

WRITTEN REPORT

Description of the pairing experience

Youth on the Trail of World Heritage – 2019-2020 Edition

This document has to be written by the teachers in collaboration with the contact person of the city administration or needs to be validated by that person.

For the schools sending a scholarship application: this document has to be handed in at the latest on March 13, 2020. If your city and your twin city both apply for the study trip scholarship, one written report is enough, but not mandatory (you can also send one written report per school if you prefer).

For the schools not interested in the scholarship: this document has to be handed in at the latest on May 19, 2020. In that case, it is expected that each school sends its own written report.

1. Give the name of your city, the name of the participating school, the name of the teacher, name of the contact person at the municipal level, the age and number of students.

San Antonio, Texas

East Central High School

Terri Real

Contact Person – Colleen Swain, Director for the City of San Antonio's World Heritage Office

Ages 14-18

53 students

2. Explain in a few words how you heard about this program and why you were interested in it.

Colleen Swain, Director for the City of San Antonio's World Heritage Office, invited East Central High School to apply for Youth on the Trail of Heritage based on a recommendation from Councilwoman Rebecca J. Viagran's office as a result of our previous work with Texas National Parks. The city had received an invitation for a "Twin City" match with the City of Oaxaca, Mexico. We met with Colleen Swain and reviewed the Twin City information. The focus on youth leadership seemed a tremendous opportunity for our district's urban, suburban and rural population to get to know their own city's World

Heritage Site at a deeper level as well as the value of other sites through the study of the site in Oaxaca, Mexico. We applied for the program and were notified of the match with Oaxaca, Mexico on October 25. The site engagement opportunity and the support from San Antonio's World Heritage Office as well as other organizations in the city also align with the goals for our district's community based accountability system which promotes the engagement of students in activities and content of value to our city. San Antonio recently celebrated 300 years of missions' history and deepening our relationship with the San Antonio Missions as a historically significant site as part of the "story of the America's" influenced our project proposal. It is important for all our students to know and value their own city's history and the relevance to our past, present, and future in terms of impact on culture and economics.

3. Describe when you started to exchange virtually with the twin class, how did you make first contact and through which medias you exchanged throughout the program (social medias or other communication tools). Share the group links here.

Instagram Accounts: @worldwidehornets

Twitter: @hornetyrbk @pattykingsway

District Webnews: Tides of Pride (<https://www.ecisd.net/Page/12222>)

Posting: Feb 21, 2020

Description: We established our primary instagram account under "@worldwidehornets" and made the first post on January 14 about our site visit off campus—a nighttime lantern tour of Mission San Jose! The delay in posting was due to the process of establishing the account and name brainstorming/polling by students. We sent two welcome video greetings to our twin city partner in both Spanish and English. There was no response. We had trouble making contact with the Twin City School, we reached out to Colleen Swain who forwarded the status to Andreeanne Charest, the Programs Administrator for the project. In the meantime, we proceeded to establish a list and time-line of activities to learn about our twin partner and the significance of our own site. We met with SAISD's Cast High School since they were also involved in a Twin City project. Tom Castanos NPS education presenter from our San Antonio Missions came to present to the students and even shared some information about the site in Oaxaca and World Heritage Site designations. Students and faculty have posted more than 50 posts on either the @worldwidehornets Instagram account or personal Instagram, Twitter, or

facebook accounts. We are also following other official World Heritage and city accounts.

4. What was the frequency of the virtual exchanges (1 communication per week, per day, etc.)?

Introductory video in Spanish; Podcast, Instagram Worldwide Hornet (14), Hashtags, Hornet Yearbook (6), ECISD Go Public (4)

5. As part of which class did the exchange take place?

The primary classes participating in the exchange were Yearbook, Newspaper, Journalism and Creative Writing. Students from these classes studied, attended presentations, tours, and explored our site while riding the VIA Metropolitan Public Transportation System, biking, hiking, or kayaking to engage with both the historical and modern context of the significance and relevance of our San Antonio Missions. These photos and written reflections were shared with our partner and anyone else who decided to follow us!

6. Make a list of all the activities you did as part of the program, either virtually or in your city, and give a short description for each one of these (what, where, when, how long, etc.).

