2023

GREEN BUILDING ACADEMY

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE GBA
The Green Building Academy (GBA) is Long Way Home’s semi annual 4-week intensive course designed for individuals who want to delve into green building and design topics, as taught by expert instructors. GBA students learn, build, and live alongside staff and interns from all around the world, as well as our experienced local team. Living in our eco designed home in a zero-waste household is a unique experience that can help participants visualize their own projects!

The program takes place at our site in San Juan Comalapa, a rural town in the beautiful highlands of Guatemala. During the course you can visit world-renowned destinations such as volcanic Lake Atitlán and the colonial city of Antigua!

All participants who join the Academy will contribute to our efforts to make healthy and resilient housing accessible to low-resourced and climate-stressed communities.
THE ACADEMY

This Academy will be about collaborative and immersive learning in the safe and welcoming environment of our one of a kind green building campus in San Juan Comalapa, Guatemala!

In addition to focused classroom studies, we dive into the construction projects like a cob bound, tire-walled, bamboo roofed, eco brick and glass bottle enhanced, solar-powered, housing structure and science lab on the LWH campus.

Our local and international team of green-building instructors will guide classroom and on-site practices. We have created an amazing agenda of learning, work, cultural immersion, and fun!

WE ARE PROUD TO HAVE HOSTED A TOTAL OF 70 STUDENTS SINCE OUR FIRST GREEN BUILDING ACADEMY IN JULY, 2018
WHAT YOU EXPERIENCE:

1. The Green-Building
   
   An interactive learning environment

   The academy includes on-site and in classroom instruction as well as an e-copy of our Green Building Manual.

2. The Town

   Cultural tour of Comalapa

   We'll take you on a walk through our town and explain some historic significance of the area. As an artist community, there are many galleries to visit and story telling murals we can elaborate on.

3. The Food

   Breakfast, lunch, and dinner provided on-site

   Get ready for local food prepared by our amazing chef, Antonia, using fresh ingredients from the local market — avocados, fruits, vegetables, home-made tortillas and salsa, and more! We’ll also cook some meals together, sharing in the fun of preparing and eating a meal with the sun setting behind the volcanic vista.

4. The Housing

   Lodging in LWH’s green-designed Volunteer Housing

   Live in our completely off-grid houses, sitting next to the school and overlooking some of Guatemala’s most famous volcanoes. The housing style is dormitories, although there may be some single rooms available. Accommodations are outfitted with solar panels, locally sourced water (purified drinking water is filtered on-site), composting latrine toilets, bucket showers, gas stoves, and common areas to cook, eat, and gather in.

5. The Cultural Immersion

   Various cultural activities available (some at an additional cost)

   - Tortilla making
   - Backstrap weaving demonstration
   - Hike to a three-volcano vista
   - Painting workshop
   - Spanish and Kaqchikel classes
The Cost

2023 Academy Price
$2,000 for the full month ($600 for individual weeks)
$200 scholarship discount available for those in financial need (i.e. $1800 in total) - application required.

2023 Latin American Citizen Price
$1,000 for the full month ($300 for individual weeks)
Proof of citizenship.
No scholarship available.

Can’t join us for the entire month?
Choose the week(s) that interest you the most!
Just $600 per week
See website for additional promotions (lwhome.org)

The Course

The course addresses different themes week to week to create a well rounded education on all prevalent green building topics. Days are balanced with theoretical classes, on-site practice, and construction time with our expert instructors

Week 1 - Earth
- Understanding earth
- Testing earth
- General principles of earth construction
- Earth construction techniques
- Repurposing materials
- Plasters, mortars and paint mixes

Week 2 - Design
- Understanding climate conditions
- Material thermal properties
- Design with your surroundings
- Structural basics
- Group project: Create a design adapted to a specific location

Week 3 - Water
- Fundamentals of water management
- Water harvesting and storage
- Water filtration
- Water pressurization
- Wastewater treatment and reuse
- Dry Composting toilets

Week 4 - Power
- Electricity basics
- Solar and wind power
- Electric system design
- Nature powered systems
- Final project: design your dream sustainable house
The Green Building Academy is led by Germain Hot, a green builder and professional civil engineer with a Master's degree from Imperial College London. He has been living in Comalapa for 2 years and knows our buildings by heart. Germain teaches in English, Spanish and French and his approach focuses on lowtech solutions and respect of local cultural heritage. He believes that with a global understanding of the concepts everybody can learn to design and build their own sustainable home!

Instruction is also carried out by LWH staff, including our experienced Comalapan builders, as well as our Executive Director Matt Paneitz, and our Green Building Manager Adam Howland.

NEXT STEPS

Ready to apply? Need more information about the course? Want to learn more about LWH in general?

Arrange a chat at volunteer@lwhome.org