

Snahul stsobojib sp'ijilal sjol yo'tan jlumaltic Tselal House of Wisdom - Collection Management

The Challenge

- The One Equal Heart Foundation works with the Tselal Maya in Chiapas, Mexico. They, along with their partners, have built a space to house the largest collection of Tselal materials in the world.
- Currently the building sits empty, the collection is scattered and in various stages of degradation, and there is no formal LIS training in place for staff.
- In March 2016, we visited Bachajon where the House of Wisdom is located at the Jesuit Mission, the various co-operatives, as well as one of the 600 Tselal communities in the region.

The Process

- During our visit we assessed the collection and the facility, this included measuring temperatures and ambient humidity. We also met with partner organizations to understand the role the collection would play in supporting their work.
- Because this project is quite large, we decided to focus on four areas to provide recommendations: Facility, Collection, Technology, and Staff Training.
- We conducted a literature review and consulted with iSchool faculty, in addition to finding examples of library practices in an indigenous context.
- Continuous consultation with our sponsor, and their Chiapas partners, was also essential in understanding the Tselal way of life.

The Outcome

- We developed recommendations for best practices to prepare their staff, collection and facilities for cataloging the collection. They are presented in the form of a handbook.
- This project has the potential to positively impact the Tselal communities; our work will support One Equal Heart in their to strengthening the Tselal language and culture. In addition to providing academic expertise to their Chiapas partners.
- The Tselal are excited for the outcome and although they are unsure of how this space will fit in their daily lives, they recognize the need to collect Tselal material and begin the process of preservation and dissemination.

What's Next?

- Now, the Tselal House of Wisdom can begin treating and preparing their collection for classification and cataloging, while training their staff and developing their technology to best serve their needs.
- The next steps for expanding on our research is to conduct a long term environmental preservation assessment and continue to amend and revise the recommendations as needed. There is a potential at this point to develop a specific indigenous system of organization for the library and practices that will help the House of Wisdom become a valuable resource for the Tselal people and generations of Tselal scholarship to come.



Newly built!
Tselal House of Wisdom ²



Some of the collection at Jesuit
Colegio ²



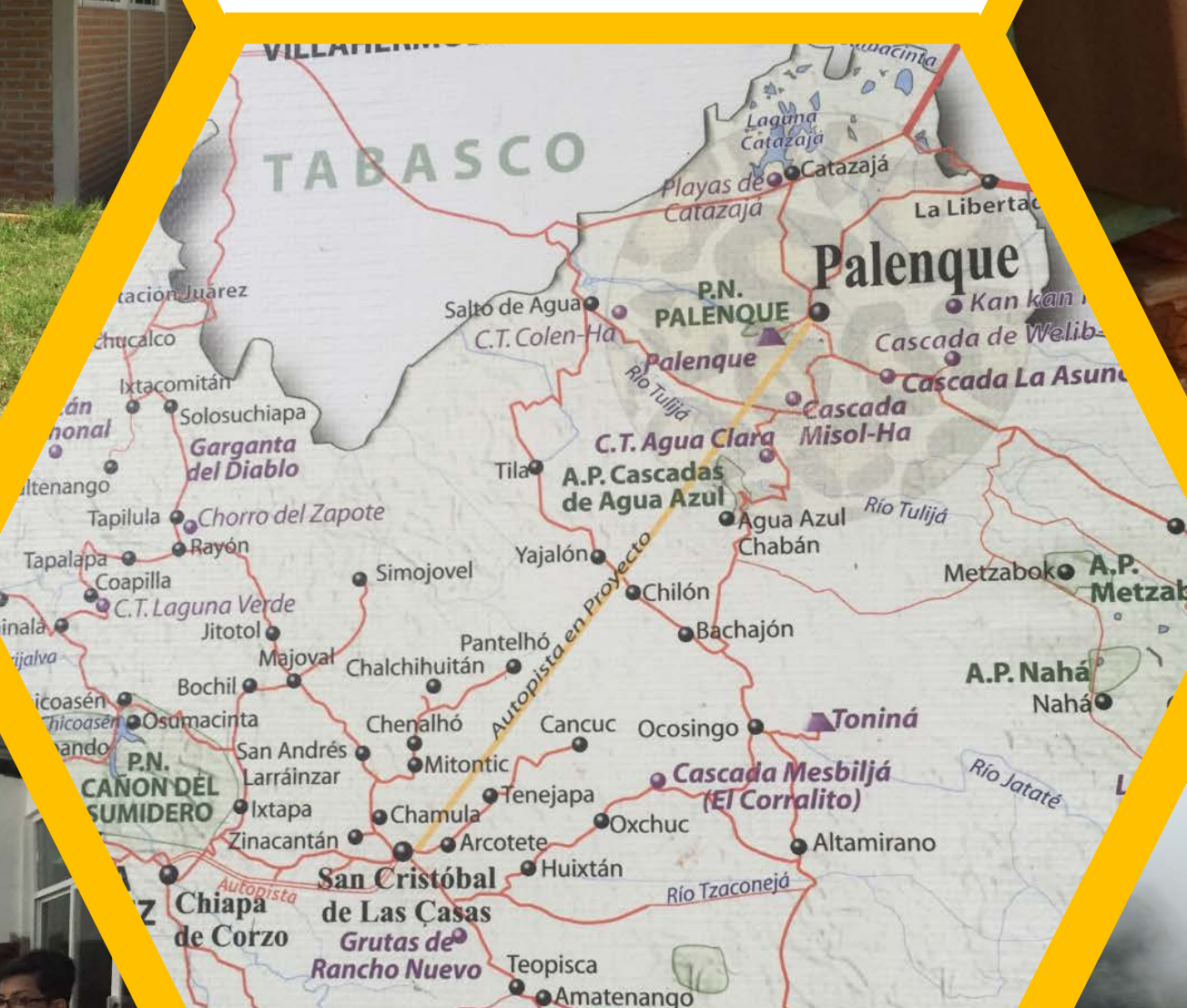
Misol Há waterfall,
near Palenque ²



View of Los Altos -
The Highlands – from the Colegio ²



Welcome from Mission
Director, Arturo Estrada ¹



Map of Chiapas – We stayed in
Bachajon & Chilon ¹



Palenque,
Mayan archaeological site ²



Arrival at Tiakil, Tselal
community near Bachajon ¹



Tiakil, inter-zone meeting,
with Jeannie Berwick ¹

Capstone 2016

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Mater of Library and Information
Science, Candidates

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