November 15, 2019 – Introduction to World Heritage Program

Location: World Heritage Office, City of San Antonio

Benefactors: East Central High School's World Heritage Teacher, District

Liaison;

Activities:

- Meeting with Colleen Swain,
- World Heritage Program overview

December 5, 2019 - Women's Lantern Tour & Conversation, Mission San Jose

Location: Mission San Jose National Park

Benefactors: East Central ISD & Floresville ISD Women Participants (Students, Parents, Teachers), East Central High School's World Heritage Teacher, District Liaison, ECISD Federal Programs Director

Activities:

- Mother/Daughter Night
- Tour and presentations by National Park Service Rangers

- Visit with National Park Conservation Association Texas Regional Team and San Antonio Councilwoman, Rebecca J. Viagran
- Participants received a solar lantern gift

January 14, 2020 - National Park Service, Oral Interpretation

Location: East Central High School (ECHS)

Benefactors: ECHS Yearbook/Journalism Students; ECHS World Heritage Teacher, District Liaison

Activities:

- Oral Interpretation by Ranger Tom Castanos, National Park Service
- Topic: What is the NPS definition of Oral Interpretation & How does it impact tourism of Historical Sites?
- Student Projects at SA Missions

January 14, 2020 - SAISD CAST Meeting

Location: San Antonio Fox Tech CAST School

Benefactors: ECHS World Heritage Teacher, District Liaison, ECISD Federal Programs Director

Activities:

- Met Mr. Luis Flores - SAISD CAST World Heritage Teacher
- Introductions and overview of each other's World Heritage partnership.
- Collaborative invitation to join Earth Day, Love Your Mission's Tour, and Constitution Cafe

February 14, 2020 - VIA Love Your Missions!

Locations: Missions: Alamo (San Antonio de Valero), San Jose, Conception, and San Juan

Benefactors: ECHS Students, World Heritage Teacher, GEARUP Coordinators, World Heritage Liaison, Director of Federal Programs, Career Technical Education Teacher

Activities:

- Partnership with VIA & City of San Antonio World Heritage Office
- Park & Ride Services
- Public Transportation Usage Lesson provided by San Antonio VIA.
- Self-guided tours of Alamo (Mission San Antonio de Valero), Mission San Jose, Mission Concepcion, and Mission San Juan.

February 17, 2020 - Espada Park Service Learning Project

Locations: Espada Park/San Antonio River

Benefactors: East Central ISD's Heritage Middle School 8th Graders & ECHS Service Learning Leadership Team, District Liaison, Federal Programs Director

Activites:

- River Clean-up
- Paddling Trails & Kayaking experiences
- Explored Mission Espada Acequia

- Spread awareness about World Heritage Event
- Partnerships by San Antonio River Authority & Texas Parks Wildlife

February 27, 2020 - Mission Trail Bike Ride Sponsored by San Antonio River Authority

Locations: San Antonio River part of Texas Parks and Wildlife “Paddling Trails”, Espada Park, Mission San Juan

Benefactors: ECHS Yearbook/Journalism & GEAR UP students, World Heritage Teacher, District Liaison, and ECISD’s Federal Programs Director

Activities:

- Bike Safety Lesson provided by Michael Gramley with San Antonio River Authority
- Bike ride from Espada Park to Mission San Juan
- Lesson and exploration of the Mission Espada Acequia
- Self-guided Tour of Mission San Juan

March 5, 2020 - Kayak, Birdwatch, Photography @ Mission Reach

Location: Espada Park

Benefactors: ECHS Yearbook/Journalism & GEAR UP students, GEAR UP Coordinators, District Liaison, and ECISD’s Federal Programs Director

Activities:

- Kayaking lesson, boats and safety equipment provided by Michael Gramley with San Antonio River Authority
- Nature Hike and Bird Watching/Calling Lesson with access to pamphlets and binoculars provided by SA River Authority
- Nature Photography
- Kayaking in the San Antonio River; “Paddling Trails”

7. What did the students learn about their World Heritage and the one of their Twin City?

Twin City—Oaxaca, Mexico

Our twin city has two linked sites recognized as the World Heritage site in Oaxaca, Mexico established in 1987.

