



**News article on Dr. Royce at the agricultural reform workshop in Havana**



**Pre-school in Havana supported by Fundación Amistad**



**Teacher training workshop in Havana classroom**



**Interactive participation at the teacher training workshop in Havana**

Dear Friends of Fundación Amistad:

July 2016

Though Summer 2016 is well underway throughout North America, our programs in Cuba are going strong to provide people-to-people connections making key and beneficial impacts for the Cuban people. This June, we sponsored two special programs – one for Cuban farmers and one for Cuban teachers – that are part of our initiatives in agricultural and educational reform. Both were highly well-received by the participants, with one of the teachers at the education workshop saying “you have turned on a light for us”.

**Sustainable Agriculture and Organic Farming Workshop: June 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>**

In collaboration with CISP (Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli), Fundación Amistad co-sponsored a workshop for Cuban farmers in conjunction with the Tropico 2016 conference in Havana. In addition to supporting the travel and accommodation expenses that brought nearly 40 Cuban farmers to Havana from the provinces of Sancti Spiritus, Cienfuegos, Matanzas, Ciego de Avila, and Santiago de Cuba, we sponsored the participation of Dr. Frederick Royce, a scientist at the University of Florida specializing in crop simulation models, cooperative agricultural production systems, and climate change.

With on-site visits to organic farms on the first day, and workshops on the second day, Dr. Royce brought insights to seed production, soils science, sustainable farming practices, and the impacts of climate change on tropical agriculture. His participation was highlighted in an article in the Nacional newspaper entitled “In Search of an Increasingly Sustainable Agriculture”. FA’s support of this program is part of our on-going commitment for collaboration between US and Cuban farmers and scholars to seek advances benefiting organic food production in Cuba.

**Teacher Training for Innovation in Learning: June 27<sup>th</sup> – July 1<sup>st</sup>**

This interactive week-long workshop was organized by Fundación Amistad in collaboration with the Montessori Children’s School of Key West (Florida) on behalf of the pre-school teachers and parents at the Felix Varela Catholic Cultural Center in Havana. FA’s Program Director, Faye Miller, participated along with five teachers from the Montessori Children’s School. FA provides the equipment, books, and operating costs for the three pre-schools at the Center.

The program focused on “whole child” development and described the various stages of growth and cognitive and social development for children. The Cuban teachers were introduced to new learning methodologies and best practices involving active student participation, mixing of age groups, and encouragement to young students to collaborate, help, and teach others. In addition, the program outlined the principles of early-childhood ESL (English as a Second Language) for use in the coming school year. FA expects to conduct a follow-up workshop in the Fall as part of our continued support and expansion of the pre-school program of the Cathedral of Havana.

Thank you for your continued support of these important programs.

*Luly Duke*

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