

Ocean Sciences Meeting, Feb. 2014

One of the most invigorating parts of being a Project-Based Learning teacher to students in the middle grades (7th, 8th) is participating in meaningful professional development. I try to attend conferences and events that involve scientists and educators so that I can continue learning myself, as well as bring back exciting new information and ideas to the classroom. I'm also very aware of serving as a role model for our traditionally underrepresented youth in the STEM fields. If a middle-aged lady can go places and learn with scientists, even conduct science of my own, then my students see that they can, too.



This GEMS grant allowed me to attend the 2014 AGU Ocean Sciences Meeting in Honolulu, HI, in February. I had hoped to bring a small group of my students with me, but interisland travel and other costs proved to be too much to overcome. Instead, I worked side-by-side with my students to conduct action research, create a poster showing our results, and share information with younger students. Our focus for our work was to examine teaching strategies that support girls' long-term interest in STEM topics. I



used email and online video to talk to my girls when I was at the conference, and I shared my experiences with them when I got back. Several of my girls indicated that they are more interested in science after participating in the action research project. I continue to work closely with several girls who are surging forward with their own STEM projects and activities as they move up through High School.



I greatly appreciate the support from C-MORE to help me attend the Ocean Sciences Meeting. I learned so much while I was there, got to network with educators and scientists, and I got to involve my students in relevant, meaningful research that will impact their lives and the lives of others.