

Georgia Southern University

From Place to People: A Collaborative Inquiry-Based Teacher Training in Social Studies

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From Place to People, a partnership between Georgia Southern University Departments of Education and History, the Botanic Garden, LEA Emanuel County Schools, and others, continues a popular and effective program that meets the extensive need for social studies training for Grades 1-5 teachers. Project goals include increasing content knowledge and increasing skill in active, inquiry-based teaching in social studies. The project offers a 3 PLU workshop for teachers of Grades 1-5 based on grade specific, GPS/GSE targeted units. Each grade's curriculum is structured around an engaging simulation, such as designing an historical park or creating a promotional campaign for national treasures. Throughout each simulation, students seek out and apply information, thereby improving their knowledge of social studies content and processes. Through three-day workshops, teachers experience curriculum units and receive content instruction, learn inquiry-based teaching strategies, and learn to find and share information through technology. The project then employs southeast Georgia's rich history as a case study for teaching economics, culture and government. Class trips to the Garden's longleaf forest, agriculture displays, one-room schoolhouse, and Rural Life Museum teach grade-specific content including Native Americans, the Colonial period, the Civil War, Reconstruction, the Depression, and many contemporary issues. During these trips, teachers learn strategies for teaching GPS/GSE standards in real world, local applications. The project has been successful in previous years, and demonstrates significant gains in content understanding and enthusiasm for both the curriculum and teaching strategies and their effectiveness at teaching GPS/GSE.

Arts & Sciences Unit of Institute of Higher Education
Georgia Southern University—Department of History

Unit of Institute of Higher Education that prepares teachers & principals
Georgia Southern University—College of Education

High Need LEA(s)
Emanuel County