



KALU YALA INSTITUTE



PROGRAM GUIDE



WE ARE
BUILDING.

Welcome to Kalu Yala

Can humanity live in a way that's socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable? That's what we're here to find out.



WHO WE ARE



Kalu Yala is an experiment in sustainable living. We've gathered some of the brightest minds from the many fields of sustainability, from Agriculture and Biology to Entrepreneurship and Education, here to reimagine what's possible.

With an interdisciplinary approach, Kalu Yala is inventing, testing, and perfecting sustainable solutions that can be scaled and exported around the world. At the same time, we're teaching a new generation how they can effect change and shape their own futures..



WHAT ALUMNI SAY

+
92%

of alumni would recommend our program to a friend.

+
94%

of alumni have stated that their experience at Kalu Yala has positively contributed to their career growth, citing it as a beneficial experience for medical school applications, developing critical soft skills for needs-based community-development assessments, and an overall transformative exposure to new academic fields, among others.

+
98%

positive reviews on [GoOverseas.com](https://www.GoOverseas.com), the leading online directory of abroad programs.

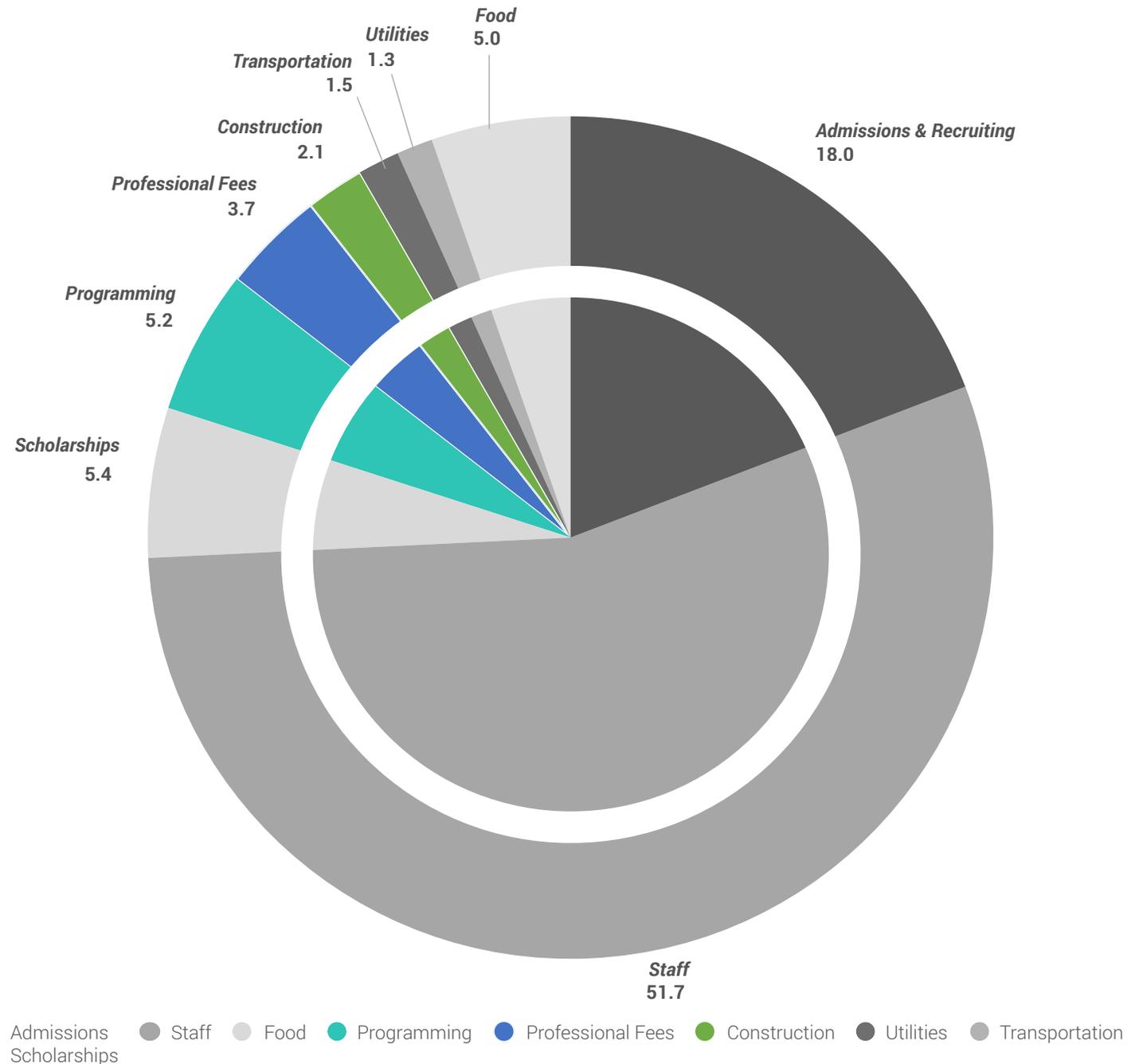
+
15%

of alumni loved their time at Kalu Yala so much they applied and were accepted to staff positions.

TUITION BREAKDOWN

So, where does your tuition go? Every semester, we're eager to field questions on how the funds you've spent to get to Kalu Yala translate into your experiences. We aim for transparency and invite these inquiries.

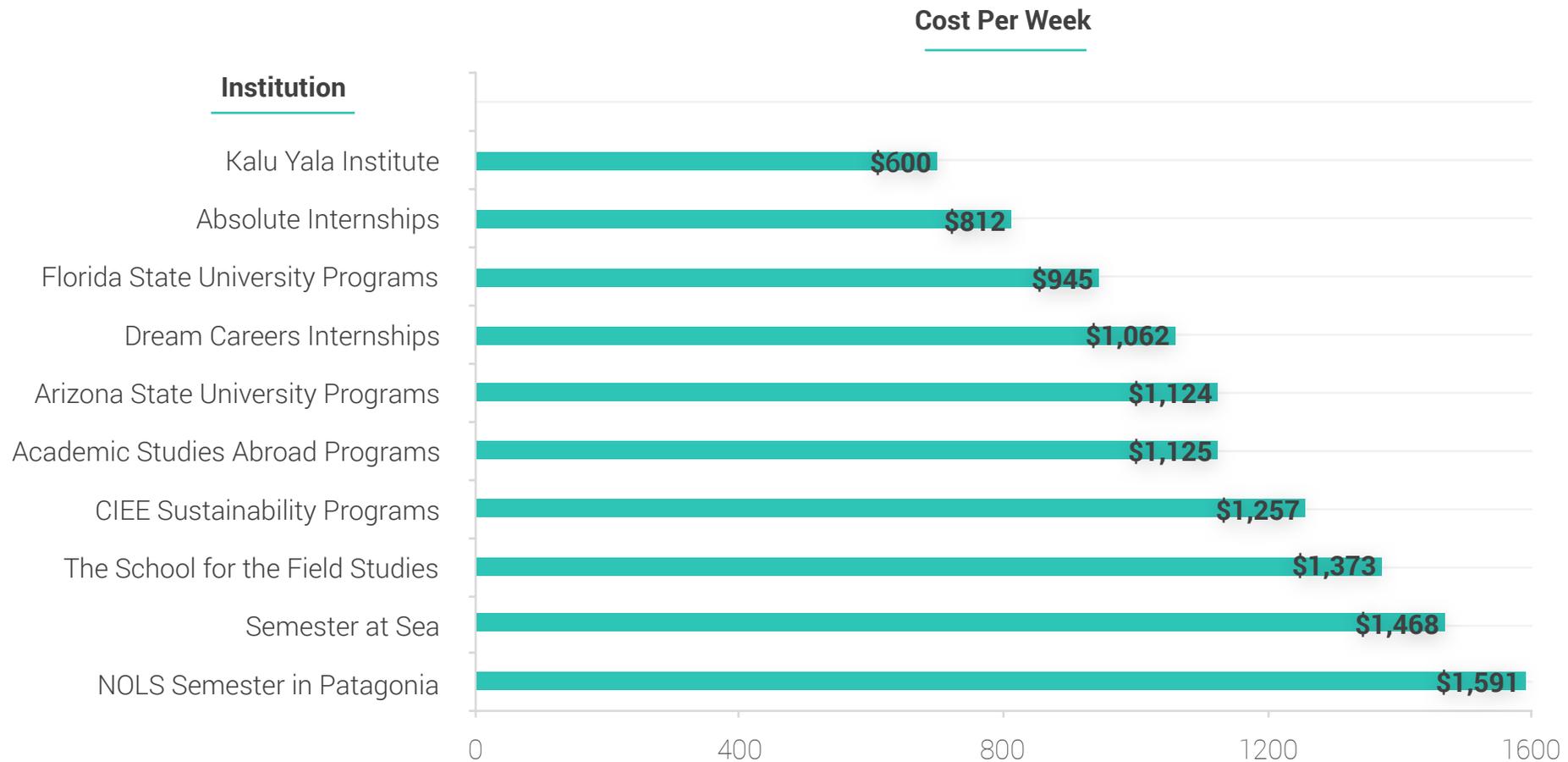
We want you to get a glimpse into how Kalu Yala functions behind-the-scenes and learn more about the logistics of operating an institute in the jungle.



