2009 Annual Report

EARTH UNIVERSITY

Our Vision

Our actions are directed toward building a future in which the humid tropics and its communities achieve social, economic and environmental well-being.

Our Mission

Prepare leaders with ethical values to contribute to the sustainable development of the humid tropics and to construct a prosperous and just society.

Cover:
Left: EARTH student, Neeta Soni from Costa Rica ('09).
Upper right: EARTH student Christopher Lengodo from Kenya ('11) analyzes soil sample.
Lower right: A sign of ecological balance—insect on EARTH's banana farm.

Above:
EARTH Professor, Julieta Mazzola, working with a student in her class.

Photography:
Angela Johnson and Garrett Britton.

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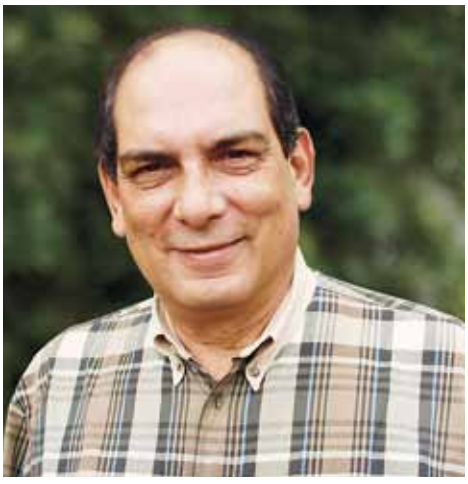
Message from the President of the Board of Directors



In the first decade of the 21st century we have faced devastating natural disasters, increased political instability, war, international terrorism and an unprecedented global economic crisis. If there is any conclusion to be drawn from the major events of the last ten years, it is our interconnectedness as a human race to each other and to the planet. As a result, it has become increasingly clear that our individual well-being can only be sustained if we pursue the common good of all of Earth's inhabitants. As the President of Ghana, John Evans Atta Mills proposed at the world summit in Copenhagen last December, "We must be prepared to be each other's keepers."

As Coordinator of Costa Rica's Peace with Nature Initiative, I have been charged with leading the government's environmental policies and actions, including its commitment to reach carbon neutrality by 2021. The name, Peace with Nature, acknowledges the interconnectedness of humankind with the natural world and recognizes that lasting environmental well-being requires social stability and prosperity. It is a very similar definition of sustainability that guides EARTH University and has made it a model for development around the world.

As of December 11, 2009, EARTH University has graduated 1,467 young men and women who have taken on a commitment to work for a better world in their countries. Having internalized EARTH's mission, its alumni are stimulating economic growth and are promoting environmental stewardship and social well-being in the rural communities of the humid tropics.

The lessons of this decade have proven the need for ethical leaders who can be catalysts for change and advocates for environmental conservation, stability and peace in the world. EARTH University is preparing these leaders and while a relatively young institution, in its brief 19 years of existence, the Institution's unique approach has produced nearly 1,500 individuals who carry with them the belief, commitment and skills to change their communities, countries and the world.

I wish to thank all of EARTH's supporters for their role in helping EARTH and its alumni achieve a more peaceful, healthy and sustainable future for us all. Your investment in EARTH is an investment in our common future.

Sincerely,
Dr. Pedro León

Message from the President

With the global economic crisis that began in late 2008, we knew that 2009 would not be an ordinary year for EARTH University.

A critical part of the EARTH mission is to provide opportunities to young people who want to make a difference in the world but lack the financial resources for a higher education. In order to do this, the University completely finances 50 percent of the cost for all of its students through an endowment and provides additional need-based scholarships to approximately 80 percent of students through annual fundraising efforts.

By the end of December 2008, our endowment had lost some 30 percent of its value. We knew that many donors and foundations were going to be scaling back their giving programs in 2009 and we anticipated that the crisis would impact the families of current and potential students with the capacity to pay, thereby decreasing our income for the year.

What we couldn't have predicted was the spirit of sacrifice and innovation on the part of our staff and the unwavering support of our donors.

Our first step in managing the crisis was to meet with our personnel and solicit their ideas for cost efficiencies. Recommendations were prioritized and an initial round of cost cutting was implemented. Combined with salary freezes, this resulted in savings of more than $1,000,000. One innovative example is the "Produced by Us" program. This initiative revised the cafeteria's purchasing policies and concentrated the production on our academic farms on the fruits, vegetables and meats that are consumed in the cafeteria. We also increased direct purchasing of these products from small farmers near the campus. Born out of crisis, this program has saved the Institution more than $26,000 in 2009, while reducing our carbon footprint and benefiting local producers.

