



# Amazon Rainforest Workshops

Professional Development Programs

For Review  
Updated: 9.7.17

**PROGRAM:** EDUCATOR ACADEMY IN THE AMAZON RAINFOREST  
**PROGRAM DATES:** JULY 1–11, 2018  
**LOCATION:** IQUITOS, PERU

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Educator Academy in the Amazon Rainforest is a 10-day cross-curricular professional development workshop for educators offering the opportunity to explore one of the world’s most important natural resources – the Amazon rainforest of Peru. Participants will have unparalleled access to all levels of the rainforest, including the rainforest canopy via one of the world’s most extensive canopy walkways. The Educator Academy in the Amazon Rainforest is designed to engage participants in hands-on investigations, citizen science research projects, and inquiry-based learning activities to deepen understanding of the rainforest ecosystem and its global importance. In addition, participants will explore how rainforest concepts relate to 21<sup>st</sup> century instructional models such as 5E lesson design, inquiry-based exploration, STEM education, and other innovative instructional tools such as BirdSleuth K-12, Project Learning Tree, iNaturalist, Vernier LabQuest® 2, Celestron® digital field microscopes, and more. This powerful field experience also incorporates the themes of cultural exchange, service learning, and sustainability in order to provide participants with cross curricular learning experiences to inspire classroom instruction and develop student understanding of the complexities global environmental issues.

**Specialized tracks for elementary, middle school, and HS/AP educators.** Throughout the field program, participants will have ample opportunity to work in grade level cohorts to maximize collaboration and take advantage of different field activities most relevant to their teaching.

<p><b>K-12 Formal &amp; Informal Educators</b> will use their Educator Academy experience to explore the Amazon through the lens of place-based learning, inquiry, STEM, and NGSS. Working with our fantastic Amazon faculty, you'll conduct field research, visit Amazon schools, and learn from indigenous communities. Each day in the field will provide you with new knowledge, innovative ideas and exceptional resources designed to help you build direct connections to your classroom. <b>Cohort Size limited to 15 participants.</b></p>	<p><b>HS, AP/IB, &amp; College Science Educators</b> will use their Educator Academy experience to dive deep into tropical ecology, community-based conservation and sustainable development and make connections directly back to your HS AP/IB and undergraduate environmental science classrooms. You'll work in partnership with the Maijuna - the indigenous group responsible for protecting Peru's newest regional conservation area - as well as field researchers and our superb Amazon faculty. <b>Cohort Size limited to 15 participants.</b></p>
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## PROGRAM CONTACT HOURS

20+ hours of pre-departure preparation via online readings, discussions, and webinars. 50 hours of active participation in daily field activities (including Project Learning Tree, BirdSleuth, and Vernier Software and Technology training) while in the Amazon.

## PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

### Program Directors

**Christa Dillabaugh** - Director, Amazon Rainforest Workshops

Christa has a degree in biology with emphasis in science/environmental education from Purdue University. As a middle school science teacher in Bexley, Ohio, she traveled to one of the first Amazon Rainforest Workshops for Educators in 1993. Nearly every other year since then she has teamed with other science specialists to lead groups of students and teachers in hands-on rainforest field study trips to the tropics. She has also worked as a free-lance science consultant to Pearson Education and Discovery Communications, contributing to curriculum and activity



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guides as well as educator in-service workshops and training materials focusing on STEM and Understanding by Design in the science classroom.

#### **Allen (Al) Stenstrup** - *Former Director of Education Programs for Project Learning Tree*

Al has more than 35 years of experience in the field of education. As Director of Education Programs for Project Learning Tree (PLT), Al directed the development and implementation of PLT's curriculum materials across the country and internationally with PLT state coordinators and other partners. Al recently published a book *Diminishing Resources – Forests* that highlights the planet's changing forests and what people are doing to manage this resource. In 2010, he received the award Outstanding Service to Environmental Education at the Global Level from the North American Association for Environmental Education for his work in 18 countries across the world.

