

Student-teaching in Mexico translates to teaching job

by **Tim Holdsworth - Wednesday, October 06, 2010**

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/6288/student-teaching-in-mexico-translates-to-teaching-job/>

University of Wisconsin alumna Rebecca Strong '10, is putting her elementary education degree into practice as a new second grade teacher at the [American School Foundation of Guadalajara](#) in Mexico.

Strong landed the position after student teaching at the school through the [Educators Abroad Student Teaching program](#). Offered through UWO's College of Education and Human Services, the program provides an option for education majors to complete their student-teaching requirement internationally.

"I minored in bilingual education and English as a second language (ESL), so I wanted to student teach in a country where I could really work on those skills," Strong said. "I was fortunate to have my second student-teaching experience in Mexico, which was even better than just studying abroad because I was able to have contact with other professionals."

Strong's new school is rather unique. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Office of Education, the school is both an accredited U.S school as well as a Mexican school. "We have an American program, which is taught by English-language faculty as well as a Mexican program, which is taught by native Spanish-speaking teachers," Strong said. "This means we have twice the amount of work to get through as a regular U.S. school in the same amount of time."

The school also has an extra grade called pre-first. The grade, which comes between kindergarten and first grade, allows students to establish a solid base of English language skills before they go to first grade. "Since most of our students are learning English as a second language, this grade is very important to their future success," Strong said.

"Working with English language learners was always something that interested me, and I have been able to put a lot of the things I learned at UW Oshkosh into practice right away," she said. "In addition, my Spanish classes at the University were very helpful because many of the parents at the school don't speak English."

Strong encourages other UW Oshkosh students to consider student-teaching abroad. "You get to know a different culture from your own, and, in the process, you really get to know yourself," she said.

In her own words ...

What does your UWO education mean to you?

"The College of Education and Human Services made sure that we took a variety of courses so that we were well-versed in many different things. The professors challenged us and taught us what we needed to be able to succeed in the world of teaching. I was introduced to many different ideas and theories that are very much 'hot topics' in education right now, so as a new professional, I entered the field of teaching

with a lot of knowledge about things going on today.”

What advice would you give education students at UWO?

“Look outside the box and find new experiences working with children that interest you. Think about going abroad and looking at education in other parts of the world. You will come away with amazing experiences that you would never get staying in your hometown. You’ll meet great people, eat delicious food and learn more than you can imagine. Take what you learn at UW Oshkosh and spread it around.”