



Visit us in Chajul, Guatemala

January 10-21, 2011

Join thoughtful travelers from around the world for service, learning, and adventure!

Sample Itinerary

Your itinerary will look something like this:



1 Arrival- Antigua

Arrival into Guatemala City. A first glimpse of Guatemala: winding cobble streets of Antigua surrounded by volcanoes. Introductions and group dinner.

2 Orientation-Antigua/Chajul

We spend the day on trip orientation, and a beautiful trip through winding mountains, cornfields and colorful indigenous towns to our new home in Chajul!

3 Chajul

Orientation and introduction to the Ixil region and to LHI. We tour the community of Chajul! Tortilla making in small groups in family's houses. In the afternoon we have an enlightening Ixil lesson.

4 Chajul

We begin work installing cement floors in an elementary school, and preparing Chajul's first public library! Cultural lesson about area and Mayan culture.



5 Chajul

Work projects continue on floors and in library, and start planting organic family vegetable gardens. Sports afternoon with scholarship kids of Limitless Horizons Ixil! In the evening, learn more about the history and work of LHI.



6 Chajul

Morning of service work with floors and organic family vegetable gardens! Hike to sacred site San Andres with local guide

7 Chajul

Hike to a beautiful waterfall with LHI students. If you're brave you can even take

a dip. Trip to nearby Ixil town of Cortzal. Eat lunch, then learn about weaving and local culture through a tour and presentation from the women's cooperative.



8 Chajul

Continue work projects in schools and the public library!
Learn to weave or make Boxbol with local families
Conference on Chajul war history with an Ex-Guerilla

9 Chajul- Day trip

Beautiful 3 hour hike to Acul!
Eat a delicious lunch at a cheese farm, and enjoy picturesque views! Time for group reflection.



10 Chajul

Continue work projects in schools and the public library! Visit to Chajul Women's Cooperative Afternoon of board games with LHI scholarship students!

11 Chajul

Finish up work projects.
Closure activity and celebration with community youth & families!

12 Chajul to Santa Cruz

Leave Chajul early. Stop for lunch and visit the Church of Chichicastengo where Mayan and Catholic ceremonies are combined. Visit Panajachel Take a boat to Santa Cruz de la Laguna on Lake Atitlan. Salsa Lesson

13 Santa Cruz- Panajachel

Hike to a beautiful restaurant, Casa del Mundo, overlooking the lake. Take a boat across the lake to visit the culturally rich town of Santiago. Return in boat to Santa Cruz for a final evening of tranquil relaxation!!

14 Panajachel- Antigua

Rise Early! Travel day to Antigua. Hike active volcano Pacaya for breath taking views. Final dinner in Antigua for group reflection.

15 Antigua- USA

Homeward bound!

Location

The Ixil region is isolated by beautiful mountains of the Western Highlands of Guatemala and has maintained its rich Ixil Mayan traditions and language through decades of turmoil. Chajul, Nebaj, and Cotzal make up the Ixil region in the Department of Quiché, each county unique in their language variants and customary dress. Limitless Horizons Ixil (LHI) serves the county of Chajul (population about 50,000). Having been at the heart of the 36-year civil war, Chajul experiences post-war challenges such as emotional trauma, land displacement, and fragmented families. Additionally, unemployment is high, large families live in one-room adobe houses with open cooking fires, opportunities for women are scarce, and family- and gender-based violence are common. The community has a corn-based agricultural economy in which adults struggle daily to feed their families and the average income is \$1-3 per day.



A 2002 study revealed that less than 1% of children graduate from high school (and only 5% from middle school) as they are forced to leave school at a young age to help support the family household, which leaves 75% of the adult population illiterate. Chajul further suffers from common preventable health concerns, such as respiratory illness, intestinal disease, tuberculosis, malnutrition, and death during childbirth. Eighty percent of the Chajul population lives in poverty.

Watch videos from Chajul at <http://www.youtube.com/user/jasonbisping> .

What will the weather be like?

Chajul has a mountain climate. Warm and sunny during the day (jeans and t-shirt), but very, very cold at night. During the January 2010 trip, it didn't rain at all. During the January 2009 trip, it rained about half the days. Antigua and other locations on this trip will be warmer than Chajul.

Activities

Service projects have included:

- laying cement floors for classrooms and community spaces
- planting organic family gardens
- preparing Chajul's first public library
- inventorying and ticketing library books
- helping students with their homework
- building a safe wood burning stove
- creating a sport court for basketball and soccer
- painting LHI's Community Center
- repairing and improving the LHI student computer lab
- mural painting
- assembling student school supply bundles



There are generally multiple service projects happening during the trip. Before the trip starts, service projects are determined based on community need and sustainable impact. LHI scholarship students are often volunteering alongside visitors.