PROGRAM COST COMPARISON

This table displays a selection of comparable study abroad and internship programs with similar curricula, features, duration, and geographical settings. On a tuition-per-week basis, Kalu Yala is consistently the most affordable program.

Do these figures include meal plan and housing? Not all of them. It's likely that for some of the programs listed, the actual cost to attend is substantially greater. Our tuition does include those amenities.



IN GOOD COMPANY

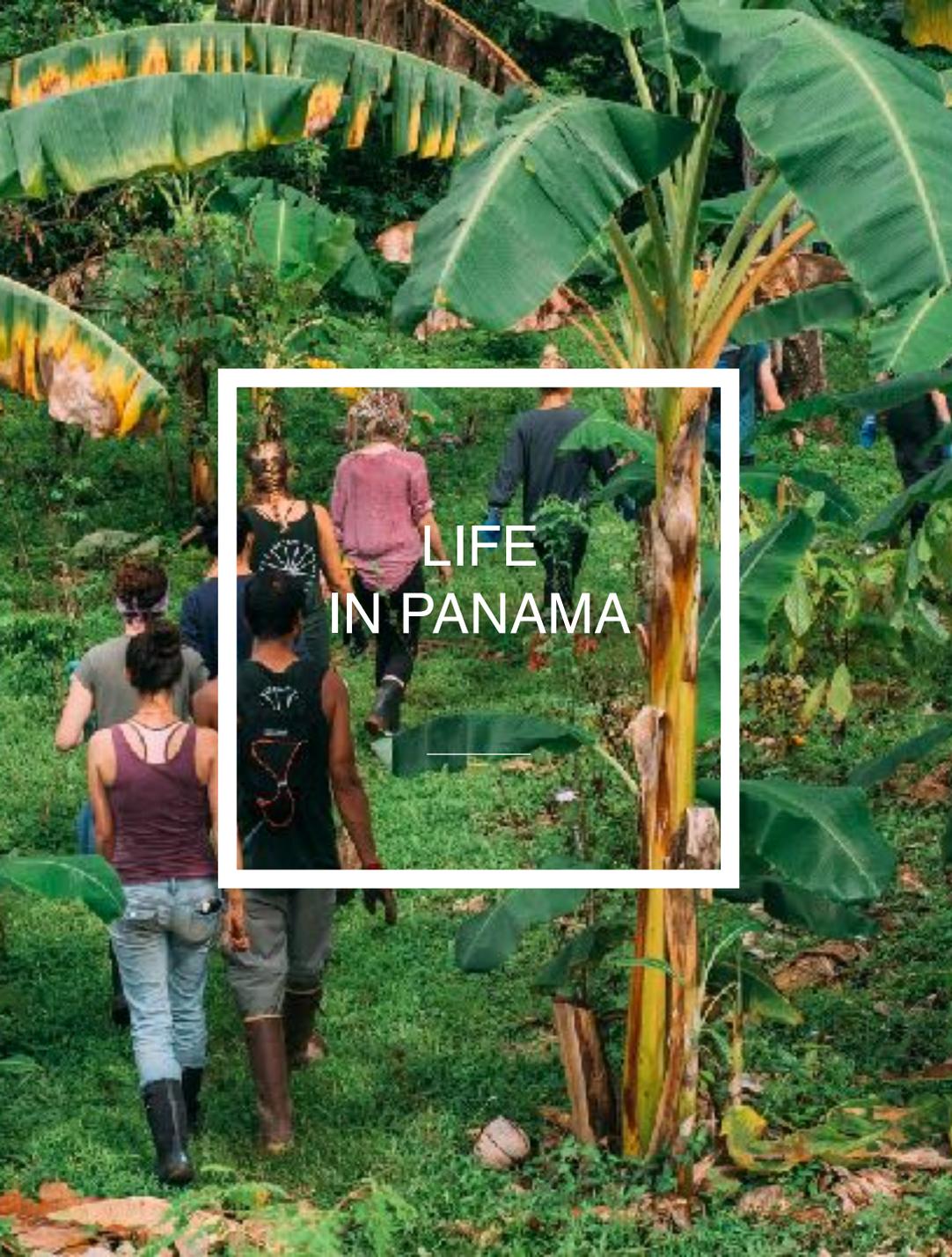
+
216

That's the number of colleges and universities Kalu Yala students come from (and counting), including small liberal arts schools like Middlebury, or Wellesley to larger institutions including Duke, UC Berkeley, Brown, and many more.

Our alumni have gone on to attend law, medical, and business schools, secured prestigious positions in many well-renowned organizations, and started their own companies. Our active alumni network and connections in a wide variety of professional fields serves as a particular advantage to many former students navigating the next chapters of their careers.



Throughout our nineteen semesters, Kalu Yala has hosted students from over 30 countries and all 50 states.



SAFETY

At Kalu Yala, safety of our community is our utmost concern. A licensed medical professional is stationed on-site full time to ensure the well-being of all students. Additionally, we have many trained and certified Wilderness First Responders (WFR) among our staff.

Upon arriving, each student will learn the in's and the out's of remaining safe and healthy throughout their stay at Kalu Yala, including familiarizing oneself with our rigorous Emergency Action Plan and associated policies to appropriately-respond to any type of incident. While we stress that getting outside one's comfort zone can be a transformative experience, stringent parameters of health and safety remain in place. We do provide details upon acceptance of acquiring health coverage while in Panamá, as well as recommendations on consulting travel physicians prior to arrival.

