



## **Asociación Pop Wuj - Environmental Projects Coordinator**

*(Revised July 2018)*

The intern's primary activities will be to coordinate the environmental projects funded and administered by the Asociación Pop Wuj. These projects include the Safe Stove Project, the Reforestation Project, and the Recycling Program. Pop Wuj's other projects are the Scholarship Program, the Family Support Center, the Pop Wuj Clinic, and the Nutrition Program. All Pop Wuj projects are located in Quetzaltenango (Xela) and nearby rural communities. This internship is full time (requiring 40 hours per week) and requires a three-month minimum commitment.

The Asociación Pop Wuj runs the Centro de Estudios de Español Pop Wuj, or Pop Wuj Spanish School, a nonprofit that directs all proceeds to its community development work. The projects are also funded in part by donations via Foundation Todos Juntos and a partnership with Timmy Global Health.

### **General Information about the Environmental Projects**

The Asociación Pop Wuj has three primary environmental projects: the Safe Stove Project, the Reforestation Project, and the Recycling Program. Generally these projects yield concrete, immediately visible results. Although the Environmental Projects Coordinator will focus on these areas (as seasonally appropriate), they will also assist with environment-related work in other projects.

#### The Safe Stove Project

One of Pop Wuj's oldest projects is the construction of safe, fuel-efficient stoves in rural towns near Xela. In most rural homes, people cook over indoor open fires. Improving stoves has become important to many global development projects due to positive consequences for both the environment and personal health. By containing and conducting heat efficiently, safe stoves use at least 50% less wood than open fires. Consuming less wood saves the family money (or time gathering wood) and reduces deforestation, an increasingly grave problem in Guatemala. Equally crucial, channeling smoke out of the house greatly reduces lung-related health problems, especially for women and children who spend much of their time in poorly ventilated kitchens. Respiratory illness is currently the leading cause of death in Guatemala (IHME). Containing the flames in a raised brick structure also reduces accidental burns and prevents back strain.

Pop Wuj builds safe stoves in rural communities near Xela. We buy all materials for the safe stove locally. Recipients provide sand, *panela* (unrefined blocks of brown sugar), water, and simple tools such as buckets. Pop Wuj provides bricks, cement blocks, cement, clay, the *plancha* (metal stove top), the chimney, specialized tools such as levels, and labor. While families are not always available to participate physically in the construction process, they are nearly always with us while we work to meet and spend time with the volunteers. By nature of local culture, those at the home during this building process are usually women and children. We appreciate their hospitality and ask that all visitors treat them with warmth and respect.

As with most Pop Wuj projects, existing community groups request our involvement, and we then conduct in-home interviews to determine eligibility. While the stoves are relatively simple, inexpensive technology, they make immediate improvements in quality of life.

Pop Wuj teams of trained construction leaders and Pop Wuj Spanish students build stoves in three stages. We build almost every week on Tuesdays at 2 p.m. and Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m. Depending on the current stage of stove construction, we need volunteers to pour and build the stove foundation, cut and lay bricks, or outfit the

stove with hardware. Every few months, as we finish a group of stoves, we also need to interview prospective recipient families, provide their orientation, and buy and deliver materials for a new group. Social Work and Medical Spanish Program students and Pop Wuj interns often help more extensively with these special stages.

An Environmental Projects Coordinator is trained in the proper construction of Pop Wuj's stove and expected to lead groups of 3 to 5 volunteers once or twice a week. They also assist with interviews, orientation, our materials purchasing/delivery day, and other miscellaneous tasks as needed.

### The Reforestation Project

Due to the widespread reliance on open fires for cooking in Guatemala, deforestation is a serious problem threatening the health and wellbeing of the environment as well as the human population. Pop Wuj's Reforestation Project is active in peak rainy season, usually from the end of May until early August. When conditions allow, Pop Wuj plants native species on the land of families participating in other projects, usually the Safe Stove Project or Scholarship Program.

As seasonally appropriate, an Environmental Projects Coordinator assists in every stage of reforestation efforts. These tasks include establishing a plan for the year, ordering and organizing saplings, coordinating transportation, and attending all planting days.

### The Recycling Program

Recycling is not common in Guatemala, and in many communities there is no waste management system to collect trash. Many families burn their trash, including plastic, and may even burn it in indoor cook fires. This practice contributes to air pollution and respiratory problems.

Pop Wuj collects plastic, glass, paper, cardboard, aluminum cans, and scrap from the Spanish school, some of our community partners, and the Family Support Center. Because we sell these materials, the program is self-sustaining. As needed, an Environmental Projects Coordinator assists in emptying and cleaning Pop Wuj's recycling bins, bringing recycling in from communities, storing materials at Pop Wuj, delivering materials for sale at recycling centers, and maintaining records about recycling sales.

