



# Nurses Crossing Disciplines and Borders: A Participatory Research Approach to Global Water Challenges

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# Disclosures

- Vicki Simpson, Assistant Professor, Purdue University School of Nursing, vsimpson@purdue.edu
- Author declares no conflict of interest.
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# Learner Objectives

- Describe an ongoing project to provide access to safe water and improved sanitation and hygiene for rural underserved areas of the Dominican Republic
- Delineate the contributions and roles of nurses as part of a cross-disciplinary team in addressing complex global challenges



# Global Health Challenges

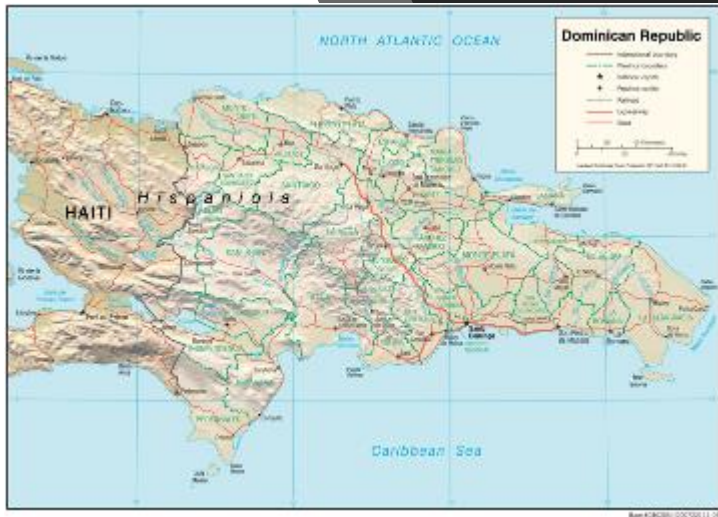


# Relevance for Nurses and Other Professionals



- Long-term international service-learning projects and travel for students impacts them, their views, and their future path
- Global service-learning experiences support the development of civic and intercultural knowledge and competence- deemed essential by the Association of American Colleges and Universities

# Project History



- Started summer of 2012
  - Focus upon provision of access to safe water for drinking
- Initially funded by an EPA P3 Grant
- Supported by Aqua Clara International and the Rotary Club of Las Canas
- Students and faculty from several disciplines (graduate and undergraduate)
  - Civil and Environmental and Ecological Engineering
  - Nursing
  - Agricultural Economics
  - Biological and Food Sciences

# Class Structure and Activities

- Variable 1-2 credit course
- Student-led
  - Develop system designs, educational materials, surveys
  - Set agendas
  - Write grants
  - Communicate with the community
  - Learn Spanish
- Weekly class meetings
- Sub-group meetings





# Initial Site-Las Canas

- Rural Community near Santiago
- Approximately 300 families
- Ana Julia Diaz Primary School



# Ana Julia Diaz System

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- Visits
  - March 2013
    - Meet community
    - Complete household surveys
    - Visit clinics
  - May 2013
    - Select site
    - Develop governance group
    - Select water source
    - Meet with teachers
    - Design strategies
  - April 2014
    - Finalize plans
  - June 2014
    - Build system





*Celebrate!*

# May 2015

- Check status of Las Canas system
  - Re-educate
  - Re-evaluate
  - Re-design
- Preliminary meetings with surrounding communities



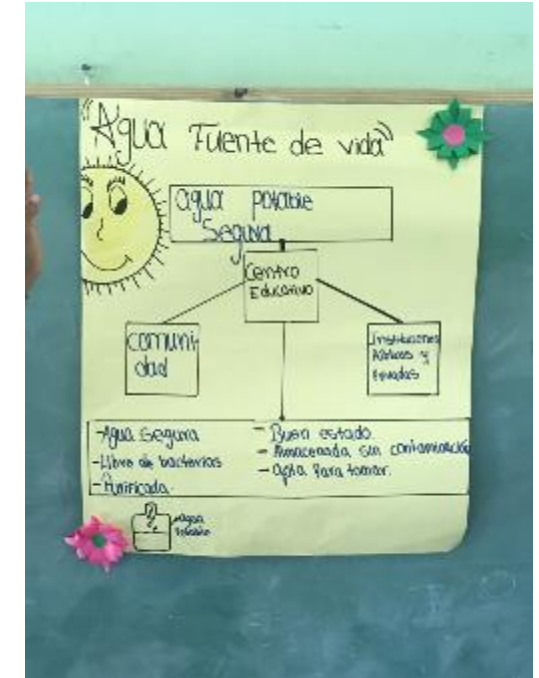


- Meetings to redesign existing system in Las Canas
- Meetings with six new nearby communities
  - Teachers
  - Community members
  - Rotary
  - Health clinic staff
  - Community health workers