Lastly, Panamá is considered one of the safest areas of Latin America with a very stable environment and low rates of crime. We pride ourselves on retaining excellent relationships with our neighboring communities and upholding detailed knowledge of Panamanian health care, including references at preeminent hospitals and clinics.



STUDENTS SHOULD ASK THEMSELVES...



AM I UP FOR:

Immersing yourself in a non-traditional educational setting, with an emphasis on exploration, experimentation, and “Learning by Doing”?

Spearheading tangible projects that tackle real-life social, ecological, and economic issues?

Living in the Panama rainforest, a sun-and rain-drenched environment alive with flora and fauna?

Figuring out how to take small scale, sustainable solutions and adapt for global export?

Cohabiting in a diverse community filled with various backgrounds, disciplines, languages, and beliefs?

Connecting with accomplished students, staff members, visitors, and guest speakers on a regular basis?

Getting to know a new country, culture, language, and the astounding people within it?

Contributing to a growing, beautifully imperfect community that thrives on innovation and collaboration?

Testing physical, cognitive, and social endurance every single day?

...IF SO, KALU YALA IS FOR YOU.

This guide will help students discover:

- + What vital role will one play at Kalu Yala?
- + Which program will empower one to thrive?

This guide provides an introduction to the various disciplines and academic opportunities that await in our tropical jungle valley.



THE PROGRAMS

Eleven academic programs make up the Kalu Yala Institute – an alternative study abroad program rooted in development and research.

Each program explores a robust curriculum over the 10-week semester. Students gain mastery and experience through a series of director-led lectures and workshops, individual and group projects, accomplished guest speakers, and unusually awesome field trips that take advantage of the exceptional resources nearby in Panama City and beyond.

Programs are led by 1-2 directors who have demonstrated extraordinary passion and expertise in their fields, and in the greater overall theme of sustainability.

