Grantee Name: Dr. Lynette K. Henderson

Title of Project: A River Runs Through It: Art, Geology and Life on the Mississippi

Grantee Name: Dr. Lynette K. Henderson

City, State: Northridge, CA

Grant Period: July 2011 – June 2012

NAEF Grant Amount: $2285.00 (Mary McMullan)

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Project Description:
This project for middle-school students is a model for interdisciplinary curriculum: including visual literacy, studio art, English-language literacy, geology and indigenous groups that lived on the Mississippi river. The location is in the upper Midwest, specifically along the river bluffs of St. Paul, Minnesota. Fourteen Students from Andersen United Community School examined the river banks and bluffs, the Indian mound sites including excavated material; visited the Science Museum of Minnesota and the Minneapolis Institute of Art; took photographs, created mixed-media art, and wrote about their experiences and findings. A main concept was to examine past and present immigrant life in that region through this interdisciplinary curriculum. The researcher functioned as one of four participating teachers, project supervisor and observer.

Project Goals and Objectives:
1. Conduct a collaborative model curriculum project with participating teachers and their students on integrating the arts into their language and social studies curriculum.
2. Engage ESL middle-school students in museum experiences as lessons on art, geology, and social studies.
3. Utilize and apply documentary photography skills, 2D and mixed-media studio skills in art, geology and social studies lessons related to the Mississippi river and its indigenous peoples.
4. Utilize and apply writing skills in students’ written narratives of experiences and research on art, geology and the lives of indigenous peoples on the Mississippi river.
5. Disseminate findings through exhibition and writing.

Description of Activities Supported by this Grant.
1. Conduct a collaborative model curriculum project with participating teachers and their students on integrating the arts into their language and social studies curriculum.
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2011-1012 Featured Grantee Summary

Caption: A River Runs Through It Project Participants: Middle-schoolers and ESL Teacher

Results, Lessons Learned: Participants were English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Title I middle-schoolers, from Mexico, Nepal and Tanzania, to name a few. We took field trips to the Science Museum, the Indian Mounds and the River bluffs. Benefits of this Project: Teachers observed methods and products of incorporating art into the general curriculum. Student experienced art history, geographical and cultural history, technology and studio art in this interdisciplinary project. Project Limitations: A 15-week semester, or a whole school year would be ideal. More time focused on: formal skill-building, 3D, anatomy, painting, finishing and detailing; cameras for practice photos, time for critique and revision, all would be ideal. An extended version can include contemporary social issues.

Impact of Receiving this Grant: This grant enabled me to work with non-art teachers, an interdisciplinary curriculum, and a group of students who had not been to museums, used cameras or photo programs, and who had minimal art instruction. I presented findings at the NAEA conference in 2013, utilize aspects of this curriculum in my Children’s Art course with the very diverse student body at CSUN, and will be publishing results of this middle-school project.

Grantee Biography: Dr. Henderson has a BFA, MFA and PhD in curriculum and instruction, and has worked with multi- and cross-cultural art education since the early 1990s, focusing on integration of sociocultural contexts and social history with art education. She has worked with PreK-12 teachers, school groups, community organizations, museums and currently as a teacher educator in higher education. Trained at an art school and two large universities, she has a comprehensive perspective on visual art education in the US. Publication topics include integrating visual art with social studies, contemporary social problems, global economy and the human figure; and teaching Southeast Asian art. An Associate Professor at California State University, Northridge, CSUN’s program emphasizes conceptual and formal excellence combined with art as a powerful form of communication.

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