

Dolphin Communication Project

Dolphin Research Trainee Program (DRTs)

The Dolphin Communication Project Dolphin Research Trainee Program (aka: DRTs) is offered for 6th - 8th grade students from one school or a school district. Class is limited to 15 students. DRT students will be eligible participants for a travel program scheduled for a week during the summer following the semester class. This after-school, informal science education program will be held one afternoon or evening per week for 12-14 weeks; class length is 1.5 hours. A nominal fee of \$175 is charged per student: the fee will be used for class materials and other directly associated costs.

Classes will focus on the culture of DCP's Bimini, The Bahamas study site, as well as other topics related to the history, geography and coastal ecology of Bimini and, of course, to dolphin biology, behavior and communication. A list of topics per class is provided. Attention will be given on select class dates to the dolphin communication research that DCP conducts.

Students interested in participating in the DCP DRT program will be required to complete a short application (available from the DCP web site). Note that the student **MUST** complete the application. Also note that participation in the 12-14 week class does not automatically guarantee a student a place on the travel program; however, only participants in the course will be eligible for the travel program.



DRT Course Structure ~ Bimini

Class Schedule Overview

Week 1: Parent & Student introductory meeting

Week 2: Introduction – to DCP, to Bimini study site, to DCP DRTs 2009/2010 (SKYPE with Kelly Melillo from Bimini)

Week 3: Geography & Ecology – similarities & difference with USA coastline (SKYPE with Kelly Melillo)

Week 4: Culture & Traditions – art, other

Week 5: Food & Language

Week 6: Coastal ecosystems: coral reefs & conservation
(SKYPE with Kelly Melillo)

Week 7: Fish species & sharks (Shark Lab)
(SKYPE with Kelly Melillo)

Week 8: Study site historical background - general and dolphin-specific
(SKYPE with Kelly Melillo)

Week 9 ~ dolphins: DCP studies of dolphin social behavior & communication

Week 10 ~ dolphins: DCP's Bimini studies of dolphins (SKYPE with Kelly Melillo)

Week 11 ~ dolphins: DCP's Bimini studies of dolphins (SKYPE with Kelly Melillo)

Week 12 ~ dolphins: DCP's Bimini studies of dolphins & discussion of student projects (topic: some marine organism)

Week 13: Pool session - to practice/try out the MVA and review protocol

Week 14: Review of class & discussion of trip & related preparations

Trip Details: June 25 - 2 July 2010; see details on next page regarding eligibility for travel program.

Class dates: February (4 days), March (5 days), April (4 days), May (1 day)



Trip Selection Criteria

Selection Criteria for Travel to Bimini, The Bahamas as a DRT in June 2010

We believe that the DRT program planned for Summer 2010 will be engaging, exciting, entertaining and highly educational. We look forward to sharing details about Bimini, The Bahamas, and its culture and, of course, dolphins! We are thrilled with the response that we received from students for class participation in our previous DRT programs. We will accept 15 students for each DRT class program. We will have 10-16 spaces for travel to Bimini, with students from different classes filling spaces on the trip. The following criteria will be used to select the students who will form the traveling DRT 2010 team who will participate in the field program to Bimini. Each of the four criteria listed below are equally important for a student to be an eligible participant.

1) Attendance & Participation & Attitude (DRT responsibility)

Each class includes information that will better inform the travel participant. Each class gives each DRT details on Bimini, the culture of Bimini and The Bahamas, and DCP's dolphin research, which will prepare travel participants for their trip and interactions with individuals on Bimini. Therefore, missing a class means you will not be as well prepared as a student with perfect attendance or commitment. **Participation** and **Attitude** during class are also important. We absolutely LOVE this set of topics and information. We want to share it with you and hope you are open and willing to share in return.

2) Team Work & Individual Innovation (DRT responsibility)

It is important that each DRT work as a contributing team member working with and supporting other DRTs. It is also important that each DRT is able to work independently with minimal supervision.

3) Journal & Essay (DRT responsibility)

Journal – Each DRT will be required to keep a weekly journal about what they learned and experienced in each class. Notes about what happened during the class should be included, as well as what you learned and how you felt about what you learned. NOTE: We will NOT review this journal weekly, but you will submit it on **May 1, 2010** (3:00 PM) to maintain eligibility as a Travel DRT. Essay – Each DRT who wishes to be considered as a Travel DRT must write a clear, concise, one page essay about what they have learned to date during the spring DRT program and why they should be selected to be a Travel DRT. Essay due dates will be confirmed in class.

4) Financial Ability (DRT parent(s) responsibility)

The cost per student (DRT participant) to travel to Bimini, The Bahamas is estimated in a budget depending on the number of participants on the trip. Contact DCP for an itemized budget.

FORMS: DRT parents are responsible for completing the release and medical forms. The due date will be provided on the first night of class.

If these forms are not received by this deadline, then your DRT student will not be eligible for participation in the travel program.

REMEMBER - PASSPORTS ARE REQUIRED FOR TRAVEL!

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