The Hillsborough Beacon

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| **News** |
| **HILLSBOROUGH: Teens continue studies in tropical environment** |
| |  | | --- | |  | | http://images.townnews.com/centraljersey.com/content/articles/2014/08/27/hillsborough_beacon/news/doc53f6418b85a04852200877.jpg | Hillsborough teen Madison D’Amico with Adriana at Escuela La Cruz, an elementary school in St. Elena in the Monte Verde province. The building is the school. | |
| By Gene Robbins, Managing Editor  *Published on Thursday, August 21, 2014 3:23 PM EDT*  For eight Hillsborough teens, education didn’t stop with the end of the school year.  The teens learned about the tropical environment, experienced a different culture and education system and overcame physical challenges on a 10-day trip to Costa Rica in mid-July.  The students — Ramesh Benimadho, Adam Brown, Lindsey Capano, Amanda Chapman, Madison D’Amico, Alexandra Degaris, Gabriella Graziano-LoPresti and Angela Kim — went on a trip organized by former Hillsborough High School teacher Jeff Kampf.  Knowing they had the opportunity to spend the day at a local school, Madison signed up for a college-level humanities course and was assigned a project on the school system in Costa Rica. She researched, solicited donations from Staples and other stores, boxed and paid for the supplies to get to Costa Rica. Others brought items as well.  Lindsay also signed up for the humanities course; her assignment was on endangered wildlife in Costa Rica.  The eight from Hillsborough were combined with another tour group from North Carolina. Some Hillsborough teens went to North Carolina a few weeks later to visit their new friends.The students paddled on a whitewater raft on a rain-swelled river, visited a volcano and scooted down the professed longest zipline in the world. They hiked through wet and dry forests and walked along beaches on the Pacific Ocean side of the country.  At one noontime — just as predicted — monkeys came out of the forest to search for and through unattended backpacks, Mr. Kampf said.  Each year, Mr. Kampf takes local students on tours around the world. This year, the trip had a special purpose. In addition to learning about the environment and experiencing whitewater rafting, ziplining and visiting a volcano, the students had the opportunity to make a difference. They visited Escuela La Cruz, a local elementary school in St. Elena, in Monte Verde province.They purchased, gathered and solicited donations that were brought with them for the school. The one-room schoolhouse was filled with excited and extremely appreciative students, who performed a local dance.  "It was one of the best days of my life," Madison said.  Mr. Kampf, who teaches world civilization at Raritan Valley Community College, organizes student tours in his company — [yourtravelbucketlist.com](about:blank). Last year, he and his wife took and 35 seniors to Greece and Turkey.  Mr. Kampf said he enjoys being able to enhance the experiences of local students, but also showing them how others live and how to make a difference, Madison said. |