**Teacher-Research Networking Plan – Amber Lancaster**

*Pre-Expedition Networking*

Due to the relatively quick turnover time between my selection and departure to Antarctica, I communicated with Maria Vernet by email and by phone. I had only about a month before I left and I spent most of my emails asking logistical questions and spent very little time trying to understand the research. I did read Maria’s blogs that she had posted on the Exploratorium’s website during a previous cruise. I also read the LARISSA website which is a repository of information about the entire project.

*Networking in the Field*

While in the field, Maria put me on a rotation between each of the different groups that were doing research. This allowed me to get a comprehensive feel for the type of research the team was completing. Once I had a feel for each type of research that was happening, I was allowed to float between the labs that needed the most assistance and that were doing interesting projects that I could highlight in the field.

Maria regularly checked in with me to make sure that things were going well. At the end of the trip, we scheduled a longer meeting to discuss how the trip went overall and what recommendations I had if she took another PolarTREC teacher again in the future.

*Post-Expedition Networking*

As a teacher, I can take some of the data that has been gathered and use it to make interesting lesson plans for professors to use in their own outreach activities or for sharing with more general audiences.

Because the boat trip involves a lot of collection of materials, I’m interested in finding out what conclusions the group makes from their voyage. Much of the data needed to go back to a lab to be explored further (DNA testing, opening the JPC, chemical analysis) and I’m interested to see what they find out.

Many of the researchers on the boat have expressed a willingness to share their findings once they have completed more of their analyses. It will be my responsibility to email them and ask about what they have found through their analyses.

In addition, Julia Smith has given me a bunch of materials regarding geology that I hope to implement in my environmental science class next year. She has offered to give me continued support in implementing a soil sample project. Amy Leventer has also offered to send me some plankton slides that my students can use in the classroom.

During AGU, there is usually a data meeting for researchers on the LARISSA cruise to share their results. This year, many of the professors were not able to make it and there was only a planning expedition for the next cruise that will occur in Spring 2013. This cruise is more focused on the geologists on the team and my classes will be communicating with Julia Smith and her graduate students as they continue their research on a Korean vessel.

Julia Smith was also able to visit my classroom while she was in San Francisco for AGU. She talked to two of my classes about her life as an Antarctic marine geologist and we borrowed ECW clothing from PolarTREC to have a couple students dress up in the actual clothing worn by researchers in Antarctica.

There was some talk of visiting the Florida facilities when the JPC was opened, but it has been delayed several times. If this happens, I think it might be a great use of support travel funding and I would learn a lot from the experience.