



**Building Self-Sufficiency amongst Guatemalan Youth  
Miguel Angel Asturias Academy  
Quetzaltenango, Guatemala**

**Summary**

Because of systemic factors related to extreme poverty and government failure, less than ten percent of Guatemalan youth have the opportunity to enter high school.<sup>1</sup> Consequentially, without access to an education, many youth in Quetzaltenango are fated to living with hunger and insecurity.

The Miguel Angel Asturias Academy's alliance with Intecap Technical School produces students who have marketable job skills and accreditation to continue on to the university level, effectively breaking the cycle of poverty for an entire family. In order to provide an additional 100 students per year with access to this life changing Academy/Intecap program, the Academy is seeking \$75,000, against which it is asking individuals and associations to make pledges.

**Guatemala's Educational Crisis**

Broad segments of Guatemala's population are not served by the current education system. Three in ten Guatemalan children finish the sixth grade and fewer than one in ten enter into high school.<sup>2</sup> The only countries in Latin America with lower literacy rates are Nicaragua and Haiti.<sup>3</sup> Education statistics in Guatemala turn substantially bleaker for rural, indigenous, and female populations. Indigenous women, on average, have completed only 1.8 years of schooling. The government-run schools that do exist are under-funded, overcrowded, and philosophically antiquated. Private schools, the supposed alternative, are in reality too expensive for the vast majority of the population, 75% of whom live below the poverty line of earning two dollars per day.<sup>4</sup>

**A Powerful Opportunity**

The Academy proposes to educate and empower an additional 100 Guatemalan youth per year in its Academy/Intecap program, adding to a new generation of problem-solvers and entrepreneurs capable of creating jobs which can reduce poverty. Students graduate from the Academy/Intecap program with a middle or high school diploma and certification in a highly demanded trade such as industrial welding or electricity. The Academy will expand this ground-breaking program by

---

<sup>1</sup> "Guatemala: Overview." United States Agency for International Development website.  
<[http://www.usaid.gov/locations/latin\\_america\\_caribbean/country/guatemala/](http://www.usaid.gov/locations/latin_america_caribbean/country/guatemala/)> Accessed Dec., 2007.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> "Statistics." Human Development Reports, United Nations Development Program website.  
<<http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/data/>> Accessed Dec., 2007.

<sup>4</sup> "GUAPA - Guatemala Poverty Assessment." 2003. World Bank Group. 23 March 2006  
<<http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/external/lac/lac.nsf/Countries/Guatemala/90CF6C5A035DCEF585256CE90049E66C?OpenDocument>>.



adding a third floor to its building, which will include four classrooms, a multipurpose room, and a library.

## Project Leadership

The Miguel Angel Asturias Academy ([www.asturiasacademy.org](http://www.asturiasacademy.org))

The Academy is a private, non-profit Pre K-12 school founded in 1994 to eliminate education disparities through subsidized tuition, and create informed, critically-thinking, socially conscious citizens through its curriculum. Jorge Chojolán Pacajoj, the Academy's founder, is an indigenous Mayan from Quetzaltenango and the first Guatemalan honored with the prestigious Ashoka Fellowship for social entrepreneurship. The Academy has expanded rapidly in recent years, constructing its own facility and adding a middle school program in 2003. In 2006, the academy partnered with Intecap Technical School and added a second floor to its building and high school to its course offering. The Academy currently serves 267 students, up 33% from the previous year, and recently ranked amongst the top 10% percent of private schools in the city of Quetzaltenango. Central to the Academy's success has been its ability to forge innovative partnerships, including domestic alliances with the Alliance of Mayan Educators and Rights Action, and international organizations such as Juniata College, Rights Action, and the Church of the Brethren.

Intecap Technical School ([www.intecap.org.gt](http://www.intecap.org.gt))

Intecap is a Guatemalan institution dedicated to the development of human resources and technical skills in the private sector. Intecap is a pillar in the Guatemalan economy, having trained more than two hundred thousand students in 21 learning centers in 2006. Intecap has historically produced skilled workers that quickly find professional employment in Guatemala's job market. Thanks to the Academy/Intecap alliance, Intecap students are able to concurrently peruse a middle or high school diploma, and upon graduation, have a job that will allow them to pay their way through further studies.