### **Responsibilities**

- Work closely with Pop Wuj's Director of Social Projects, Carmen de Alvarado to coordinate Pop Wuj's environmental projects.
- Travel with Carmen and/or other staff to the communities served by Pop Wuj, depending on the weekly schedule of activities. The intern will also travel and work independently.
- Collaborate with Pop Wuj's Student Coordinator and fellow Pop Wuj volunteers.
- Interview prospective families for the Safe Stove Project (alongside Pop Wuj staff).
- Plan and participate in the orientation meeting for new safe stove recipients.
- Assist with the purchase and delivery of materials for new safe stove recipients.
- Complete safe stove construction training and lead volunteer groups in construction.
- Return to families' homes after the third stage of safe stove construction to install the fire door.
- Become familiar with safe stove recipients and share their stories with volunteers.
- Interview and otherwise follow up with families who have previously received safe stoves to determine their status (e.g. in use, in need of repair, etc.)
- Maintain the Safe Stove Project database with up-to-date information about recipients and their stoves.
- Coordinate the purchase, transportation, and planting of seedlings for the Reforestation Project (peak rainy season only).
- Oversee Pop Wuj's and the Family Support Center's Recycling Program.
- Collaborate with staff and fellow volunteers to maintain Pop Wuj's recycling storage spaces.
- Coordinate the transportation and sale of recyclables (as needed).
- Update records about recycling intake, sales, and disposal options around Xela.

- Educate adults and children about environmental issues at the Family Support Center and in the communities served by Pop Wuj.
- Support the environmental work of the communities where Pop Wuj works.
- Serve as a liaison between Pop Wuj's projects and its language school students, which includes attending the weekly Monday morning meeting and Thursday evening dinner.
- Take photos and videos of Pop Wuj's community development work in and around Xela.
- Produce content (in English) for Pop Wuj's blog ([proyectospopwuj.blogspot.com](http://proyectospopwuj.blogspot.com)).
- Research and write status reports as needed for the Foundation Todos Juntos biannual newsletter (*Solidaridad*), quarterly FTJ updates, etc.
- Update and maintain Pop Wuj's project database and Google Drive.
- Create and post Pop Wuj's weekly schedule of project activities.
- Assist in coordinating special activities in the projects when Pop Wuj hosts groups of volunteers.
- Translate cultural competency courses and other meetings/presentations as needed.
- Organize benefits and special events as needed.
- Participate in Pop Wuj's cultural competency lectures at the beginning of the internship.

### **Requirements**

- Intermediate Spanish
- Experience in construction, recycling, and/or reforestation OR willingness take initiative in learning about them
- Strong organizational skills
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Basic familiarity with computers and social media
- Willingness to learn about and respect the Guatemalan culture
- A lot of energy!

Please note that an intern's Spanish level heavily dictates the work they'll be able to do in the projects. The more advanced the Spanish, the more an intern can participate actively in meetings, translation, presentations, interviews, etc.

The internship can be completed at any time during the year. However, the Asociación Pop Wuj operates the Reforestation Project only in peak rainy season, typically late June and early July. The Asociación Pop Wuj is willing to extend the internship should the intern succeed during the first three months and have interest in continuing. The Asociación Pop Wuj also offers other internship opportunities should the intern be interested in focusing in working across all the projects or focusing on another area.

### **Supervision:**

Director of Social Projects Carmen de Alvarado will supervise the intern. The full team of volunteers and Social Work Spanish students meets with the director every Monday morning. Although this meeting covers projects other than the environmental projects, attendance is crucial. All volunteers and coordinators work together in the projects and learn from each other's obstacles and successes. Because Carmen has many years of experience working in rural communities, we rely on her expertise and cultural awareness to guide our work. No significant change or new work should be undertaken without first consulting her. Outside our Monday meetings, Carmen is available to meet individually with volunteers as needed. The Pop Wuj Student Coordinator is not a formal supervisor but is available for day-to-day support.

### **Internship Cost**

Each intern pays a \$300 fee that is shared equally between EntreMundos and Pop Wuj. This payment defrays the costs of training and materials. The \$300 must be paid in full to the Volunteer Coordinator at EntreMundos by 6 p.m. on the Friday of the intern's second week at Pop Wuj. Failure to complete payment by then will result in suspension of the internship.

### **Recommended Equipment**

The Environmental Projects Coordinator will need work clothes for safe stove construction. (Some volunteers prefer to purchase an extra t-shirt and pair of jeans for a dollar or two at one of Quetzaltenango’s many secondhand stores.) Construction gloves are handy but not required. Likewise, a camera and laptop can facilitate blog, database, and other computer-based work. Pop Wuj’s Student Coordinator may be able to lend these items on occasion, but we strongly recommend that interns bring their own if possible.