#### **Program Faculty**

#### **Kelly Keena, PhD** – *Blue Lotus Consulting and Evaluation*

Kelly is the co-founder of Blue Lotus Consulting & Evaluation; a small firm focusing on supporting programs that engage people through the environment. Kelly's background includes field work and administration in environmental education, international study of cultural geography and the environment, formal classroom work as a licensed science teacher and instructional coach, two honorarium faculty positions working with pre-service teachers in science methods of instruction, and research regarding children's connection to nature in green schoolyards using participatory research methods.

#### **Stephen (Steve) Madigosky, EdD** - *Professor of Biology & Environmental Science at Widener University*

In addition to his academic teaching at Widener, Steve is also Director of Research at the Amazon Conservatory of Tropical Studies (ACTS) in Iquitos, Peru. Aspects of tropical biology and conservation have been his focus for nearly two decades. As a researcher, he has been investigating the biochemical dynamics of select compounds in tropical plants and animals. The crux of his work centers on understanding how organisms obtain chemical protection from their diets. In addition, Steve is conducting a long term study and detailed climatic profile of the forest layers surrounding the ACTS field station. Also active in science education, he has obtained nearly one million dollars in grants over the past decade to support educational programs to increase science literacy among K-16 teachers and students.

#### **Randy Morgan** - *Curator Emeritus of Invertebrates for the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden*

Randy holds an M.S. in entomology from the University of Wisconsin and his work managing a Leaf-Cutting Ant Colony earned the Zoo a Significant Achievement Award issued by the American Zoo and Aquarium Association. This recognition was preceded by other awards in 1999 for Bullet Ants, in 2000 for the long-term propagation of the Peruvian Fire Stick, and two in 2001 for the long-term propagation and captive management of the Giant Water Bug. While regularly serving as faculty during Amazon Rainforest Workshops since 1991, Randy also led the JASON XV team of scientists in February, 2003 during their Rainforests at the Crossroads expedition to Panama and served as a JASON X researcher in the Amazon in March, 1999.

#### **Kristie Reddick and Jessica Honaker** - *Entomologists and Science Communicators, The Bug Chicks*

Kristie and Jessica are entomologists who teach about the fascinating world of insects, spider and their relatives. Through videos, digital media and in-person appearances they inspire people to open their minds and learn about these often-maligned animals. Their drive to create fun, accurate science media has led them to work with some amazing organizations: the U.S. Forest Service, Norman Borlaug Institute of International Agriculture, and National Ag Science Center, Microsoft and many more! They inspire people to be brave and realize that different isn't bad. In this vein, they use bugs to teach about prejudice and racism and reaching your full potential.

#### **Nancy Trautmann, PhD** - *Director of Education, Cornell Lab of Ornithology*

Under Nancy's leadership, the Education Program at the Lab creates resources and opportunities that aim to



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inspire people of all ages to care about birds and the critical issues facing our environment today. The BirdSleuth Habitat Connections curriculum is one of the resources produced by this team. Nancy's interests center on curriculum development, teacher professional development, and interactive online learning opportunities that help people build closer connections with nature, learn about birds and the natural world, and participate in citizen science and conservation action. Curricula she has published include *Birds Without Borders* (Carte Diem Press); *Citizen Science*, *Decay & Renewal*, *Assessing Toxic Risk*, *Invasion Ecology*, and *Watershed Dynamics* (National Science Teachers Association), *Biodiversity: The Keystone to Life on Earth* (California Education and the Environment Initiative); and *Composting in the Classroom* (Kendall Hunt).