The Historic Centre of Oaxaca is a 16th century colonial town with a central square, a cathedral and a strict grid building design. It was founded in 1529 and has registered more than 1,200 monuments. In addition to the long history and preservation of this Spanish colonial town, Oaxaca is considered the birthplace of iconic Mexican dishes including seven different types of mole. Students and the community are proud of the historical and cultural significance of the site. Tourists come for the history and what is now viewed as fusion foods built on the roots of recipes from indigenous peoples.

Nearby lies the **Archaeological Site of Monte Alban**, a pre-Columbian ceremonial centre. Dating to 300-900, Monte Alban was a ceremonial center for the Zapotecs during the 9th/10th centuries followed by the Mixtecs in the 11th century. The signs inside Monte Alban are in 3 languages: Spanish, English and Nahuatl. The Nahuatl inclusion on the signage represents the indigenous peoples and the significant role indigenous peoples played historically and continue to influence the area's identity today. Monte Alban is considered the finest example of Zapotec ruins with a collection of ceramics and relics from the Zapotecs, Olmecs and Mixtecs.

Reflections: After visiting with our own National Park Service Rangers, watching the welcome center film, and participating in numerous activities, we made some clear connections with our peers both in San Antonio and in Oaxaca through the content. It seems one of the most important barriers removed in appreciating history through a World Heritage Site designation is the focus on what we call "telling every story" by expanding the stories told to include a variety of ages, backgrounds, heritage and experiences. Our city at one time simply had ruins and women groups raised the awareness and pressure to preserve and restore our missions. The climate, the plants, the people and lives they lived is much broader than we imagined. We love the opportunity to learn with each other and regardless of what grade we are in we see the value of knowing what's in our own backyard and intend to continue to develop a deeper relationship with our site while sharing it with others.

8. How were the virtual exchanges on a linguistic point of view?

East Central offers a dual language program and some of the students volunteered to make the Spanish welcome video. We continued to post information in English to our followers. The email exchanges came with a translator option which was convenient.

Some students had not used the professional cameras prior to the site visits as they were in introductory journalism courses and it was wonderful to see the excitement they had for being mentored and tasting the power of the camera to transcend words through images of the architecture, nature, or humans engaging with the sites. A picture can still tell "1,000 words" in any language.

Topics our students were interested in:

Power of women - leadership and preservation to lead

Power of personal stories told by a variety of perspectives. (Mission Concepcion's portrait display with recorded voices reading the stories was powerful and the "whispers" of voices in the Mission San Jose film was noted by students as connecting them to the teen perspective.)

9. Did the students go further in their conversations than exchanging about the topic of World Heritage? From the very first event to beyond our last event, students have engaged in conversations beyond the topic of World Heritage—which demonstrates the power of a World Heritage designation as related to “universal value.” They were impacted by the power of women leaders in what they saw. Councilwoman Viagran spoke to them as someone who represented our city on the delegation recommending our city’s application for World Heritage Site Status. Councilwoman Viagran lifted up the power of “voice”—she said, “repeat yourself if you are not being heard” and “don’t be afraid to ask a question?” Other topics our youth marveled in through our partnerships with the San Antonio River Authority, Texas Parks & Wildlife recreation activities, and National Parks Conservation Association were: Wellness, Water Quality, fishing, and wildlife habitats. They were surprised and felt special that their night tour guide was the first bilingual Park Ranger hired by NPS for the missions. Students enjoyed mixed grade interactions---they felt more like they represented a community and were exploring a community all at the same time! They felt it was important to document their experiences and wondered how to document their experiences so they could be tied to their future and the future of the city.

10. Give as many other details as you wish to, in order to give a complete summary of your experience. *Please join to this document the work sheets made by the students and any other document (photos, links to blogs, social media pages/groups, etc.) that demonstrate the exchanges between the students, the work and activities done as part of this program.*

Please see our attached Powerpoint. Students chose to combine their photographs with content to summarize our experience. Statements ranged from simple wonder to a sense of purpose including:

I did not realize these activities were in my backyard and that it was as beautiful as it is!

I did not cross the borders! The borders crossed me!

It's your park, it's your mission!

We have an impact on the local, national and global landscape. Every activity I participate in, I recognize I am part of the next generation that leads the story and the narrative.

Students also publicized our events and activities through social media. Samples of postings are included in the powerpoint.