



Elementary teachers applying a lesson from the DMDB Curriculum.



# International School Project

**W**ho influences every socio-economic, cultural, and religious segment of every community in every society? What is the largest group of trained professionals in the world?

## Teachers.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, recipient of the Nobel peace prize in 1970, said, “The truth is, we must not begin with school children, but teachers; the cream of the nation. They are people with the calling to whom we entrust our future.” In 1990, a former minister of education in Russia said, “In 1917, we asked God to leave our country, and he did. Now we want him back. Can you help us?”

The International School Project, a movement to reach teachers, began in response to this urgent need. Today this movement impacts 29 countries by reaching over 94,000 teachers. These teachers impact 40+ million students.

## Transformation in Ecuador

Against a backdrop of alcoholism, adolescent drug use, gangs, and broken homes, teachers in Ecuador are often overwhelmed and undervalued. When school leaders like Santiago began using the ISP curriculum in their schools last year, they saw things change for the better.

Many teachers are introduced to ISP through educational

conferences. The Dream-Maker/DreamBreaker conference uses professional teaching techniques to train teachers to prevent drug and alcohol abuse. By addressing these significant, worldwide problems, this four-day conference has opened many doors for ISP to reach teachers in more than two dozen countries.

The conferences facilitate lots of interaction within small groups. Plenary speakers focus on working through differing worldviews. Dr. Gary Stanley, one world-view speaker said, “Most of the time, change in what we believe and value happens as a result of what becomes important to us. At what



## By Noelle Gebel

*Noelle Gebel works alongside her husband Paul with the International School Project (ISP). Her four adult children and one grandchild are literally scattered from coast to coast. She enjoys sharing health-giving recipes and ideas with friends. She and her husband, Paul, live in Irmo.*



Santiago from Quito, Ecuador leading a conference workshop.



Small groups in Quito applying Worldview Lesson.



Hung and his co-worker teach in Taiwan.

level do you believe your worldview makes a difference in your life? How do you know what you know?"

Questions like these are taken into the discussion groups, making for some lively conversation. Each western small group facilitator is equipped with advanced training ahead of time and an interpreter.

Santiago led his colleagues through the life map exercise, an activity he learned during an ISP conference. "I felt like it cleansed the inside of us," he says. He believes some teachers have even come to Christ through teaching the curriculum.

The partnership with ISP has helped Santiago witness transformation at his school and has encouraged him to move towards his goal, "to share Christ with all the teachers and students." It is a worthy goal, but it's just part of a larger vision.

### Beyond the School

This spring, Santiago, along with about 50 other teachers and volunteers, had the opportunity to expand their vision beyond their own school. A member of ISP's movement-building team held a training in Quito for leaders like Santiago who have been involved with the *DreamMaker-DreamBreaker* curriculum this past year.

This local team saw how outreaches such as the DreamMaker conference, local discipleship, and outreach follow up are all pieces that work together, leading to multiplication and the building of a movement.

### Exponential Growth

Nancy, head of a large school in Quito, said, "I've been involved with ISP for two years, but recently I learned about the multiplication strategy." She called the movement launch training (MLT) "eye-opening." The training focuses on a core team of teachers and staff who will "own"

the spiritual movement and engage in multiplying discipleship.

Nancy now has an idea for action: "When we see it in numbers, it makes total sense how one teacher from my school (who received the MLT training and applies the program) could impact and influence two other teachers from two other schools, and start to meet up and disciple them. In that way at least 200 students will be impacted with the gospel by these 3 teachers."

"I have to confess," Santiago said. "Previously I was focused on how ISP could help me and my school. But I now I see that it is much bigger. Now I see that this has the potential to change my country."

### Change in the Classroom

"The whole class joined the uproar, students taking sides in an argument that disrupted



my classroom,” says Hung, a teacher, as he related a recent experience.

The next day, Hung shared a story from the Bible – that of the king and the debtor. Hung patiently explained how Jesus has forgiven all of our sins, like the king who had forgiven the debtor's massive debts. One student thoughtfully asked, "If Jesus has forgiven all of my sins, I guess I should forgive my classmate?" Hung affirmed the boy for applying this truth to his own situation. He later watched as this student and the other boy reconciled and went together to the playground.

“I count success not just what we do at our conferences and trainings, but through what happens *after* these events,” says Roy Christians, ISP’s Executive Director. Hung’s students have had a heart change because Hung is feeding their hearts with God’s truth.

Hung went on to share his story with fellow International School Project teachers at a recent leadership conference in Taiwan, connecting it to the theme of being salt and light. “The Lord has used me as salt and light to help my students forgive.”

Once large DreamMaker Conferences are over, the national movement launch team is ready to contact individual teachers. They form smaller teacher movement communities in individual schools, and more outreaches are planned.



Dr. Gary Stanley and his interpreter leading a session on Worldviews.

### **Volunteers Help Build Momentum**

ISP’s large conferences are led by volunteers who are thoroughly trained as a small group facilitator (SGF). SGFs don’t “teach” their small group. Instead they build relationships with their group members –relationships that will open the doors for future spiritual conversations.

In one Middle Eastern Country, a teacher said, “We have never really seen this kind of teaching before.”

“We have been to many conferences and this is the best; here we feel loved” another said. That’s the job description of a SGF – to pour out God’s love to each teacher in their small group.

Dwight and Colleen have traveled as volunteers on over 50 ISP trips since 2001. Colleen shared, “There is still a little magic to being an American. It tends to draw people. You have personal contact and personal impact.”

When asked, “Why reach teachers?” Dwight replied, “That’s where the gold is and the most effective way to multiply your efforts. If you reach a teacher, you reach students for 20-25 years. You extend your reach by reaching teachers. They are the opinion makers of society.”

ISP is committed to equipping educators and developing leaders to shape future generations. Reach a teacher for Christ, and the doors of society will open for generations to come. **ROC**



**When you give your life away, you gain so much more. For more information on traveling with ISP as a volunteer, please contact [noelle.gebel@isponline.org](mailto:noelle.gebel@isponline.org)**

**For more information on ISP’s teachers movements around the world, visit [www.isponline.org](http://www.isponline.org)**