

# LE JOURNAL

West Virginia State College Office of International Affairs Newsletter

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## West Virginia State College Receives a Fulbright-Hays Grant

The WVSC Office of International Affairs (OIA) received a Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Program grant for \$60,000 to sponsor a 4-week seminar in Costa Rica. The grant provided funding for 8 WVSC faculty and 5 WV high school teachers to travel to Costa Rica during the summer of 2002. The program consisted of instruction, field study, research, and cultural activities in Costa Rica for the purpose of enabling the participants to 1) learn about Costa Rican culture and develop curriculum materials for use in the classroom; 2) acquire an understanding of sustainable economic development and environmental protection in Costa Rica. OIA coordinator, **James Natsis**, and Political Science professor, **Gerry Beller**, co-directed the project. Other participants included:

WVSC faculty: **Maude Brunstetter** (Political Science), **Martin Japtok** (English), **Abainesh Mitiku** (Business Management), **John Richards** (Sociology), **Carolyn Halstead** (Spanish), and **Ann-Marie Evans** (History).

Secondary educators included: **Vicky Carney** (Spanish) Sissonville Senior High, **Gail Tolbert** (Social Studies) South Charleston High, **Carmella Crawford** (Physical Education) Capitol High, **Bruce Ensinger** (Music) New Martinsville School and Magnolia High School, and **David Dowdy** (Art) Liberty High.



West Virginia educators hike along Costa Rican trails

The project directors worked in conjunction with Linda Holland, Executive Director of the Institute for Central American Studies (ICAS) in San Jose to design the itinerary for the 4-week field research and traveling seminar. The group resided with local families during the first week while studying Spanish and receiving lectures from local NGOs and scholars.

Thanks to the efforts of Mrs. Holland, the group was privileged to meet and discuss issues with the current Minister of the Environment and Energy, Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, and the former Minister of Education (1998-2002), Guillermo Vargas Salazar while in San Jose.

During the next few weeks the group visited the regions of Talamanca, the Osa Peninsula, and Guanacaste to meet with local citizens, NGOs and group cooperatives. Highlights of their stay at the Monteverde Cloud Forest (Guanacaste) was attending a lecture given at the Monteverde Institute by the former president of Costa Rica, Rodrigo Carazo.

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