Collaboration between programs is highly encouraged, as the pillars of sustainability are so inextricably linked. While each student must choose one program, you may want to consider how programs could intersect, and work that into the decision-making process (for example, culinary and agriculture students often collaborate, as do the biology and business programs.)

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Dig deep into sustainable agriculture in the tropics. Develop and experiment with sustainable farming systems. Learn to grow food using a range of integrated, sustainable techniques. Spearhead the research, creation, or expansion of a tangible agriculture endeavor. Discover and define how sustainable agriculture can be built into your life and career. Teach and promote small-scale farming techniques to students, staff, and surrounding local communities.

In the Sustainable Agriculture program, you'll delve deep into all aspects of agriculture, such as land planning and management, planting and propagation, composting, livestock, machete wielding, and irrigation work.



Common career paths & majors for Sustainable Agriculture

- Agricultural Production, Business, Engineering, Economics
- Animal and Plant Science
- Environmental Science and/or Studies
- Sustainability

Examples of former student & program projects

- Biochar production, implementation, & testing
- Planning, execution, and maintenance of compost
- Building chicken coops, chicken care & maintenance
- Building bamboo trellises for vertical farming
- Facilitation of aquaponics facility
- Extending large-scale agro-forestry project
- Greenhouse construction & maintenance



Recent noteworthy guests & speakers

- **Stephen Brooks:** Co-Founder, Envision Festival, Director of Punta Mona Institute of Permaculture
- **Lyn Bishop:** Founder, Art Farm Panama

[+ www.kaluyala.com/education/sustainable-agriculture](http://www.kaluyala.com/education/sustainable-agriculture)



CULINARY ARTS

Develop classical and contemporary culinary skills in an off-grid, farm-to-table setting. Transform local ingredients into delicious and innovative creations. Collaborate with Agriculture to plant and harvest ingredients. Team up with Business to sell your edible creations. Work alongside a diverse kitchen team, including pro chefs, culinary students, and local Panamanian *cocinandos*. Empower local kids to cook wholesome, healthy meals using the ingredients in their backyards.

In the Culinary Arts program, you'll create an astounding variety of meals using hyperlocal ingredients. You'll learn to work the kitchen like a pro – enhancing your cooking techniques, knife skills, culinary math, and collaboration abilities. You'll learn how to create and sustain a sustainable food system, and export those solutions to the greater culinary world.

Farm to Table every day

Common career paths & majors for Culinary Arts students

- Culinary Arts
- Sustainable Food Systems
- Hotel & Restaurant Management
- Food Science
- Nutrition

Examples of former student & program projects

- Opened "Sully's Sorbet" company in the jungle
- Smoker & solar dehydrator construction
- POV cooking videos and online promotion
- Creation of Kalu Yala's first seasonal cookbook
- Cooking classes in San Miguel for school children
- Herb Garden construction
- Creating & selling farm-to-table creations at La Tienda



Recent noteworthy guests & speakers

- **Mark Brand:** Social Entrepreneur, Founder, Save-on-Meats, A Better Life Foundation
- **Megan Vose:** Social Entrepreneur, Founder, Motete. Kalu Yala Business Incubator Consultant
- **Dr Aris:** Panamanian Raw and Vegan Diet Expert
- **Kitchen crew from Intimo:** renowned Panama City-based farm-to-table restaurant
- **Chefs from Mise en Place** Culinary school

+ www.kaluyala.com/education/culinary-arts

BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Leverage business and entrepreneurship to tackle complex social and environmental issues. Learn to create triple-bottom-line frameworks that are profitable, good for people, and good for the planet. Turn great ideas into actionable business models. Reevaluate your assumptions on what's possible— and profitable— in the world of business. Start a business of your own in a dynamic, fast-growing community... or test drive ideas in a conducive and candid market.

In the Business & Entrepreneurship Program, you'll work with existing and emerging businesses to identify opportunities, design business models, and bring new products and services to market. You'll develop business ideas in an evolving community, with mentors guiding you and peers cheering you on. You may even launch a profitable business in or directly out of Kalu Yala. You wouldn't be the first!