### Cohort Leaders

#### **K-12 Formal & Informal Educators**

**Kirsten Franklin**, *Science and Environmental Educator, Petaluma City Schools, Petaluma, CA*

Kirsten has been an elementary educator for 30 years with experience teaching the first through sixth grades. In addition to teaching in California, Kirsten was a Fulbright exchange teacher to Scotland in 2006 and taught ESL to primary students in the Galapagos in the summer of 2008. From 2013-16, she was a teacher on special assignment supporting elementary science and the common core in the Petaluma City Schools. During that time she joined the Educator Academy in the Amazon with a cohort of colleagues. Her responsibilities included working with lead teachers participating in BaySci; a consortium of San Francisco Bay Area school districts that works with the Lawrence Hall of Science and the Exploratorium to promote quality science instruction. Two years ago, Kirsten applied to a pilot program to support districts in developing K-12 Environmental Literacy. Her district is now working with ChangeScale, an environmental education support organization, to create an articulated environmental literacy continuum over the next two years. Finally, Kirsten has been able to share her passion for project-based learning as one of the Nexus instructors at Sonoma State University's summer PBL workshop for teachers for the past four summers. Kirsten is now back in the classroom as a fourth grade teacher utilizing strong partnerships with several environmental education providers to provide a place-based approach for teaching science and environmental literacy.

#### **HS, AP/IB, & College Science Educators**

**Laura Branch and Rebecca Wingerden**, *Science Educators, Santa Maria School District, Santa Maria, CA*

Laura and Rebecca are science teachers at Ernest Righetti High School in Santa Maria, California. They both have participated in the Educator Academy in the Amazon with Amazon Rainforest Workshops/EcoTeach and are currently implementing an Environmental Resources Pathway at their high school. Rebecca has a B.S. and an M.S. in Biology. She has written EcoDatum, a data logging APP that students use to collect data for projects in their school's CTE Environmental Resources Pathway. Laura Branch has a B.S. in Geology and an M.Ed in Education. She has written numerous curriculum grants and was the 2016 NAGT Earth Science Teacher of the Year. Both Laura and Becca love writing curriculum and are currently involved in the coordination of the HS, AP/IB & College Science Educators cohort for the Educator Academy in the Amazon. Together these science teachers have planned multiple citizen science projects for their respective classes (including AP, L2 levels) and have become proficient in teaching water quality testing with both Vernier probeware and using testtubs. Both are proficient in soil testing, too. Both are well-versed in the Next Generation Science Standards and have worked tirelessly to align their curriculum to become NGSS compliant.

### **PROGRAM RATIONALE**

The future of our planet depends on our youth becoming concerned scientists, responsible environmental policy makers and informed global citizens. Knowledge and skills in science are paramount. How do we nurture this next generation to appreciate the role of science in addressing local as well as global problems related to climate change, sustainable development, and resource conservation? Teachers and teacher educators alike need to *participate* in science themselves in order to incorporate science methods in their classrooms. They need to *use* inquiry-based techniques in order to guide students in the tools and skills of research. They need to *experience* critical ecosystems, such as the rainforest, in order to teach about their importance to global health.



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The Educator Academy in the Amazon Rainforest addresses these concerns by involving scientists who collaborate with teacher educators and naturalist guides and engage participants in hands-on investigations, citizen science research projects, and inquiry based learning activities. These authentic learning experiences are set in the upper Amazon basin of northern Peru, where the intensely rich rainforest environment, simplicity of human life, and local economic challenges are easily observable as part of one intact, interrelated system. The Educator Academy in the Amazon Rainforest uses the rainforest setting to model the importance of using authentic life experiences to teach science. The field activities are led by a professional staff, focus on core standards, and incorporate many innovative educational programs, protocols, and tools such as BirdSleuth's Investigating Evidence & Birds without Borders, Project Learning Tree's Forests of the World, iNaturalist, Vernier® Software and Technology, and more.

