

# From Classroom to Community: United Planet and AATSP Inspire Global Youth Leadership

*Building Global Connections: United Planet and AATSP's Growing Collaboration*

BOSTON, MA, UNITED STATES, August 12, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [United Planet](#), a leading international nonprofit dedicated to fostering global understanding through cultural exchange and volunteer service, proudly continues its collaboration with the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP) to empower young language learners through immersive, real-world experiences.



Traditional Dance Class in Costa Rica

This summer, Jill Tracy, CEO of United Planet, represented the organization at the 2025 AATSP Annual Conference held in Panama City, Panama. Her presentation, "Bridges of Understanding: Service, Language, and Culture Fostering Youth Leadership Development," explored how

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This has been such a cool experience! It has been one of the best weeks of my entire life!”

*Maria, an NSE Scholarship Winner & Costa Rica Quest Participant*

international service experiences can nurture leadership skills and global citizenship among students. The session emphasized the importance of integrating language learning with cultural and community engagement.

The conference marks one of several initiatives between United Planet and AATSP to connect students with immersive experiences that expand their worldview. Through a partnership with the AATSP's National Spanish Examinations (NSE), high-achieving students in the United

States can earn scholarships to participate in United Planet's Quest programs in Costa Rica and [virtually](#).

Now in its third year, the NSE Costa Rica summer [service-learning](#) Quest program brought

together NSE scholars for a week of conservation service, language and cultural immersion, and community engagement. Students worked alongside local community partners at the Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve in Monteverde, contributing to trail maintenance, environmental monitoring, and collaborative restoration projects.

They also had the opportunity to explore Costa Rica's vibrant culture through traditional dance and cooking classes, visit the Arenal volcano and La Fortuna waterfall, and engage in community-led educational experiences.

"Students, parents, coordinators, and chaperones are all incredibly thankful to AATSP, National Spanish Exams, and United Planet for this unique experience. I would like to thank our President Elect, Sybil Sánchez, for her amazing job as a chaperone on this trip. It has also been a gift to have United Planet CEO, Jill Tracy, with us, whose kindness and professionalism Sybil and I highly valued. We made such a great and collaborative team," said Claudia A. Kechkian, AATSP Exams Director

"This has been such a cool experience! It has been one of the best weeks of my entire life," said Maria, an NSE Scholarship Winner & Costa Rica Quest Participant.

United Planet and AATSP also collaborated on an annual virtual language and cultural immersion Quest program. Through this remote experience, students deepened their Spanish language skills and participated in activities such as Latin cooking, learning about history and traditions and dance workshops. Each participant received 20 hours of community service credit in recognition of their active engagement.



Jill Tracy, CEO of United Planet, at the 2025 AATSP Annual Conference held in Panama City, Panama



Snapshot from the annual virtual language and cultural immersion Quest program

These programs reflect United Planet and AATSP's shared commitment to experiential learning, youth empowerment, and cross-cultural understanding. By combining language study with voluntary service, students not only improve their linguistic abilities but also gain a deeper appreciation of global opportunities and the role they can play as future leaders.



To learn more about United Planet's cultural immersion and volunteer programs, visit [www.unitedplanet.org](http://www.unitedplanet.org).

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United Planet is a non-profit organization with a mission to create a global community, one relationship at a time. Established in 2001, United Planet offers personalized, immersive, service-learning, project-based learning, and experiential learning programs, including volunteer abroad, virtual internships, internships abroad, and global virtual classroom exchange in more than 40 countries.

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