

Science outreach international: The Belize Adventure

When an opportunity came up to go to Belize in Central America to work with a large commercial shrimp farm Professor Robin Cooper in Department of Biology jumped at the chance and took along a mindset of maintaining the bridge with outreaching efforts with UK.

The shrimp farm needed help with documentation of physiological parameters addressing an issue in processing shrimp in the most rapid less stressful manner. Cooper did not want payment as he wanted the studies to be a research project so that he could potentially publish the results at a later date. So instead of financial payments, he negotiated with the farm to hold science teacher workshop with their local high school science teachers on the shrimp farm, to continue Cooper's passion for science outreaching. The Shrimp Farm bought the teachers' equipment (back yard brain kits) they could take back to their classrooms to work with their students.

At University of Kentucky, Cooper maintains outreaching efforts for the university as a whole, the Neurosciences Program (hot link <https://neuroscience.as.uky.edu/ns-major>), the Center of Muscle Biology (hot link <https://www.uky.edu/chs/muscle-leadership>), and Human Health Sciences around the Commonwealth of Kentucky and has been working Internationally with on line interactive learning for the past several years. Last year, Cooper creatively used undergraduate classes to work on data sets and interact with students in Erbil, Iraq. Now, he can add high school students and their teachers in Belize as part of the international community he is building in connecting UK's undergraduates and graduate students to the internal efforts. He hopes soon to bridge Kentucky's high school students with high school students in international places and have undergraduates involved in mentoring classes as a part of learning how to mentor and engage students in science education. So the "World Wide Science Talk" (hot link- <https://sites.google.com/site/sciencetalkworldwide/>) and having UK students involvement in Citizen Science Projects (hot link- <http://web.as.uky.edu/Biology/faculty/cooper/Citizen%20Science%20folder/CitizenScienceProjectPage.htm>) of these self-created programs of Cooper's continues to grow.



