



“This is a once in a lifetime experience for most and this is only the second day.”

Tim Brooks
GVI Volunteer, Costa Rica, 2007

EARTH University's School Program, Costa Rica



EARTH University is now recruiting for its specialist high schools program, run in partnership with esteemed volunteering organization GVI, which offers your high school safe educational trips, courses and volunteering opportunities in Costa Rica.

Opportunities exist for 7 to 15 days and we offer a free place for a teacher or supervisor for every 8 students that attend. Through our flights partners we are also able to offer personalized travel and group discounts.

Opportunities can include teamwork and leadership exercises, worthwhile work on long term projects in support of local partners, educational presentations and courses, plus adventure side trips. In addition, we can help facilitate an ongoing partnership between your school and EARTH University and the local schools or projects, to allow your students to stay in touch, see the long term impact of their work and supply ongoing support. Project work can range from construction, to reforestation, sports, arts, teaching English and even farm work!

EARTH University will tailor make each group's itinerary based upon desired group numbers, objectives, location (on campus in hotel accommodation to off campus in dorms or homestays), focus and duration.

Costs include pre-departure support, field manuals, long term experienced staff, thorough safety procedures, airport pickups and drop offs, all basic in country food and accommodation, project work, educational and adventure side trips, insurance, plus access to the project blog, a photo CD and a branded newsletter and report.

For more information please contact EARTHUniversity@gvica.com or call us on **1-888-653-6028** and we can call you right back.



Background

EARTH University is located close to Guácimo in the Limón province of Costa Rica. Created in 1990, EARTH is a private, international, non-profit University offering education in agricultural sciences and natural resource management in order to contribute to sustainable development in the humid tropics. EARTH bases its educational model on four pillars: social commitment, environmental awareness, an entrepreneurial mentality, and the development of human values.

Location and Accommodation

Located a two and a half hour bus ride from the country capital of San Jose, EARTH University is situated on 8,154 acres which support the educational facilities, a library, laboratories, a reserve with primary and secondary forests, farms, recreational areas including sports fields and swimming pool, services and residences for students, faculty and staff. The campus is also equipped with internet services and a medical facility.

Program Options

EARTH University offers many areas of the campus available for tours and for your group to learn from and work with the distinguished faculty members. The following list includes brief descriptions of the activities for your group to choose from when tailoring your program.

Spanish lessons: Group language lessons are offered locally by experienced teachers who use interactive skills and exercises to ensure the lessons are both relevant and fun. The lessons help students to acclimatize and give them enthusiasm for a very useful skill.

Banana Tour: This tour of the plantation, packing plant, and paper plant allows all aspects of fruit harvesting to be experienced as it is prepped to be shipped to the United States and Europe. Groups will also see how EARTH minimizes waste by using the banana stalks and recycled paper to produce new banana paper.

Organic Tour: Born out of student initiative and interest, EARTH now boasts this tour's three main areas of animal production, food production, and recycling and production of organic fertilizers. The aim of this project is to reduce the amount of imported materials needed.

Ecological Tour: This tour encompasses both the Ethno-botanical Garden and the Botanical Garden. These gardens exhibit the diversity of orchids and other flowers found in the humid tropics, as well as allowing students to see, touch, smell and taste a variety of medicinal plants and learn about their uses.

Integrated Dairy Farm Tour: This unique farm utilizes all the resources to reuse and recycle all of its byproducts, making a completely closed system. The tour will teach you about all of the systems in place and the science behind them.

Biodiversity Tour: This tour through the forest reserve, encompassing 1480 acres of primary and secondary forest, takes you on a 1.2 mile hike which puts all of the senses to the test. Take in the bright colors, smells and sounds as you look for the many species of flora and fauna in the area.

Macadamia Nut Farm Tour: Travel to the nearby town of La Alegría to tour a traditional farm learning more about the local flora and witnessing the traditional trapiche.

Community Reforestation and Construction Project: Volunteer in the community of La Alegría, working with the local water authority to help sustain the town's water supply through reforestation efforts. Help the people of Las Lomas build a community center at the elementary school. Additional project work options include sports, arts and crafts, English teaching and farm work.

Ropes Course: Complete a ropes course at the University, gaining the skills and experience of teamwork, leadership, trust and other key life skills.

Adventure side trips: Costa Rica offers a wealth of adventure side trips. Possibilities include whitewater rafting, canopy tours, zip lining, volcano viewing, sea turtle viewing and guided rainforest walks.



Sample 8 Day Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in San Jose, airport pickups and travel to EARTH University, approximately 2.5 hour journey. Welcome meeting, risk assessment and orientation of campus. Welcome meal.

Day 2: Orientation about EARTH University, with the Banana, Organic and Integrated Farm Tours, and then the start of Spanish language lessons. Meet and eat dinner with international students.

Day 3: It's an early start to a busy day taking the Biodiversity tour and continuing your Spanish lessons in the morning. After lunch work together on the ropes course developing your teamwork. In the evening we shall enjoy cultural presentations on Costa Rica's history and geography.

Day 4: Today you will travel to Las Lomas where you will spend the morning helping the school director build the new community center. You will eat lunch with the children and continue work before returning to EARTH University to continue your Spanish lesson.

Day 5: Returning to Las Lomas to complete the phase of renovation work at the local school. Enjoy lunch with the school children and games in the afternoon, followed by a return to campus and the last of your Spanish lessons. In the evening we shall enjoy an arts session with the University students.

Day 6: Today is a day of adventure as the group travels to their chosen side trip. Your group will have chosen between a wide range of activities, from horse-riding, rainforest walks, canopy tours, volcano viewing and whitewater rafting.

Day 7: In the morning we shall take some time to relax around campus and take photos and say goodbye to friends we have made over lunch before going back to San Jose for a farewell meal.

Day 8: Airport drop-offs and departures.

For more information please contact EARTHUniversity@gvica.com or call us on 1-888-653-6028 and we can call you right back.