

CHAPS workshop aims to help educators teach history in the RGV

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A group of RGV K-12 teachers learned how to make an atlatl spear-throwing mechanism in a Native American Peoples of South Texas Workshop conducted June 6 by the Community Historic Archaeology Project with Schools (CHAPS) faculty and staff. The teachers will take the hands-on learning activities into their classrooms this fall.

The Community Historic Archaeology Project with Schools (CHAPS) Program at The University of Texas-Pan American hosted a group of local area K-12 teachers at a Native American Peoples of South Texas workshop June 6 at the Community Engagement and Student Success building.

The four-hour workshop included lectures about prehistoric and historic Indians who inhabited the Rio Grande Valley region as well as a hands-on activity of building an atlatl spear-throwing mechanism which included a lesson in physics about Newton's 2nd Law of Motion. Ashley Leal, a Lipan Apache Tribe of Texas member, was also on hand to discuss Native American peoples in contemporary society.

Each school district represented at the workshop was given a traveling trunk of items to use in their classrooms. As the majority of the teachers in attendance were 7th grade Texas History teachers, this particular subject matter is very relevant to the curriculum for their students, said Roseann Bacha-Garza, CHAPS program coordinator.

"Our program is driven to inspire and intrigue regional educators and their students with relatable material for use in the classroom," Bacha-Garza said. "We look forward to classroom visits with these teachers as the academic year begins again in the fall."

Funding for the traveling trunk project was made possible through a generous donation from the Summerfield G. Roberts Foundation out of Dallas, Texas.

The people and school districts represented at the workshop were: Nicole Cain and Maria Nino, Sharyland ISD; Reymundo Quiroga and Rachel Quiroga, Donna ISD; Ronald Claflin and Benjamin Vela, Alton ISD; Alicia Loya and Norma Vega, La Joya ISD; Ruby Aguilar, Rio Hondo ISD; Patrick Twist, Edinburg CISD; Jennifer Longoria, Josette Ramirez and Cynthia Maldonado, South Texas ISD; and Lisa Adam and Judy McClelland, Museum of South Texas History. Not present at the workshop were but who will also use the curriculum this coming fall in their classrooms are Raul Pena and Eulalio Gutierrez, Roma ISD.