## Budget

### CONSTRUCTION OF FLOOR

Item	Cost per M <sup>2</sup> (Q)	Cost per M <sup>2</sup> (\$)	Quantity	Total (\$)
Labor	450	60	293	17606
Materials	500	67	293	19562
				\$ 37,168

### CONSTRUCTION OF ROOF

Item	Cost per M <sup>2</sup> (Q)	Cost per M <sup>2</sup> (\$)	Quantity	Total (\$)
Labor	125	17	293	4891
Materials	125	17	293	4891
				\$ 9,781

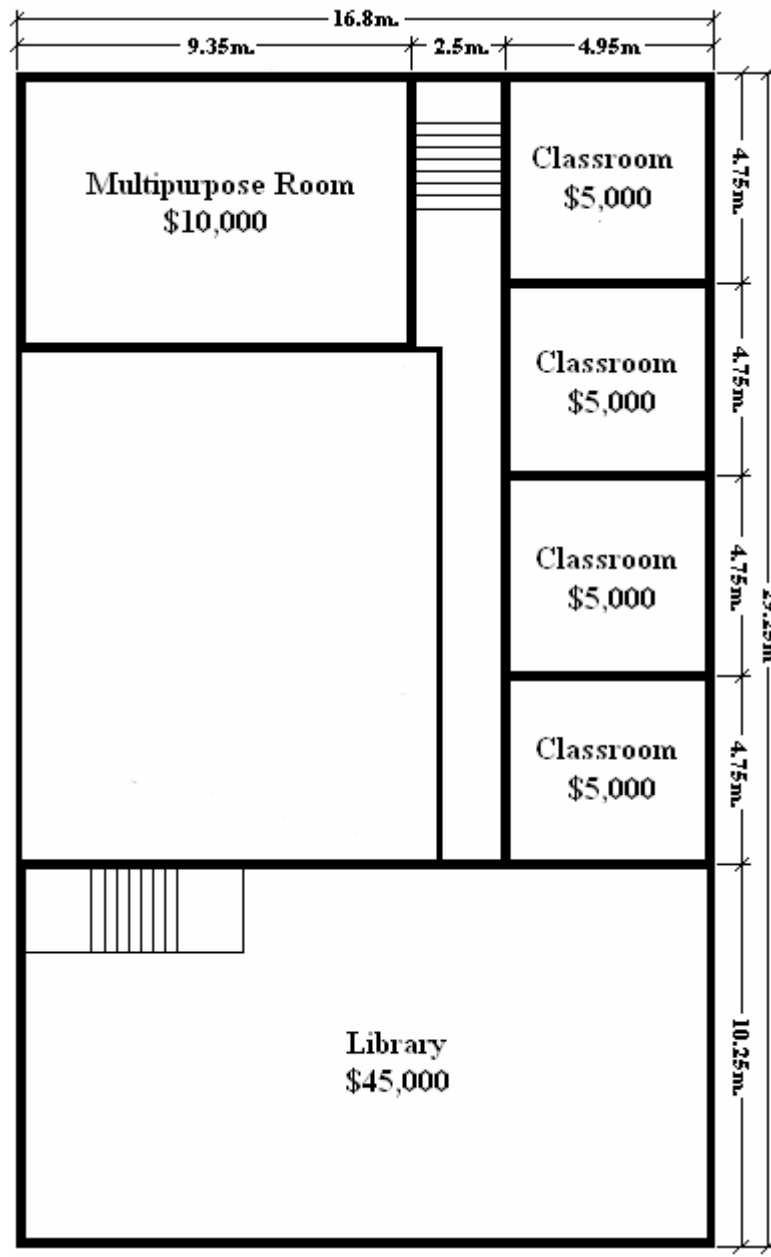
### FURNISHING

Item	Cost per unit (Q)	Cost per unit (\$)	Quantity	Total (\$)
Book Shelves	1600	213	18	3840
Tables	500	67	22	1467
Chairs	200	27	132	3520
Computer	5500	733	1	733
Books	75	10	1500	15000



Teacher Chair	200	27	6	160
Teacher Desk	750	100	6	600
Security System	15000	2000	1	2000
				\$ 27,320
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$ 74,269</b>

## Diagram of Third Floor



Please contact us directly at [info@asturiasacademy.org](mailto:info@asturiasacademy.org) for additional information, such as nonprofit status, timeline, and project evaluation, and organization budget.