## PROGRAM GOALS

The Educator Academy in the Amazon Rainforest professional development program offers participants the opportunity to experience the Amazon rainforest as a compelling context for developing a global perspective, understanding sustainability and learning about the key elements of inquiry-based learning, STEM learning, place-based education, and national curriculum standards and curricula to better meet the needs of a changing society and an increasingly diverse student population. **Each grade level cohort will address the following program goals through individualized experiences and facilitation while in the field.**

1. *Experience the Amazon rainforest to develop a global perspective of the richness and interconnectedness of societies, cultures, and environments as well as an awareness of personal commitments needed to sustain them.*
2. *Deepen understanding about the rainforest system and its global importance through learning opportunities which allow participants to engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate the rainforest system and associated issues.*
3. *Apply an inquiry-based exploration model as a powerful way of learning and knowing about the rainforest, one's local environment, and the world.*
4. *Develop an understanding of how citizen science projects and hands on field studies promote an appreciation for the role of science in understanding and sustaining the rainforest, one's local environment, and the world.*
5. *Explore how the tools and protocols of scientific exploration as well as innovative science education resources can be used to deepen knowledge and understanding about the rainforest ecosystem, one's local environment and the world.*
6. *Explore how the application of an integrated STEM approach to problem solving can be used to investigate rainforest topics and find sustainable solutions to issues in the rainforest, one's local environment, and the world.*
7. *Develop an appreciation for the complexities of sustainability and the role of science in sustainability education in the Amazon and in one's local community.*
8. *Explore strategies and methods for using a global learning experience in the Amazon as a vehicle for incorporating STEM education, inquiry-based learning, and sustainability science education which address national curriculum standards in formal and non-formal learning environments.*



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## PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

### Pre-Assessment Tasks:

- *Participants will complete a survey which will assess their background knowledge about and attitude toward rainforest and education related topics.*

### Formative Assessment Tasks:

- *Round Table Discussions will be facilitated by course instructors and are designed to help participants process daily activities and learn from one another.*
- *Small groups will use guided questions, concept maps, and other tools to share what they are learning and discuss applications and connections to their classrooms, communities, and local environments.*

### Summative Assessment Tasks:

- *Participants will work in teams to create a group proposal for incorporating a citizen science/service learning project into their classroom instruction as a vehicle for meeting local, state, and/or national curriculum standards.*

### Post-Assessment Tasks:

- *Participants will develop and share standards-based strategies and tools for sharing the Amazon experience with their students, colleagues, and communities.*
- *Participants will complete a program evaluation designed to assess changes in knowledge and attitudes as a result of participating in the Educator Academy in the Amazon Rainforest.*

## PROGRAM FORMAT

### Pre-Departure:

The rainforest is an exciting and dynamic learning environment and in order to take full advantage the opportunities available through the educator Academy in the Amazon Rainforest, participants will be provided with key background information, readings, and reflection activities prior to departure. These resources are carefully constructed to build requisite background knowledge and will be delivered in a variety of ways including print and web-based resources. In addition, participants will engage in web-based community building activities and discussions to make connections with fellow participants prior to arrival in the Amazon. In addition, in order to maximize our training time in the field, introductions to BirdSleuth, Project Learning Tree Forests of the World, Vernier LabQuest® 2 data collection and other resources will also be introduced prior to departure. Pre-departure preparation is a crucial element in creating an exciting and vibrant learning community. All participants are expected to take full advantage of the resources provided, complete pre-departure readings, and contribute to online interactions.

### In the Field

The field component of the Educator Academy in the Amazon Rainforest professional development takes full advantage of the learning resources only the Amazon can provide – amazing biodiversity, complex ecosystem structure, indigenous cultures, and a global learning environment.

Each day offers new learning opportunities and is broken into morning and afternoon sessions. Sessions last three hours and include an introduction to the subject, a field experience in the rainforest or Amazon community, and a guided reflection activity. In addition, classroom connections will be highlighted and explored via training sessions provided by BirdSleuth, Project Learning Tree, Vernier Software and Technology, and Amazon faculty. Field sessions are designed to actively engage participants via guided natural history explorations, inquiry-based learning activities, citizen science research projects, cultural explorations, village service projects, data collection, and more. Incorporated into each session are activities in which participants will deepen their understanding of best practices in inquiry-based learning, sustainability science, and STEM education. Sessions are limited in size, so there is an



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opportunity for interaction and one-on-one instruction. Daily sessions are facilitated by course instructors, guest faculty and researchers, and local naturalist guides.