### Additional Expenses

Each intern is responsible for their own room and board in Xela, transportation costs when using public transportation to work in the projects, and Thursday dinner payment. Interns may choose to live with a Pop Wuj host family (who provide a private room and 3 meals a day, 7 day a week) for \$50 USD per week or to arrange their own accommodations with guidance from the EntreMundos Volunteer Coordinator. Public buses charge Q4 (\$0.50 USD) for round-trip fare from Xela to the current Safe Stove Project sites. Pop Wuj usually provides private transportation for scholarship meetings, medical work outside our Xela clinic, and special events in the environmental projects. Intern attendance is required at the Pop Wuj dinner, also attended by the Student Coordinator, at least one Pop Wuj director, and many students and teachers each week. Students pay Q30 for their meal while staff and volunteers pay Q10 (\$1.25 USD). Pop Wuj offers free WiFi, which interns are welcome to use while Pop Wuj is open (M-F 8 a.m.-7 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m.-7 p.m.). However, interns pay for any additional internet usage at internet cafes, etc.

### Typical Schedule

The schedule at Pop Wuj varies enormously with project priorities, time of year, etc., so describing a “typical week” is difficult. The sample schedule below includes common events at Pop Wuj, some of which are mandatory for interns and others of which depend on project priorities and intern interests. We have highlighted a sample schedule for an Environmental Projects Coordinator in blue. Please note that working over 40 hours happens easily in a busy week, so interns can ask Carmen for permission to leave early or arrive late during unstructured periods.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	WEEKEND
<p>8 a.m. <b>Activities Meeting</b></p> <p>9 a.m. Medical Conference</p> <p>9 a.m. <b>Meeting with Carmen de Alvarado</b></p> <p>10 a.m. Cultural competency course</p> <p>1 p.m. <b>LUNCH BREAK</b></p> <p>2-5 p.m. Unstructured time for <b>Recycling Program work, writing, database maintenance, etc.</b></p>	<p>8 a.m. Pop Wuj Clinic</p> <p>8 a.m. <b>Scholarship Meeting (on- or off-site)</b></p> <p>9 a.m. Cultural competency course</p> <p>1 p.m. <b>LUNCH BREAK</b></p> <p>2-5:30 p.m. <b>Safe Stove Project (off-site)</b></p>	<p>8 a.m. Pop Wuj Clinic (on- or off-site)</p> <p>8 a.m. Scholarship Meeting (off-site)</p> <p>8:30 a.m. <b>Safe Stove Project (off-site)</b></p> <p>1 p.m. <b>LUNCH BREAK</b></p> <p>2-5 p.m. Unstructured time</p>	<p>8 a.m. <b>Nutrition Program (3x/month, off-site)</b></p> <p>9 a.m. Cultural competency course</p> <p>1 p.m. <b>LUNCH BREAK</b></p> <p>2-5:30 p.m. <b>Visit to the Family Support Center</b></p> <p>5:30-6 p.m. <b>BREAK</b></p> <p>6-8:30 p.m. <b>Pop Wuj Dinner</b></p>	<p>8 a.m. Pop Wuj Clinic</p> <p>8 a.m. <b>Family Support Center Mothers’ Meeting</b></p> <p>1 p.m. <b>LUNCH BREAK</b></p> <p>2-5 p.m. Unstructured time</p>	<p><b>FREE</b></p> <p>(Pop Wuj open Sunday 11 a.m.-7 p.m.)</p>

### Additional Information

The Pop Wuj Projects Blog - [proyectospopwuj.blogspot.com](http://proyectospopwuj.blogspot.com)

Pop Wuj's website - [pop-wuj.org/](http://pop-wuj.org/)

Foundation Todos Juntos - [todos-juntos.org](http://todos-juntos.org)

Pop Wuj's Facebook – [facebook.com/PopWujSpanishSchoolGuatemala](https://facebook.com/PopWujSpanishSchoolGuatemala)

Pop Wuj's Instagram - [instagram.com/popwuj](https://instagram.com/popwuj)

Pop Wuj's Student Coordinator is happy to answer questions and/or provide references from internship alumni on request.

**Contact Information**

Carmen de Alvarado, Director of Social Projects

Asociación Pop Wuj

1ª Calle, 17-72, Zona 1

Quetzaltenango, Guatemala

(502) 7761-8286

[dealvarado2004@yahoo.com](mailto:dealvarado2004@yahoo.com)

(Spanish only)

Pop Wuj Student Coordinator

(502) 7761-8286

[oficina@pop-wuj.org](mailto:oficina@pop-wuj.org)

(Spanish/English)