

Science in Action: 9-12 Science Education within the University Infrastructure Fosters Effective Project-Based Learning

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Thanks to the C-MORE GEMS award, I was afforded the opportunity to join my co-authors at the 2014 Ocean Sciences Meeting in Honolulu, Hawai‘i, where we presented a poster (Poster ID: 1629) that showcased our work in STEM education (Abstract ID: 17377; Rii et al.). Our poster described a two-week course that was developed and delivered on C-MORE’s behalf, *Marine Microbiological Mysteries*, for the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Outreach College’s inaugural *Science in Action* 2013 summer program for high school students. Our poster also described the effectiveness of this course, as determined through pre- and post-surveys. In brief, it was apparent that hands-on learning, made possible by access to university-level personnel and facilities, elevated the students’ outlook on science, fostering their interest in pursuing STEM careers.

Our poster was presented in Session 045 – *Sea-ing connections: Ocean science as catalyst to inspire next wave of (preK-16) scientists & keep students engaged within and outside the classroom*. This put us in close proximity with other presenters sharing similar interests and goals, which really helped to promote stimulating and productive discourse. Among the most noteworthy of these was a presenter sharing details of an oceanography camp for teen-aged girls held through the University of South Florida. It was really interesting to learn how they used the Deepwater Horizon oil spill catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico as a catalyst to spark engagement in learning standards-based concepts among the youth of the Gulf Coast. Learning of the different types of inquiry- and place-based curricula was of course very fascinating, but it was also beneficial to learn of program logistics, such as modes of funding, advertisement and selection processes.

Utilizing my one-day registration to its fullest, I also attended some very pertinent oral sessions. In addition to talks given in Session 045, I found some presentations in Session 097 – *Breaking boundaries: The role of science communication and outreach in promoting healthy oceans* to be of high personal value. As a science educator, I am keen on the challenging art of effective and sound science communication. Mahalo nui C-MORE GEMS!

