



University of San Francisco
School of Education

Project Learn Belize UPDATE

June 2008



Project Learn Belize: Teacher to Teacher Exchange continued in June, 2008, as Dr. Yvonne Bui, associate professor in SOE's Department of Learning & Instruction, along with three recent USF master's graduates in Special Education (Elias Barlow, Mary Busby, & Robin Irely), traveled with Dr. Dillon, the Project's director, to Sacred Heart Primary School in Dangriga.

The four specialists provided a full week of teacher in-service training, focused on students with learning disabilities, for thirty-two Sacred Heart staff



and faculty. The "team" administered over forty individual student assessments for children identified by their teachers with potential special needs. In addition to daily workshops, the USF group engaged in classroom observations and demonstrations of differentiated instruction. In between all of these activities, they found time to work with students at *Stella Maris*, the school's special unit for children with moderate to severe learning disabilities.



During this trip, Dr. Susan Prion, faculty member in the School of Nursing, met with local medical officials at the regional hospital to further clarify opportunities for a joint partnership of School of Nursing undergraduate and graduates students with *Project Learn Belize* during 2008-09. This was the second phase of planning begun by Dr. Judith Karshmer, Dean of the School of Nursing, when she visited Dangriga last January. Students of the School of Nursing will not only assist at the local hospital and clinics, but also implement the national health curriculum at Sacred Heart School.

Finally, *Project Learn Belize* expanded its understanding of "benefactor" to include the contributed services of a volunteer who joined the others for the June trip. Mr. Lawrence King, a friend of Dr. Dillon from Seattle, spent two weeks doing major repairs at the school. From a rewired school



bell to the reconfiguration of space for the anticipated renovations of the school kitchen, "Mr. Big Man", as he came to be called by the school children, poured his talents and heart into anything that needed attention. Most notably, he designed and constructed much-needed storage cabinets outside the principal's office. Leaving all of the tools he had brought was Mr. King's final gift to the school.



Once again, *Project Learn Belize* is indebted to its benefactors for their financial support of this on-going work in Dangriga. Additional funding for this June trip was provided by the Jesuit Community at USF and a USF Jesuit Foundation Grant.