Common career paths & majors for Business & Entrepreneurship

- Accounting
- Business & Finance
- Economics
- Marketing
- Operations Management

Examples of former student & program projects

- Development of farm product lines & market research
- Business consulting and support for Incubator startups
- Scaling La Tienda into a full scale operation
- New product creation or development
- Collaborations with local artisans on product lines
- Summer Camp business development and marketing
- Biochar sales in collaboration with Biology program



Recent noteworthy guests & speakers

- **Ryan Westberg:** Social Entrepreneur and Founder of Serengetee
- **Andrés Leon:** Start-up Programs Manager, Innovation Center at the City of Knowledge, Panamá
- **Rafi Museri:** Co-Founder, Dekel Group and CEO, Selina Hostels
- **Henry Faarup:** Town Co-Founder, Porta Norte
- **Jaime de Saint Malo:** Founder, EDIFYCA, President of the Congress of New Urbanism

[+ www.kaluyala.com/education/business-and-entrepreneurship](http://www.kaluyala.com/education/business-and-entrepreneurship)



EDUCATION

Teach local Panamanian students in a developing rural region. Plan and conduct weekly English classes. Gain practical knowledge on lesson planning, instruction, assessments, grouping strategies, and behavior management. Work with educators and policymakers to improve education systems. Hone grant writing skills through proposals to fund educational projects. Cultivate relationships with students, teachers, and families in a rural Panamanian town.

In the education program, you'll live, study, and teach in a small rural town. You'll work closely with local students, imparting book knowledge and crucial values like courage, compassion, and confidence. You'll lead classes, field trips, after-school activities, and entrepreneurial pursuits. You'll get students inspired about sustainability ideas and practices.

Ensure a bright future

Common career paths & majors for Education

- Early Childhood & Middle School Education
- Educational Planning and Management
- Social Work
- Psychology and/or Sociology
- International Studies

Examples of former student & program projects

- Youth leadership development programs
- Camp Kalu Yala
- Afterschool workshops and clubs
- English classes in local primary school classrooms
- Art-focused workshops with collaborative mural
- Improvement of library as a community space
- Creating & selling farm-to-table creations at La Tienda



Recent noteworthy guests & speakers

- **Marilu Salvador:** National Director of Basic Education, Ministry of Education, Panamá
- **Clare Jenkinson:** The British School of Panama
- **Franco Soldi:** Youth Development Potential Founder

+ <http://kaluyala.com/education/public-education-and-community-development>

BIOLOGY

Pioneer conservation research and efforts in an environment alive with fascinating flora and wildlife. Develop the biological knowledge base of Kalu Yala, Panama, and international conservation archives. Gain experience with scientific design, data collection, and analysis. Lead scientific investigations and contribute to meaningful research projects. Spread your love and respect for the environment to students, staff, and surrounding local communities.

In the Biology program, you'll play an active role in ensuring our sustainable town maintains a neutral or negative carbon footprint. You'll figure out how to adapt sustainable solutions for scale and export.

Learn in a living lab



Examples of former student & program projects

- Biochar production, sales, and renewable energy opportunities
- Medicinal plants & their uses in collaboration with other programs
- Sustainable Aquaculture of river prawn populations
- Amphibian biodiversity survey in local rivers
- Biodiesel production
- Soil restoration
- Development of online species catalogue for flora & fauna
- Develop a professional-level biology lab for expanded research capabilities



Common career paths and majors for Biology

- Biology
- Ecology, Behavior, & Evolution
- Environmental Science
- Animal & Plant Science
- Botany
- Forestry
- Geology
- Bioinformatics
- Physiology
- Neuroscience



www.kaluyala.com/education/biology



OUTDOOR RECREATION



Harness adventure and exploration to get communities excited and engaged in the natural world. Design and lead outdoor adventure experiences for Kalu Yala and surrounding local communities. Study wilderness ethics, environmental impact, and survival skills in an intense jungle setting. Pursue personal passions and develop your unique leadership style. Learn to connect and collaborate in a diverse team, and work with other cultures to bring the natural world to life.

In the Outdoor Recreation program, you'll learn how to plan and conduct trips in a foreign country with diverse participants. You'll learn the academic research and ground-level realities of the outdoor recreation industry in developing countries.

