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Melanie Marquez

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Local Teachers Travel to Rural Honduras to Share Education Expertise

(St. Petersburg, Fla.) June 16, 2008 – Local elementary school teachers from Pinellas and Hernando counties traveled to Honduras in June to help enhance educational programs in a rural mountain village. Their trip is in conjunction with Honduras Agalta Valley Education, a non-profit foundation established by local businessman and philanthropist, Gerry Hogan.

Led by Vivian Fueyo, PhD, dean of the College of Education at USF St. Petersburg, the teachers, all graduate students at USF St. Petersburg, spent a week sharing fundamental education practices to a team of teachers in the Agalta Valley of Honduras from June 21-28.

Two teachers from the group are ESOL instructors in Pinellas County and the other is a kindergarten teacher in Hernando County. Each earned three graduate course credits while using their Spanish skills to help the teachers in the Agalta Valley and work with the elementary students in the schools. This trip was the first international opportunity for students in the College of Education.

"The College of Education is excited to be able to offer this international teacher training opportunity in Honduras to its university students," Fueyo said. "We look forward to building a long-lasting partnership between our college and the teachers and students in the Agalta Valley."

Honduras Agalta Valley Education, or HAVE, is volunteers that have worked to improve educational opportunities in the Agalta Valley for more than a decade. Gerry Hogan, one of the foundation’s founding members, invited USF St. Petersburg to partner with him and HAVE to create opportunities for local teachers to earn university credit while participating in international educational outreach. The goal is to expand the program in the future, allowing more local teachers to participate.

"Providing this study abroad opportunity for our students expands the impact of our educational programs in the College of Education in important and meaningful ways," Fueyo said.