Cultural and educational activities have included:

- making tortillas and *boxbol* (the Ixil region's most traditional food) in families' homes
- exhibitions of local dances and traditions
- visiting a Mayan sacred site with local guide
- hearing a talk by an ex-guerrilla from the Guatemalan civil war



- learning Chajul's traditional weaving techniques
- taking lessons in the local language, Ixil
- visiting coffee cooperatives
- visiting the women's weaving cooperative
- participating in lessons on local Mayan culture and religion
- shopping at local markets
- learning to dance Salsa
- reflecting as a group

Adventure and vacation activities have included:

- living in Chajul for over a week!
- hiking to local cheese farm
- hiking to beautiful waterfall
- climbing volcanoes
- staying at a resort on the shores of the famous Lake Atitlán
- exploring the Lake Atitlán area independently (optional kayaking and boat tours)



Do I need to speak Spanish?

Not everyone on the trip needs to know Spanish. Spanish speakers will be able to use their language skills extensively, and you will be able to use your Spanish with LHI youth in Chajul, who speak Ixil at home and are also learning Spanish. We will make sure that there are enough Spanish-speaking participants on the trip so that you can help each other, and all the talks will be delivered in, or translated to, English. All tour guides are either bilingual English-Spanish or trilingual with Ixil. We will also ask the more advanced Spanish speakers on the trip to help translate.

Safety



- Global Works and LHI only run trips that meet their **high standards** for safety.
- Global Works and LHI will take care of the group. They have been working with volunteers in Guatemala and all over Latin America for years and make safety a priority. **Trip leader Katie Morrow has led over 25 trips** over the past 8 years and has had extensive training in risk management and emergency response. LHI has hosted seven volunteer groups over the past two years.
- All Global Works leaders are trained in CPR/First Aid and are professional guides and travelers.
- All destinations have **Emergency Action Plans** which

carefully and efficiently lay out the practice of ensuring safety for the group, attaining medical care if necessary, and outlining specific expectations for all staff and group participants

- Global Works and LHI choose their **locations** consciously and carefully to ensure the highest level of safety. All locations are scouted thoroughly prior to arrival.
- Upon arriving in airport, participants will be met by the Global Works/LHI trip leader and brought to the private van, which will shuttle the group to Antigua, a tourist-friendly city.
- In Chajul, where the service work takes place, the group is **together at all times**. Individuals may only travel in groups of three or more on all Global Works programs.
- The day will start early and **end early**, with dinner in hotel and time to relax, journal, reflect, get to know each other, and sleep.
- Global Works has a **no drugs nor alcohol** policy during all Global Works activities. Any behavior that puts participants, staff, or any individuals at risk may result in expulsion from the program.
- Participants are **advised not to bring valuables**. Global Works and LHI are not responsible for lost or stolen goods. While tips will be provided at orientation for how to prevent theft, and LHI will attempt to secure items at all times, it is always safest to leave mp3 players, jewelry, etc. behind when traveling.



- LHI hires the **transportation company with the highest safety rating** in the country for all group transport. This will be a private bus/van with a certified, highly qualified driver who typically is hired for groups like this.
- The first night in Chajul, the trip leader will **discuss safety during orientation**, and share with the group what is appropriate and what's not.

Note: Participants and parents who have concerns about safety can speak with Global Works. Please **call Global Works at 303.545.2202**.

Health and Immunizations

- Global Works requires the completion of **health forms** to ensure that participants are healthy, capable of physical activity, insured, and immunized.
- Global Works will need confirmation from a physician that the student has been **immunized against tetanus, diphtheria, and hepatitis B, which are all standard vaccines**.
- Additionally, participants are recommended to get vaccines specific to this trip: **hepatitis A** (two-shot series, good for 20 years) and a **typhoid shot** (good for two years).
- There is no risk of malaria in any of the areas on the trip's itinerary.
- All food is prepared by people trained in **safe cooking methods** with attention to the needs of foreigners.
- If the student is concerned about digestive sickness, he/she should get a prescription of the antibiotic **Cipro** from his/her physician and bring 4 to 10 days worth of the medication. If the student gets sick from food, Cipro may work to remedy the problem. In any cases where symptoms persist, **medical care will be provided**.
- There are **medical centers in every location** that the trip goes. Chajul has a clean and well-supplied medical center, with two well-trained doctors and a psychologist.



Food & Lodging



LHI scopes out safe, community-minded hotels in all locations. In Chajul, participants stay at the hotel maintained by a local cooperative. You sleep in bunk beds, 2-6 participants to a room. Bathrooms are shared, have running water and flushable toilets (but toilet paper goes in the trash!), and showers (usually with hot water!)

Participants eat breakfast and dinner at the hotel in Chajul. LHI students prepare breakfast as part of their work-study program, and dinner is community-style, where everyone helps. Lunch is served in town.