Throughout the program, grade level cohort content and connections will be woven into each of the field workshops. [Please see website for additional information pertaining to the grade level cohorts.](#)

The following is a **tentative** list of workshops and associated topics planned for the 2018 Educator Academy

Session Title	Rainforest Connections	Education Connections / Resources
<b>Welcome to the Amazon – Life Below the Equator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Developing a sense of place</i></li> <li>◦ <i>People, places, and culture</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Inquiry</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Global Perspectives</i></li> </ul>
<b>The Mighty Amazon - It's More than a Forest or a River, It's a Watershed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Geography of the Amazon River</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Amazon river system</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Amazon Ecosystems</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Deforestation and habitat loss</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Inquiry</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Global Perspectives</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Geography</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Project Learning Tree</i></li> </ul>
<b>Habitat Connections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Amazon habitats and ecosystems</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Amazon biodiversity</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Amazon birds</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Amazon arthropods</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Inquiry</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Global Perspectives</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Geography</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Cornell Lab of Ornithology</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Citizen Science</i></li> <li>◦ <i>The Bug Chicks &amp; Celestron®</i></li> </ul>
<b>Intro to Inquiry – What Makes a Rainforest a Rainforest?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Rainforest structure &amp; function</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Rainforest climate</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Neotropical biodiversity</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>5 E Inquiry Model</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Project Learning Tree</i></li> <li>◦ <i>BirdSleuth</i></li> <li>◦ <i>iNaturalist</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Vernier LabQuest® 2</i></li> <li>◦ <i>The Bug Chicks &amp; Celestron®</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Biocubes</i></li> </ul>
<b>Inquiry and Field Investigations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Rainforest structure &amp; function</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Rainforest climate</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Neotropical biodiversity</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Inquiry and Investigation</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Asking good questions</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Field Studies</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Vernier LabQuest® 2</i></li> <li>◦ <i>The Bug Chicks &amp; Celestron®</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Biocubes</i></li> </ul>
<b>Amazon Biodiversity – Secret Lives and Complex Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>cooperation and competition</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Plant adaptations &amp; herbivory</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Medicinal plants</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>5 E Inquiry Model</i></li> <li>◦ <i>iNaturalist</i></li> <li>◦ <i>BirdSleuth</i></li> <li>◦ <i>The Bug Chicks &amp; Celestron®</i></li> </ul>
<b>The Rainforest Canopy – Where all the ACTION Is</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Amazon Conservatory for Tropical Studies (ACTS)</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Canopy ecology and research</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>STEM</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Project Learning Tree</i></li> <li>◦ <i>BirdSleuth</i></li> <li>◦ <i>iNaturalist</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Vernier LabQuest® 2</i></li> <li>◦ <i>The Bug Chicks &amp; Celestron®</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Biocubes</i></li> </ul>
<b>The Amazon and Climate– What's the Connection?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Microclimates in a rainforest</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Climate change and the Amazon</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>STEM</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Inquiry and Investigation</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Engineering Design</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Vernier LabQuest® 2</i></li> </ul>



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<b>Research in the Rainforest: Trade your Lab Coat for a Rain Poncho</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Tools and protocols of field research</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Citizen science in the rainforest</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>STEM</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Project Learning Tree</i></li> <li>◦ <i>BirdSleuth</i></li> <li>◦ Vernier LabQuest® 2</li> <li>◦ <i>The Bug Chicks &amp; Celestron®</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Biocubes</i></li> </ul>
<b>Have you touched a rainforest today?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Neotropical biodiversity</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Rainforest resources</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Sustainable development</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Global Perspectives</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>(K-12 Formal &amp; Informal Educators)</b>  <b>Traditional use Rainforest Resources:</b> What the Yagua can teach us about the history of indigenous community and culture in the Amazon</p> <p><b>-OR-</b>  <b>(High School and/or AP Science)</b>  <b>Managing Paradise:</b> What the Maijuna can teach us about current conservation and sustainable development in the Amazon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Indigenous people and culture</i></li> <li>◦ <i>indigenous use of rainforest resources</i></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>indigenous people and traditions</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Conservation</i></li> <li>◦ <i>sustainable harvesting of rainforest Resources</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Culture and Community</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Global Perspectives</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Service</i></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>Culture and Community</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Sustainability &amp; Conservation</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Global Perspectives</i></li> <li>◦ <i>Service</i></li> <li>◦ Vernier LabQuest® 2</li> </ul>

## PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS/RESPONSIBILITIES

The Educator Academy in the Amazon Rainforest is an extraordinary professional development opportunity. In order to create a rich, rewarding, and maximized learning experience for *all*, it is imperative that each participant understands their *individual* role in the achievement of this goal. Participants are expected to:

- review and respond to all pre-departure readings and activities.
- share and apply what they learn pre-departure during the field experience.
- be positive, active, engaged team members before, during, and after, the Amazon field experience.

## REQUIRED READINGS/MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT

The majority of course readings and assignments will be available on-line via our virtual Academy Classroom. Participants will have access to these materials upon the receipt of their registration form and deposit. On-line discussions related to the background readings and program pedagogy/instructional practices will begin approximately 6 weeks prior to departure.

A comprehensive optional/suggested reading list will also be provided to participants upon registration. A recommended list of field equipment/supplies will also be supplied prior to departure.

## PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

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## FEES & REGISTRATION DETAILS

<http://amazonworkshops.com/educator-academy/>

## SCHOLARSHIP & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

<http://amazonworkshops.com/scholarships-funding/>

## REFLECTIONS FROM EDUCATOR ACADEMY ALUMNI

*"After 20 years in the educational field, this was the best professional development program I have ever participated in. As I reflect, I compare it to the workings of a balanced ecosystem. A program of excellent design, instructors with effective niches, diverse teachers with similar interests, and total immersion in the Amazon Rainforest environment...these components created interrelationships that benefited each other, and will sustain themselves for a long time. I feel grateful to have shared this experience of a lifetime with a set of dynamic, inspiring teachers from across the country." – Judy Graziano, Edgar Middle School, NJ*

*"Amazing. I had high expectations, but overall this experience surpassed them on so many levels. The combination of the people involved, the organization and structure, and one of the most astounding places on Earth made this incredible." – Joan Bachynsky, Cristo Rey High School, NY*

*"Every component of the academy can be integrated into my classroom, my curriculum and my teaching philosophy. The faculty provided high quality experiences and resources to help me do this! Most professional development programs regurgitate the same resources, strategies and ideas without much inspiration. They lack the ability to connect the content to our lives! This program not only provided a life changing experience, they provided the human connection to that content. It provided the answer to, "Why should I care? What can I do? How can I get others involved?" The best program I have EVER had the privilege of attending!" – Melissa Jordan, Sarah Scott Middle School, Terra Haute, IN*

*"I left feeling inspired, renewed, and excited about what I will share with my students and peers. I was learning every hour of the day and evening. Not a minute of this trip was wasted. It was run by people who really know what they are doing and have spent a considerable amount of time planning and perfecting the trip. The faculty and guides were all very friendly, professional, and very knowledgeable, each an expert in their field and very willing to share their knowledge." – Jenny Murphy, Sullivan Middle School, Lowell, MA*

*"This has been the best professional development program I have ever participated in. The workshop was way more than just an awesome Amazon adventure. The teachers became part of a close knit team which have been encouraged to continue to collaborate long after the workshop ends. Together with the quality staff presentations, shared experiences, hands-on activities, long term online resources, and the comradery of our group members, I am confident I will be able to share what I have learned with my students. Further more I feel that I have what I need to continue to learn." – Phil Kahler, Tualatin Valley Academy, Forest Grove, OR*