

Jose Leonardo Brenes

- STEAMED Latam

During the summer of 2022, I volunteered with STEAMED Latam, an education non-profit whose approach consists of training the teachers to maximize the long-term impacts. They have partnered with Boston Scientific to help them with two STEAM-related initiatives. The first is teaching robotics at a school in Rincón Chiquito, a small town close to the Boston Scientific factory in the central valley. The second, is starting the first STEAM academy for deaf people with Asorli, the association of deaf people of Limon (a major coastal city in the Caribbean).

I worked with both communities to help strengthen their STEAM programs. Most of my involvement was with the teachers in the Rincón Chiquito school. In previous years, the robotics courses were led by Boston Scientific volunteers but for this year, they wanted the teachers to lead them and have the volunteers take a smaller role. During the first weeks I helped train the teachers to utilize the robotics equipment, specifically how to build with the LEGO Mindstorms pieces and program using a tablet. We also went over previous lesson plans which included other STEAM topics such as prototyping, sustainable energy and the power of STEAM to solve everyday problems. After this training, I helped them adapt the existing lesson plans to their scheduling constraints and write up new ones. I also helped coordinate the logistics of this year's course and was present during two of the three sessions to help them with any technical issues. They now have their new lesson plans along with audiovisual material as well as the technical know-how to teach future courses.



I also worked with Asorli by preparing two learning experiences. The first one was a presentation about Google Classroom and how they could use it with their classes. The second was a robotics make-a-thon that was part of their graduation from the STEAM trainer program. This was done in conjunction with the robotics team from the library of Limon and served as an event to create connections between different groups involved in STEAM in the city. I also worked on a more complex make-a-thon that involved solving issues related to Boston Scientific's mission, but this was saved for a later time.

This fall, the school in Rincón Chiquito will continue with their robotics course and Asorli will start the next phase of their STEAM deaf academy.

A new robotics course led by one of their members is currently being developed. I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to connect with so many amazing people through this summer project and learn more about my country.