

BISHOP O'DOWD

H I G H S C H O O L

To those considering an adventure with EPI:

It is with sincere pleasure and excitement to have the opportunity to write a letter of reference for Ecology Project International (EPI). The type of experience gained by all who participate in one of the EPI programs is exceptional on so many levels. Each trip is truly a life-changing experience and one to savor and share for a lifetime.

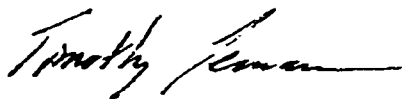
I am a life science teacher at Bishop O'Dowd High School in Oakland, California. In twelve years of teaching both biology and advanced placement biology, I have taken students on many educational trips including to foreign countries. My experience with each travel company has been very good and the trips have all been very good as well. Without a doubt, EPI has set the bar at a much higher level in terms of travel experiences, before, during, and after each trip.

Every member of the EPI team is very well trained, experienced in his/her field, helpful with individual issues, and overall very friendly. They are accessible for questions and helpful in preparing students for all that they will encounter on a trip. The web site and handouts available through EPI have guided many parents and students so well, that questions for me as a teacher are minimal. In working with other companies, I have noticed that information is not always timely and sometimes comes so late that it adds to the stress of going on a trip of this magnitude. EPI has never put me in that position and has been able to streamline the process including when emergency or last-minute issues have prevailed.

While on location with EPI, the experience is even better. The students have a very full schedule that includes a wide diversity of experiences – both educational and fun. The instructors are very knowledgeable in their field and great with students. All levels of students have enjoyed the trips with EPI and have had successful experiences. Every student comes back with a broader sense of the world and other cultures, a phenomenal experience in field science, and a life-long memory. For most, they have a strong desire to go back and some already have with their own families. I can also say that the teachers have an equally exceptional experience.

I cannot more highly recommend the EPI program. They make it worth the work it takes to organize all that is involved to go. This is a quality program – well designed, well planned, well presented, and it is obvious that they (EPI instructors) enjoy what they do. As a teacher and as a biologist myself, the experience is unforgettable. But to see these experiences through the eyes of your students has even much more impact.

Take advantage of this opportunity and go!



Timothy Newman
Science Department Chair

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