May 2016

# May 2017

- Las Canas system re-designed
- Development of system management protocols
- Education about public health, hygiene and safe water
- Visits to:
  - El Torre
  - El Mamey
  - Los Peladeros
    - Community and student leadership groups developed



# Benefits

## Students and Faculty

- Gained an appreciation for the roles of multiple disciplines necessary for success
- Liked fact that it was a real world problem, not an “imagine-if”
- Saw “aspects of poverty” never seen before
- “Richest experience of my college years”
- Community “embraced the students”
- Increased respect and humility for differing cultures

## Community

- Improved water supply
- Sense of ownership
- Increased knowledge of relationship between water and health
- Empowerment
- Decreased water-related illnesses



# Challenges

- Communication
- Funding
- Cultural Differences
- Power Differences
- Sustaining Initiative
- Chikungunya/Zika



# Cultural Impacts



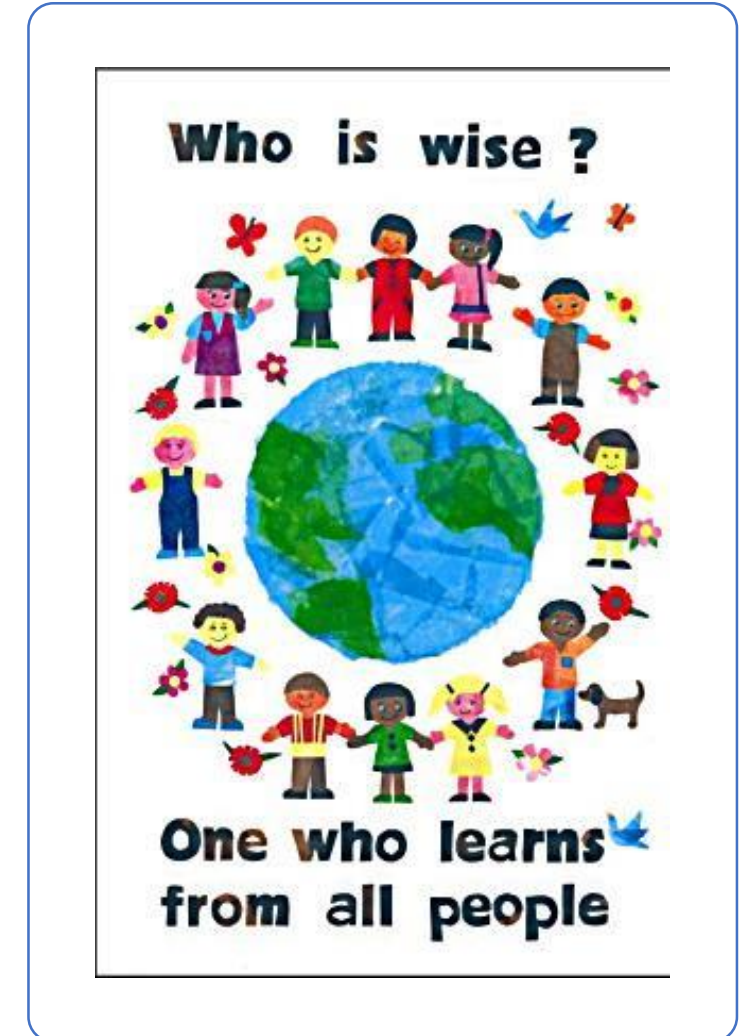


# “The Stranger’s Eyes”



# Core Cultural Values and Mapping Exercise

- Monochronic vs Polychronic Time
- Individualism vs Collectivism
- Equality vs Hierarchy



# Perceptions

*“While I was working in the Dominican Republic, I witnessed something completely different than what I am used to seeing. People did not just show up somewhere, take care of business, and leave. They caught up, engaged in conversation about how each other were doing, shared laughs, and overall just enjoyed each other’s presence. They did not use the clock as a reason to neglect their relationships with others. Instead, they spent that time building relationships and partnerships. Observing this change in the way people prioritize their time to put other people above business immensely impacted me. It showed me that at the end of the day, degrees and loaded resumes are essentially meaningless. Yes, it is important to do things in life that align with your passions and to help others, but we must never neglect our personal relationships in the process. This is especially true while working on our water project since relationship building is such a critical component of the project. All in all, in the end when all is said and done, those relationships will be the things that provide us comfort and peace of mind in knowing that we left an impact.”*

# What creates success?

- Commitment
- Communication
- Understanding
- Respect
- Cultural Competence
- Interdisciplinary Approach

• **RELATIONSHIPS!!!!**



Thank you!

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