By the end of the exercises in this session, the class will ultimately join all of its stories (bodies of water) to see that everyone’s experiences give significance and value to the greater community.”

6. Social Justice

“In this session, we will begin to apply our perspectives of self and community in much more real and tangible ways. Through the Bonners’ devised skits that reenact a multitude of social injustices, students will be asked denote “what is wrong” in each scenario and to brainstorm a possible solution to the conflict. Ultimately, our aim is to prime the Belizean students’ perception of inequities and their articulation of solutions for ending the problems at their source.”

7. Civic Engagement

“It is time to bring theory to practice in this session that challenges the Belizean students to consider the power of youth outside of the classroom. These exercises demand the students’ creativity and empower them with the basic tools for engaging social entrepreneurship. Working in teams, the students will prepare action plans for the final session of the day in which they will present their models for civic change to the rest of the class.”

8. Conclusion: Change Starts With Me

“To showcase the brainpower and intuition of the students’ creativity, this session requests four student groups to orally walk their peers through a devised action plan responding to one of Orange Walk’s community challenges. Having been fully equipped with the council of their Bonner guides and this program’s leadership exercises, the Belizean students are ready to articulate their visions for the future of their community in Orange Walk, Belize.”

Partner Organizations

Honored thanks are due to the partner organizations that assisted in the development of this track:

- **Peacework**
- **The Bonner Foundation**

For More Information

This track was designed, coordinated, and facilitated by:

- Clay C. Grego, Bonner Scholar, Allegheny College
- Kelly Behrend, Program Associate, Bonner Foundation
- Victoria Thompson, The College of New Jersey