

# Teacher Mentors Abroad 2017 Annual Report

## Officers

President Nancy Threan Loraine

Vice President Sandra Cole

Secretary/Treasurer Timothy Geissberger

Email [\*\*info@teachermentors.ca\*\*](mailto:info@teachermentors.ca)

Directors Beverley Freedman

Janet Giberson

Wayne Louie

Douglas Wilson

Honorary Members Georges Boissé CS

Pauline B. Laing

Teacher Mentors Abroad's Annual report describes our work from September 1, 2016 to August 31, 2017. Without our enthusiastic, devoted and highly competent volunteers, none of what is described would be possible. There are never enough 'thank you's' or 'muchas gracias' to express my gratitude to each of them.

Nancy Threan Loraine  
President

### **What's New**

- Online registration was initiated for the Santo Domingo Summer Institute site. Typically, TMA receives a list of educators who ministry officials have selected to attend the workshops. In the absence of that being provided in a timely fashion, an online registration option was offered to interested educators. The response was overwhelming and included registrants from distant parts of the country. In Santo Domingo, 150-200 participants had been expected, but 335 arrived.
- The Dominican mentors were co-presenters with Canadian team members at workshops in both the Santo Domingo and Santiago sites. In Santo Domingo, Dominican mentors led workshops independent of the Canadian mentors.
- Several Dominican mentors were promoted to leadership positions in their school.
- Integrated Science/Math/Language workshops, using Food & Nutrition as the theme, were designed at the behest of Dominican education ministry officials, following last place ranking by the Dominican Republic in PISA (Programme for International Students Assessment).
- According to a major international study released December, 6, 2016 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Canadian students are among the highest achievers in the world in science, mathematics, and reading. *PISA/CMEC release*
- TMA educators assisted a joint endeavour desiring to introduce our mentoring model in Haiti, the result of Haitian teams participating in TMA workshops in the Dominican Republic in 2013. Although logistical difficulties prevented the project from proceeding, it hopes to materialize in 2018.

### **What Continued:**

- The demand for program delivery grew significantly. Expected attendance was 250-300 participants at Summer Institutes and 450 registered. To date over 2,000 Dominican educators have participated in TMA institutes.
- Our DR Coordinator in Santo Domingo, Gloriannie Lopez, and CAFÉ (Canadian Aid for Education) partners in Santiago, Juan Pablo Liriano and BettyAnne Platt, facilitated the increased leadership role of Dominican mentors in program planning and delivery.
- Assessment of how effectively instructional practices learned by workshop participants are being applied.

- Recruitment of highly skilled and enthusiastic team members resulted in a balance of new and experienced Canadian and Dominican mentors as workshop presenters.
- Use of Tribus, the Spanish Tribes resource book that is an essential resource in all workshops. Annually provided gratis to participants, this year demand outstripped supply and not all educators were able to receive a copy.
- Developing workshop content based on the Dominican curriculum. High quality, practical workshops based on good pedagogy. Emmanuel Hilario, a first-time participant said, “the professional development offered by TMA is extraordinary. The workshops always examined how the learning can be applied across the curriculum.”
- Communications through Newsletters, Information Sessions and Speakers.
- Annual Charity Volleyball Tournament.

### **What's ahead**

TMA has learned that for partnerships to be sustaining; it has to be mutual, evolving and use feedback and observational data to measure influence of capacity building, confirm existing areas to be strengthened and set new directions. Much remains to be accomplished but the collaborative partnership has made a good beginning. Bodkin & Freedman, AERA presentation, 2016

- In 2017 the Board of Directors initiated a review of its organizational structure to determine its alignment with the direction of program development and its sustainability. Pauline Laing, notable educator and honorary member of Teacher Mentors Abroad, has facilitated this review to clearly define roles for our board and a committee structure that will position us for future expansion while ensuring quality program delivery.
- Addressing human and financial resource needs in this process is paramount through team recruitment and expanding our funding base.
- Daniela Vukobratich, has retired as chair of Communications & Fundraising Committee. Her leadership, quality of communications and direction in launching a new fundraising event has been outstanding. Our sincere thanks. A new chair is being sought.
- A communications platform for exchange of continuous learning resources, ideas and evidence of improvement. Volunteers skilled in communications, and online learning are required.
- Continued integration of Dominican curriculum in program delivery. The Dominican Ministry of Education has extended the school day from ½ day programming to full day for 1.2 million students. Over the coming year another 600,000 students will be in the extended program. Educators stated they feel ill equipped with training or resources to do so and consider TMA's training invaluable in transitioning to a full-day program.

How best to summarize why TMA provides so much promise to those who volunteer? “I cannot begin to express how life altering the whole Dominican experience was for this newbie. Throughout the week I often wondered who was mentoring whom. I was very impressed with every member of the Dominican team. Wow!! What a tribe!!” Joanne Trudel, Thames Valley DSB