Parallel to these cost cutting measures and with support from Cummins Inc., we completed a statistical analysis of the variables impacting EARTH's long-term financial sustainability and through this, determined the need to increase our fundraising activities to bolster our endowment. In spite of the tough fundraising climate, when we explained our situation to our donors, several increased their scholarship gifts to cover all or a percentage of what is normally covered by our endowment, thereby giving our endowment an opportunity to recover its value and grow. All of this has enabled the Institution to maintain the quality of its program and its commitment to providing opportunities to young people who otherwise could not afford a higher education.

While we are on a solid path to long-term financial stability, the impact of this crisis will be felt at EARTH for the coming years. However, I am pleased by what this crisis has revealed—primarily, our capacity to innovate, the loyalty of our staff and the commitment of our donors. We will never forget that the continued fulfillment of EARTH's mission relies on the support and generosity of donors and friends who share our belief that it is people—with conviction, capacity and commitment—who can solve the problems plaguing humankind and the planet.

Sincerely,
Dr. José Zaglul

Preparing the leaders of tomorrow

EARTH's Peri-Urban Agriculture Program captures the imagination of students while transforming how people eat in the region

Sustainable Agriculture professor, Dr. Alex Pacheco, joined EARTH University in 2007 and immediately spotted an opportunity to improve the quality of life for the residents of the communities surrounding EARTH.

"In the Atlantic region, all of the vegetables we consume are produced in the Central Valley of Costa Rica. This presents three problems: first, the produce is grown with excessive amounts of chemicals in high intensity systems; second, there is significant energy expenditure in the distribution channel; and third, there is no local investment, as the profits go back to the Central Valley instead of benefiting local residents."

The high clay content of the soil and year-round rainfall in the Atlantic region make growing vegetables commonly used in Costa Rican cooking, such as onions, tomatoes and lettuce, a major challenge. Recognizing this, Professor Pacheco started looking at raised or hanging production models for peri-urban regions using alternative substrates such as carbon, rice husk and coconut fiber. Together with his colleague, Dr. Carlos Montoya, he designed 20 low-cost, sustainable systems that are easy to implement, optimize space and use recycled materials. These systems offer residents in the area a practical way to grow commonly-used vegetables for their own consumption, helping to promote food security and adequate nutrition in the region.

In 2008, they began construction of a demonstrative farm at EARTH to serve as a training center for community members, and developed simple training manuals for each system.

"Seeing how students have been inspired by these systems is very motivating as this program has the potential to benefit communities of the humid tropics around the world," remarks Professor Pacheco.

In 2009, they began promoting the project in surrounding communities and are currently working with eight farms in the neighboring community of La Argentina.

The systems have attracted the interest of major corporations, with more than 720 employees of private companies in Costa Rica trained in 2009. With the funds generated from these training sessions, Professor Pacheco and the faculty and students involved in the program have trained approximately 130 local community members, free-of-charge.

In just a year and a half, the program has captured the hearts and minds of the students and much of EARTH's faculty and staff. Since its inception, more than 200 students have worked in the module, and more than eight students have conducted their graduation projects with the program. Fifty-two students are members of the Peri-Urban Agriculture Club and work voluntarily to maintain the demonstrative farm. The program also supplies 450 heads of lettuce to EARTH's cafeteria every week.

"Seeing how students have been inspired by these systems is very motivating as this program has the potential to benefit communities of the humid tropics around the world," remarks Professor Pacheco.

Student initiative adapts periurban agricultural model to help women in the community of Grano de Oro

In January 2009, Adalice Drakeford ('09) from Paraguay and Daniela Medina ('09) and Jimena Rábago ('09) from Costa Rica, were awarded a $1,685 grant from the Oxfam International Youth Partnership to implement a six-month project, titled: "Investing in Agriculture is an Investment in Food Security."

The project focused on Grano de Oro, an isolated community located approximately 30 minutes from EARTH's campus. Food security was a major concern for the community, as its residents relied exclusively on a produce and egg delivery truck that arrived once a week for fresh food.

Taking into account the residents' small lot sizes, the students saw an

Adalice Drakeford ('09) (right) and community member, Shirley Jiménez Bonilla (left) discuss the condition of Jiménez's raised garden beds.

Adalice Drakeford ('09) with community member, Mónica Varela Jiménez. As a result of the project, Ms. Varela now runs a small-scale egg production business.

opportunity to adapt the peri-urban agricultural model to help the community increase their self-sufficiency.

