

ESCUELA CARACOL

WALDORF PEDAGOGY



Escuela Caracol is the first internationally certified Waldorf school in Guatemala founded in 2007 in the town of San Marcos La Laguna. Since its inception, it has provided an pedagogical-driven education for the local community. All Mayan students (around 90% of the student population) receive a near total scholarship so that they are able to receive this nurturing education.



At Escuela Caracol, we are a group of united educators from the villages of Lake Atitlán, committed to guiding the child through an education based in love and respect. The school follows the tenets and principles of Waldorf education, which places the student at the center of the education and helps them grow according to their natural development. At Escuela Caracol, Waldorf education is woven together with the Mayan Cosmovision to create a conscious environment where the head, heart, and hands are integrated to foster true learning.

WHAT DO WE DO?

At Escuela Caracol, we receive each student as a gift. We recognize that every individual that walks through our gate has extraordinary abilities that will develop if guided on the right path. The foundation of Waldorf education is based on offering the ideal experience based on the student's development from inquisitive child to a well-rounded adult, honoring the physical, emotional, and cognitive aspects of development. We focus on the nurturing of the head, the heart, and the hands of every child, and creative expression, practical work, and contact with nature accompanies each student along their personal development.

UNRIVALED EXPERIENCE

At Escuela Caracol, you will encounter a unique community in which Waldorf education is seamlessly blended with the Mayan Cosmovision. Our local teachers are trained in the Waldorf pedagogy and help bring this merging of cultures and philosophies to life. Our students are surrounded by nature on campus, with climbing trees, hidden gardens, and Mayan symbolism at every turn.



WAYS TO DONATE

Escuela Caracol relies on outside donations to fund about 80% of its basic operating expenses. During the year, we host several fundraising campaigns and offer a monthly sponsorship program.

SPONSOR A STUDENT

Become a monthly donor and sponsor a local starting at \$20/month. By supporting a local child, you give them the opportunity to receive an educational scholarship for a comprehensive education in a positive learning environment.

ONE TIME DONATION

By making your donation you help us to continue developing the daily programs of the Caracol School: daily nutritious food, organic garden, music, art, movement and languages.

We invite you to be part of the Caracol family!

HOW STARTED?

THE STORY OF ESCUELA CARACOL



In 2007, Joshua and Courtney Wilson opened Escuela Caracol, embarking on a journey that would change the course of the community. They envisioned an education that respected the spirit-sustained world. They believed that education should recognize the invisible and mysterious force of life and provide children with a more unified experience of its richness.



In San Marcos La Laguna, they were inspired by the people and community. They saw the values that live strongly in so many indigenous Mayan communities (working with their own hands, a tight community, and reverence for the natural world), and they knew that these ideas should be kept alive in the rapidly-changing modern world.

Waldorf pedagogy emerged as the way to harness the Mayan Cosmovision into a well-rounded education. The Waldorf pedagogy is both spiritual and earthly, and creatively addresses the threefold development of the child, through the body, soul, and spirit. By fostering an education that joins the modern world and ancient wisdom, students transform into adults that are ready to serve the world in all that they do.



This year, the Escuela Caracol celebrated 16 years of graciously serving the community. From the beginning of our magical garden and our first classrooms, to the 130 students that we welcomed with open arms this year, Escuela Caracol has grown and changed to help facilitate our mission of education. Escuela Caracol is women-led and 88% of our faculty are from the local community, a united group of educators who have embraced the idea of nurturing the head, heart, and hands to drive childhood development.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2023

ACADEMY

- 117 Mayan students benefit from scholarships
- 10 discounts annually to non-Mayan families
- 130 students benefiting from Waldorf education daily

PROGRAMS

- Daily nutritious meals for 130 students.
- Natural materials provided for the student as: wooden pentatonic flutes, beeswax crayons, organic watercolors, beeswax plastiline, dolls, wooden, wool and cotton materials
- 2 weekly English workshops
- 1 weekly drawing workshop
- 1 weekly watercolor workshop

Preschool

- Daily storytelling and songs
- 1 weekly bread baking workshop
- 1 weekly walk inside and outside the school

Elementary

- 1 weekly music workshop for each elementary grade
- Daily performing wind instruments in the main class
- 1 weekly movement workshop to each elementary school grade
- 1 weekly Kaqchiquel workshop
- 1 weekly clay molding workshop for 4th grade
- 1 weekly wooden carving workshop for 5th and 6th grade
- 1 weekly gardening workshop

MAINTENANCE

- A garden designed specially to climb trees, to run free and surrounded by nature.

GIVE IT BACK

- Monthly workshops on Waldorf pedagogy offered for families
- 1 free workshop for 5th and 6th grade students of San Marcos La Laguna National School
- 1 free biographical workshop for personal growth for a non-profit organization in Quetzaltenango
- 1 free show for preschool students of San Marcos La Laguna National School



WISHLIST 2024

OUR DREAMS

FOOD PROGRAM: 18,000USD

Our daily food program provides a healthy, nutritious snack to all 130 students every day. This snack is prepared with the advice of the Teacher's Council with the purpose of giving our students healthy food options in a region heavily affected by malnutrition and poor dietary habits. Donations to our food program contribute to the continued mission of making sure that our Caracol community is well-fed and ready to learn!



ART AND MOVEMENT: 10,000USD

The art and movement programs at Escuela caracol are essential pillars that allow students to express their feelings and emotions in positive ways. Art and movement is one of the best methods at connecting the head, hands, and heart, a core tenet of Waldorf education. Throughout the grades, students work with watercolor painting, clay modeling, wood carving, and pencil sketching. We strive to use natural and well-sourced materials without artificial coloring or plastic, and donations to our art and movement program help nurture the creative expression of each student.

MUSIC PROGRAM: 6,800USD

Our music program is realized every day in the classroom, allowing the students to learn an instrument and more importantly, understand the importance and beauty of musical expression. As the students move through the grades, they learn to sing (kindergarten), play the pentatonic flute (first grade), the diatonic flute (third grade), and the guitar (fourth grade). Donations to our music program helps us provide the children with musical instruments and space for them to explore this creative path.

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KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM BUILDING: 25,000USD

Due to the growth of Escuela Caracol this year, we welcomed a third kindergarten for the first time. We transformed our art classroom into the third kindergarten classroom as a short-term solution. Donations to this area allows us to build a proper kindergarten classroom and thus move our art program back into its intended space.

WALDORF TEACHER TRAINING: 8,000USD

All Escuela Caracol teachers must be certified in Waldorf education so that the pedagogy can be successfully brought to the students. Each year, the teachers attend training in Mexico or Colombia in order to remain certified and learn more from experienced educators in Latin America. Waldorf education is a living pedagogy that is constantly evolving with the needs of the students, and teaching training is a paramount tool for being able to keep it alive.



ENGLISH PROGRAM: 7,500USD

Our English program is given weekly to all students from kindergarten to sixth grade. We believe that learning a language is a challenge that is extremely important for the students in our community. Support for our English programs helps us employ a trained English teacher who can help open greater opportunities for our students through the acquisition of a language.

SERVICES: VARIABLE AMOUNT

- 3 computers: 2 for faculty use and 1 for our marketing department.
- Reinstallation and maintenance of the electrical system in our classrooms.
- Installation of drywall around the campus.



THANK YOU!

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