

## Teach the Teachers Program

Katie Yaun, a new UVMIM volunteer, has been visiting for the past 10 days, meeting neighbors and people she'll be working with, and scouting out the area in advance of her long-term move here in several more weeks. Katie will be working with Misión Fronteras for about 9 months, launching and directing the new Teach the Teachers Program to improve English language skills throughout the region.



As you may recall from the last newsletter, local folks here are very keen to learn English. Ryan Kolegas, a friend and volunteer from the States, taught English for five months last year in a small rural school near Copacabana. Other teachers and school directors learned about that. They – and the mayor of Copa -- wanted to know when Misión Fronteras would be providing volunteer English teachers for *all* the grade schools and high schools in the entire peninsula!



Clearly, the mission can't afford to do that. But we figured we might be able to maximize resources – and impact -- with a teach-the-teachers program. Less than a day after coming up with the concept, we learned of Katie's interest in teaching English here: a heaven-sent match!



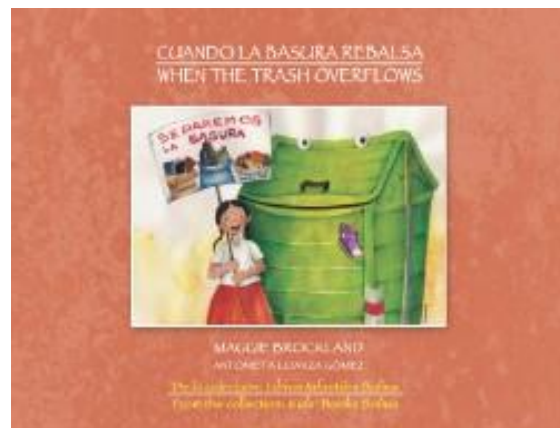


When Katie returns in six to eight weeks we'll talk with school administrators and teachers to learn how best to design the content and structure of the program – how many representative teachers will come from each school, how often and where to meet, and what materials will best help the teachers help their students.



*Left Top: The school in Huacuyo. Left Bottom: Huacuyo school's more than 200 students in the school's courtyard. Right: Katie and our new friend Monica (a kindergarten teacher from Chile) working with students in Cusijata. Monica would like to return next year to spend her 3-month school break working with Misión Fronteras.*

We envision that Katie will likely set up a visiting schedule, meeting once or twice a week with groups of teachers. As part of that, we plan to offer a mobile lending library from which teachers could borrow books for their classrooms and students. There are now about 220 items in the collection: early readers in English and Spanish, Spanish-English story books, and a variety of teaching tools such as flash cards, floor puzzles, and workbooks. We hope to buy more materials from an organization called “Kids’ Books Bolivia,” which prints school books in Aymara, Quechua (the languages of the two largest indigenous tribes), Spanish and English. The books focus on Bolivian culture and some also aim to teach specific lessons -- one, for example, addresses trash and toxic waste disposal – a complicated problem throughout Bolivia. To learn more about Kids’ Books Bolivia, please see their web site at <http://www.kidsbooksbolivia.org/>



*Two of the many books available from Kids’ Books Bolivia. Notice the book on the left, “I Always dreamed of Having a Store,” is in Castellano (Spanish), Aymara and English.*

Like us, Katie will be working without a salary. If you'd like to help support the Teach the Teachers Program, please consider making a gift. To make an electronic donation, please go to:

<http://www.umcmmission.org/Give-to-Mission/Search-for-Projects/Projects/Peru-Bolivia-Lake-Titicaca-Border-Mission>

and follow the prompts. Specify **Advance site # 3021288 – Teach**. If you prefer to send a check, please make it payable to **Advance GCFA**, in the memo line be sure to write **Site # 3021288/Teach**, and mail to:

**Advance GCFA  
P.O. Box 9068  
New York, NY 10087-9068.**

Here are some ways your gift will help the mission's "Teach the Teachers" program:



Sponsor one, or more, of six 4-week "Teach The Teachers Course" sessions for 30 students. Includes all materials, printing, refreshments, certificates & Katie's travel.....**\$375 per session**

Sponsor one, or more, of 30 classroom teaching kits. Includes teacher's aids, posters, flashcards & games...**\$25 per kit**

Kids' Books Bolivia  
We would like to purchase a minimum of four sets for the mission's school lending library. Set of 10 (if purchased by us in Bolivia).....**180 Bs. (\$27) per set**

Or make a donation of any amount ...?

### **Katie in Copacabana**

Hello, Misión Frontera enthusiasts! I am writing from a corner in Jeff and Debbie's Copacabana, Bolivia, home overlooking Lake Titicaca and their lovely garden. The sun is just starting to peek out after a rainy start to February 9, the middle of rainy season here, and I can't help but think this is a wonderful metaphor for the exciting year ahead: it is my hope to shed a bit of light, in the form of English education, to Copacabaniños while simultaneously learning from, about, and with this community of welcoming and wise individuals.





For the next 9 months, I will join Jeff, Debbie, and their impressive work with Misión Fronteras in the promotion of sustainable economic, agricultural—and now educational—growth in the Bolivia/Peru border region. I am thrilled to have an opportunity to launch a Teach the Teachers program, focused on training local teachers how to teach English to their elementary- and high-school-age students.

How and why did I come to this place? you might be wondering. “This place” is actually the intersection of three roads that have shaped my life: English education, Latin America, and overseas mission work. First, I have been journeying toward “this place” of English education since childhood, as a booklover. In college, I majored in English and minored in Spanish, then received a Masters in English and TEFL certification. I worked several years as a writer, teacher, editor, and educational coordinator.



Second, my arrival at “this place” of Latin America has been gradual. I grew up in South Texas and Florida, where Spanish is just as likely to be spoken as English. My father worked for U.S. Customs and traveled at least once a month to various places in Latin America. He told many stories about the poverty he observed during these travels. As a child, I remember wondering if I could possibly do something to help. In 2010, I participated in a short-term mission trip to Nicaragua. Since then, I have been interested in returning to Latin America.



In 2011, my father unexpectedly passed away. This sudden loss initiated the final change in my life that led to my arrival at this third place, Misión Fronteras in Copacabana, Bolivia. One day, I was a typical career-minded, single, busy—and admittedly stressed out! —young woman. The next day, prompted by the heartache over my father’s death and the realization of how very short life is, I found myself questioning the pace and focus of my life. In 2012, I decided to investigate education projects in Latin America,

thinking this might be an answer to that childhood question (how can I help?) and a way to redirect my life in a meaningful way. I looked into many programs, but nothing clicked like Debbie, Jeff, and Misión Fronteras. There is a sense of rightness and peace about my joining them.



I have been visiting for a week now, and have had the chance to adjust to the altitude, get to know Jeff and Debbie (and their amazing gourmet cooking!), scope out housing, and most importantly—get oriented to Misión Fronteras and how I can fit in. I am now familiar with the needs, goals, and motivations behind this community's desire for English education. I have eaten lunch with an Aymaran church community, visited a local school, learned about the many projects the mission has underway, and have gazed on the beauty of Lake Titicaca. I have seen God at work here.



Yes, there is indeed a sense of rightness and peace about my being here. I have so many ideas for the Teach the Teachers program, and cannot wait to join this caring community!

Thanks for your prayers and support!

Katie Yaun