Common career paths & majors for Outdoor Recreation students

- Outdoor Recreation and Exercise Science
- Tourism & Travel Management
- Parks, Recreation, & Leisure Studies
- Environmental Studies
- Sports Management

Examples of former student & program projects:

- Design, Construction, and Maintenance of recreation park, volleyball course, yoga and meditation garden, amphitheater, surrounding hiking trails
- Launch of adventure tour company
- Climbing wall and obstacle course design
- Installation of observation platforms along overnight wilderness hikes
- Conduct emergency evacuation analysis



"I spent the semester hiking, swimming, surfing, climbing, getting to know humans from all different backgrounds and schools of thought, and learned things that I will spend the rest of my life unpacking."

**CARLY GARLAND
FALL '16**

[+ http://kaluyala.com/education/outdoor-recreation](http://kaluyala.com/education/outdoor-recreation)



MEDIA ARTS



Use film, photography, article writing, blogging, and podcasts to tell compelling stories about sustainability. Understand the importance of media as a tool to spread awareness and amplify impact. Dive into the creation process, from conception and creation, to post-production and promotion. Experiment with creative storytelling mechanisms and develop your unique voice. Produce a meaningful portfolio of short films, articles, photography and other formats.

In the Media Arts program, you'll write, produce, direct, and edit cutting-edge projects for your professional portfolio and Kalu Yala's robust content platforms. You'll pitch stories and work with others to hone ideas, gather feedback, and facilitate support.

Common career paths & majors for Media Arts students

- Journalism & Communications
- Film Studies
- Marketing
- Visual Arts (Photography, Graphic Design, and more)
- English Literature or Creative Writing

Examples of former student & program projects

- Weekly filmed Jungle Talk Show
- Weekly Kalu Yala podcast
- Jungle fitness website and blog creation
- Mini-documentary on Ocean Conservation
- Surfing and eco-tourism promotional video
- Exposé on cultural issues in neighboring towns
- Photojournalism display of community progress

Recent noteworthy guests & speakers

- **Ondi Timoner:** Two-time Sundance Winner, Producer of *Dig!* and *We Live in Public* documentaries
- **Carly Schwartz:** Google Editor, Former Huffington Post Editor, Kalu Yala Media program
- **Stuart Hooper:** Founder, Ambrosio Films
- **Anaximena Esquivel:** Journalist, La Prensa (leading Panamanian newspaper)
- **Elysa Fenenbock:** Designer-in-Residence, Google

[+ www.kaluyala.com/education/media-arts](http://www.kaluyala.com/education/media-arts)

DESIGN THINKING

Construct cherished spaces for the community using ecological design principles. Use design-thinking to solve problems and address opportunities. Study sustainable architecture and design, hone drawing, modeling, and full-scale building abilities. Learn to assess designs and concepts using a triple bottom line perspective. Create solutions quickly and efficiently in a startup jungle setting and in the context of a diverse and rapidly evolving community.

Combine design-thinking and eco-design to solve problems and inspire camaraderie. In the Design Thinking program, you'll collaborate with makers, dreamers, and do-ers to build places of beauty and function. You'll have the opportunity to pursue projects of your own invention, tapping into your passions and interests to deliver something exceptional.

We are building



Common career paths & majors for Design Thinking students

- Architectural Design & Engineering
- City, Community, Regional Planning
- Landscape Architecture
- Industrial and Product Design
- Visual Arts and Design Majors

Examples of former student & program projects

- Exploring clay and bamboo as basic materials
- Creation of Art Studio and weekly gallery events
- Construction of functional tiny homes
- Collaboration with international eco-hostel chain Selina
- Developing co-working spaces
- Design and construction of expanded rancho spaces
- Carrying out weekly product development



Recent noteworthy guests & speakers

- **Kim Lewis:** Founder, Kim Lewis Designs, Design Consultant, FYI Television Network
- **Oz Zechovoy:** Creative Director, Selina Hostels
- **George Moreno:** Principal, George Moreno & Partners, leading architecture & urbanism firm in Panamá

+ www.kaluyala.com/education/design-thinking

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Contribute to the health and wellbeing of a diverse and fast-evolving communities. Study and implement strategies to strengthen public health and wellbeing. Work with clinics in developing regions to improve local health standards. Facilitate events, seminars, and activities within Kalu Yala and surrounding local communities. Practice interpersonal conflict solutions within a dynamic social atmosphere. Gain familiarity with public health in a global context.