Food will reflect local eating habits (lots of corn, eggs, and beans!) but is also sensitive to the food habits of travelers. A wide variety of foods will be served along with bottled water and other safe, non-alcoholic drinks. Vegetarians and other diets are welcome! Travelers are encouraged to bring snacks (e.g. Cliff bars, trail mix) or any special foods they like (e.g. peanut butter) to supplement and add variety to their meals.

Cost

The **tuition** for the trip will be \$1700 (flights are not included.) \$500 of this cost is tax-deductible.

Where does the money go? What is included?

- Safe and reliable transportation in Guatemala
- Low-cost medical care, potable water, medicine kit
- Emergency medical insurance, including evacuation in case of a serious emergency
- Lodging, food (always chosen based on safety and supporting the local community wherever possible)
- Access to Chajul and a genuine experience there working alongside local families
- A rich, collaborative, hands-on learning experience for all participants
- Materials for service projects (which are sustainable and high impact)
- Activities (hikes, tours, fees, materials, speakers)
- Employment for local coordinators and cooks
- Professional and experienced trip guides – including the opportunity to work alongside and learn from the founders of LHI, both experienced tour guides
- Regular trip updates to parents from Global Works
- Extensive trip research and planning
- Time of Global Works and LHI employees to coordinate and manage trip



What's not included in tuition?

- Airport departure tax (\$3)
- Meals in airport
- Airfare (usually \$400-\$550)
- Communication home (participants can pay for phone minutes and internet time as needed/available)

Is the payment considered a tax-deductible donation?

\$500 of the tuition is tax deductible. Because this trip is designed to provide our 501c(3) organization, which serves the indigenous community of Chajul, Guatemala with needed assistance in various projects, a portion of the trip costs qualify as a tax deductible charitable contribution.

The portion of the trip costs for non-volunteer activities such as transportation, speaker fees, lake visit, and medical care do not qualify as a tax-deductible charitable contribution.

Our CPA has determined that \$500 of the \$1,700 total trip cost is eligible for tax deduction based on current I.R.S. regulations.

Upon payment in full, you and/or your donors will receive charitable donation receipts.

Why should we pay to volunteer?

- Without your tuition payments LHI would not be able to carry out high need service projects. The funding pays for all the materials required for the projects as well as the staff time to manage each group's service experience. You will be leaving a lasting difference in the community of LHI and Chajul.

- This travel experience is typically unavailable to tourists, as Chajul is so isolated and nearly impossible to navigate without local connections. The money that you contribute to activities in Chajul goes directly to support the local students and families involved in facilitating them. You are participating in a uniquely sustainable flavor of tourism.
- The trip is an investment in personal learning and growth. LHI and Global Works deliver a meaningful experience that will open your eyes to new ideas and open doors to new opportunities.
- Payment covers food, lodging, travel expenses, and activities in addition to the volunteer opportunity.

Trip Preparation & Flights

Do I buy my own flight?

Yes. As participants typically fly from many different cities, it is best to purchase your own flight depending on what works best for you in terms of departure cities and cost. Early purchase of flights will ensure lower airfares.



What airport do I fly into? When?

All participants must fly into Guatemala City before 5pm on January 10 and must fly out after 10am on January 21. This is to ensure safety of participants, minimize risk, and ensure that a trip leader can accompany you to and from the airport.

Can I stay longer or arrive earlier and travel on my own in Guatemala?

Yes. You will be asked to meet the group at the hotel in Antigua by a certain time if you are traveling in Guatemala before group arrival. LHI and Global Works are not responsible for you before or after the specific start and end times of the trip, but we are happy to advise.

Can I talk to someone who's been on the trip before?

Yes. January 2009 trip participant Alysha Naik would be happy to talk to you. You can send an email to alysamnaik@gmail.com.

What do I need to do to prepare for the trip?

- complete medical history form
- Get physician's report
- get immunizations if necessary (typhoid and hepatitis A)
- meet deadlines for payments
- buy your flight and notify us of your flight details
- make copies of your passport
- no visa is required for U.S. citizens, but if you are from another country, you may need a visa, so do your research!
- make sure you have a valid passport with at least 6 months before expiration
- make sure you have everything you need (see packing list)
- review LHI visitor's information to ensure appropriate cultural sensitivity while visiting Chajul
- do lots of walking and maybe a few hikes to get in physical shape
- learn about Guatemala and the Ixil region
- brush up on your Spanish

Sustainability

How is the trip sustainable?