Play an active role in shaping the health culture of Kalu Yala and surrounding communities. In this program, you'll assess community needs and determine practical and socially conscious solutions. You'll spearhead projects that have a marked and lasting positive impact in local communities. You'll have an opportunity to work with people of all ages and backgrounds— from the young international crowd at Kalu Yala to the locals in surrounding communities.



Examples of former student & program projects

- Free blood pressure screening in San Miguel, our neighboring community
- Data collection, testing, and maintenance of water quality
- Hypertension and diabetes awareness program in San Miguel
- Lead wellness seminars in Kalu Yala and surrounding local towns
- Community garden to increase nutritional diversity and food availability
- Assist medical staff at San Miguel health clinic
- Establishment and continuation of multi-semester wellness survey
- Assess and further develop spatial needs for healthy, thriving community



Common career paths and majors for Health & Wellness

- Public Health
- Pre-med and Medical Students
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Physical Therapy
- Nutrition
- International Studies
- Anthropology
- Nursing
- Health Public Policy



<http://kaluyala.com/education/health-and-wellness>



POLITICAL SCIENCE

Live the experience of town-building while studying it through the lens of political science. Shape the political culture of a fast-growing and intentional community. Learn how to incorporate social and environmental ethics into public law and policies. Get hands-on experience in NGO building and administration. Work with government officials to improve local and national conservation efforts. Deepen your understanding of geopolitical challenges and resource management in Latin America.

In the Political Science program, you'll examine the inner workings and strategic growth of a community as both a member and political scientist. You'll learn to understand and influence local and national institutions. You'll mediate conflicts and facilitate solutions within a diverse community of students, agriculturists, builders, engineers, biologists, journalists, and more.

ENGINEERING

Explore a wide range of engineering applications for sustainable living in an off-grid environment. Design systems for pollution prevention, recycling, water irrigation, and renewable energy. Conduct field investigations to analyze parameters and limitations of new and existing projects. Contribute to Kalu Yala's base knowledge of crucial topics required to sustain the community. Learn to overcome challenges of optimizing design efficiency with limited resources. Incorporate principles of sustainability to a variety of engineering projects.

HOSPITALITY

Spearhead our growing eco-resort and events company at Kalu Yala. Design a visitor experience built around connection to nature, knowledge, hands-on learning, and one another. Play a defining role in shaping ecotourism at Kalu Yala into a positive social and environmental force. Design, manage, and improve every guest touch point to deliver the ultimate eco-experience.

In the Hospitality program, you'll design and manage every aspect of the hospitality process, from social media and guerrilla marketing to guest booking, on-site reception, concierge services, food and beverage systems, exit surveys and loyalty programs– all while maximizing positive social and environmental impact.

CONSTRUCTION ARTS

Build an eco-home from start to finish in just 10 weeks. Learn to incorporate social and environmental factors into the plan and build process. Get hands-on with material choice and sourcing, various construction techniques, build management systems, and sustainability measurement. Be innovative with materials in a resource-aware environment. Watch your creations come alive in a fast-growing community, and enjoy them with your new friends in the jungle.

In the Construction Arts program, you'll read construction drawings, learn materials procurement and management, gain serious skills in carpentry and masonry, along with the basics of plumbing and electrical, and learn to create and modify designs to make them more functional and beautiful.





FOCIS CLASSES

This weekly series of interdisciplinary lectures offers a deep dive into the Foundations of Community, Innovation, and Sustainability (FOCIS) by looking at how each program offered at Kalu Yala contributes to our overall mission.

Each Monday afternoon, the entire community assembles for engaging lectures paired with hands-on activities led by a rotating duo of instructors.



WHAT THE MEDIA SAYS



THE
HUFFINGTON
POST

WSJ

The
New York
Times

Kalu Yala has been written up as a groundbreaking organization in many prominent media outlets for its unique system of hands-on experiential education, exciting approach to establishing a sustainable modern town, and the stunning physical beauty of our tropical valley landscape.



FOR MORE DETAILS, VISIT:

kaluyala.com/education