While we can't argue that your flight is good for the environment, we can say that your stay with us in Guatemala is planned with close attention to sustainability. Always in an effort to build capacity among Chajul's residents, all projects are conducted alongside LHI scholarship students or local workers. We choose projects that can be completed by the group during your stay, or with feasible capacity before and after. Each service project chosen is determined based on need and the lasting effect it will have on the community. Each family, student, local employee, and contractor involved in your trip is paid a fair wage, not only during your stay but also in all of the work they do with LHI. Cultural activities are designed to empower local families and youth to share their culture, language and heritage in order to celebrate their importance. Families and students use money earned to fund their or their child's middle school or high school education (which is not free). We select locally managed hotels and restaurants that give back to their communities. We encourage you to purchase small items (snacks, artisan products, etc.) in order to further stimulate the local economy. Additionally, we strive to use environmentally friendly materials, reuse, and recycle whenever possible.



About Us

Global Works



Global Works is an experienced travel operator that believes in traveling with a purpose. All of their trips have a combination of service, adventure, and education. Global Works runs trips in many countries from a small office in Boulder, Colorado.

Global Works is responsible for coordinating the logistics, travel details, and emergency management associated with this trip so that LHI can focus on the program itself. During the trip, they are the U.S. contact for parents and help the trip leaders with on-the-go research and last-minute changes.

Global Works also sponsors an LHI scholarship student every year and has been dedicated to LHI's work in Chajul for many years.

See <http://www.globalworkstravel.com> for more information.

Limitless Horizons Ixil

LHI is a 501(c)3 non-profit and Guatemalan non-governmental organization located in the western highlands of Guatemala. LHI envisions the community of Chajul becoming a productive, self-sustaining area with equal gender opportunities for adequate employment and literacy, access to health care and education, solid infrastructure, and affordable living costs, while embracing and staying true to its Maya Ixil



Limitless Horizons Ixil | <http://www.limitlesshorizonsixil.org>
Contact: Lindsey@limitlesshorizonsixil.org

traditions, heritage, and language. Current effort is being put towards this vision through combining local and international resources and expertise in a collaborative and integrated LHI team. The focus of LHI's programs is determined according to feedback from the community about their needs and LHI's capacity to meet them. The heart of LHI is its scholarship program, which currently provides 76 students with scholarships for middle school and high school. In addition to providing students with the economic support they need to continue with their studies, LHI also meets the students' broader needs through tutoring, computer classes, intensive Spanish language courses, guidance counseling and support in exploring career options, as well as opportunities to earn extra money through the Work to (L)earn work-study program. Other community programs include an organic garden initiative, promotion and sale of safe wood burning stoves and other community health products, and Chajul's first-ever public library.

LHI was founded in 2004 by Chajul native Pedro Caba and American social worker Katie Morrow. Pedro grew up in Chajul and is the first person from the community to graduate from university; he holds a degree in Civil Engineering and is a certified Mayan culture guide. Katie, who holds a Master's degree in Social Work, was inspired by the people of Chajul, as well as shocked by the extreme poverty and lack of opportunities. By uniting their insights and experiences, together Pedro and Katie have created an organization that combines local and international resources and expertise and remains committed to both its local and international roots.

Registration and Payment Process



Registration is open until the trip is full.

Step 1: Email Lindsey@limitlesshorizonsixil.org to let LHI's coordinator know you are interested. You may **discuss any questions** with Lindsey.

Step 2: When you are ready to **register** and pay the deposit, complete the application and \$300 deposit through this Global Works Travel link: https://glo802.sslcert19.com/cgt_application_adult.php

Step 3: Purchase your **flights** and send your flight itinerary to groups@globalworkstravel.com. You may travel from any airport in the world, and you may arrive earlier or stay later in country should you wish to extend your trip.

Step 4: We will send you information on vaccinations and a packing list, and you will send us 2 required forms (medical history and physician's report).

Step 5: \$900 payment due to Global Works on November 30.

Check: Make it out to 'Global Works Travel', put your name and "LHI" either on the check or in a note with it, and send it to 2342 Broadway, Boulder CO, 80304

Credit card: payments can be made directly to Global Works over the phone 1 (800) 784-6362 or online via our secure form: https://glo802.sslcert19.com/Payment_cc.php

Step 6: \$500 tax-deductible payment due to Limitless Horizons Ixil on December 20. Upon payment in full, you and/or your donors will receive a charitable donation receipt.

Check: Make it out to 'Limitless Horizons Ixil', put your name and "AWB" either on the check or in a note with it, and send it to Christie Leighton, 1805 Maple Shade Lane, Richmond, VA 23227. (note: if you are fundraising and several people are writing checks made out to Limitless Horizons Ixil, please collect them and send them to Christie as a batch).

Credit Card: payments can be made online at <http://limitlesshorizonsixil.org/english%20site/donate.htm>, and be sure to click on the 'on behalf of' link, then put your name and 'AWB' in the box so we know what it is for.

Step 7: We'll see you in Guatemala!



Photos are property of Limitless Horizons Ixil. Thanks to Brown alumna Ahalya Nirmalan for taking most of these photographs and sharing them with LHI.