With the support of EARTH's Community Development Program, Adalice, Daniela and Jimena collaborated with 12 women from Grano de Oro to develop course content for the program. Later, they imparted five, 16-hour training modules in technical aspects, as well as the management, planning and dissemination of the peri-urban agricultural systems.

"It was a very demanding project. Being completely extracurricular, the three of us had to meet at 10 or 11 p.m. during the week and on weekends in order to plan the training sessions," comments Adalice.

While Daniela Medina acknowledges that a longer term commitment is needed in order to make a bigger impact, the project was very motivating for all three students.

All 12 women who participated in the project are producing their own vegetables, and in some cases are raising hens. One single mother of four who participated in the program was a particular source of inspiration, as she and her family enthusiastically implemented the production systems and built a small greenhouse to produce seedlings that she sells in the community.

"This program helped me define the direction I want to go. I want to focus on social development," remarks Adalice, who during the 2009 graduation ceremony in December received the EARTH Prize, the highest distinction awarded to a student.

Daniela adds, "This assignment gave us the confidence that we can develop a project and get funding. I want to work in the community. I know now that this is my vocation."

EARTH student makes roofing green

For her graduation project, twenty-one year old Neeta Soni ('09) from Costa Rica partnered with Holland Roofing to research lighter-weight substrates for roof-top gardens. Working with Professor Pacheco and EARTH engineer Rodrigo Mata, Neeta developed her experiment on a flat garage roof next to the EARTH cafeteria where she grew bok choy in eight different substrates, varying the percent of organic material such as compost and peat moss with other materials such as carbon, coconut fiber and rice husks.

The project sparked her creativity, "I'd love to take the concept and adapt it—if not on roofs, then on walls."

Neeta plans to continue studying substrates for green roofs in the humid tropics and believes the concept could be modified to make it more affordable to the rural reality, particularly in regions where flat roofs are more common such as the Central Valley of Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Neeta Soni ('09) surveys her research project on a roof-top garden.

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International students receive practical training in community development at EARTH

In 2009, EARTH University's International Academic Program began offering internships for international students to work in development projects in El Carmen, a community near EARTH's campus. During the year, EARTH hosted nine interns from Norway, Peru, the United States, the Philippines, Serbia and the Czech Republic. Interns completed a park design, supported a training program for women to start their own small businesses and developed and implemented extra-curricular activities for at-risk youth.

EARTH partners with Southern New Hampshire University for joint certificate courses

In November 2009, EARTH University and Southern New Hampshire University teamed up to offer post-graduate certificate courses in Pro Poor Market Development (PPMD) and Community Economic Development as a first step in determining the viability of offering a joint Masters Degree in Community Economic Development. Held on EARTH University's campus, the courses were organized and taught jointly by EARTH and SNHU Faculty and staff and had a combined total of 62 participants from six countries.

With financial support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the two institutions have been developing closer ties and the success of the certificate course indicates that there is indeed a need and a market for graduate level training in grassroots community economic development.

Serbian intern, Marea Grinvald, with a student from the elementary school in the community of El Carmen.

Addressing climate change and environmental destruction

In endless pursuit of a more sustainable banana

Some 20 years ago, EARTH University took on the challenge of transforming the commercial banana farm that was a part of the campus property. In the early 1990s, EARTH broke new ground in the banana industry with progressive programs to manage the waste produced by the operation, including the creation of banana paper from the stalk of the banana plant, recycling of the plastics used in the field, the development of an innovative water filtration system in the packing plant and the transformation of production waste into a natural fertilizer. These innovations have since become the norm in many commercial banana operations and have been promoted by EARTH alumni around the world.

In spite of these achievements, its faculty and staff have continued taking risks in pursuit of the most sustainable banana production possible in the humid tropics.

In the late 1990s, EARTH professors Dr. Pánfilo Tabora and Dr. Fritz Elango, along with visiting professor Masaki Shintani began researching the application of EM® (a mixture of microorganisms) for the treatment of Black Sigatoka. A highly infectious leaf spot disease caused by a fungus, Black Sigatoka is perhaps the single biggest barrier to organic production in the humid tropics, as infected plants have significantly reduced yields. Traditional control of Black Sigatoka involves a huge chemical load on banana farms and represents approximately 25 percent of the in-farm production costs.

EARTH shared the results of its research with other farms in Costa Rica and in 2007, together with Chiquita, began commercially applying EM on 75 percent of its own banana farm. In the first year, EARTH was able to replace 20 percent of its chemical fungicides with EM® applications without any impact on yield. Given the positive results, in 2009, EARTH substituted 40 percent of the normal chemical fungicide applications with similar results.

Dr. Pánfilo Tabora compares the leaves of two banana plants to demonstrate the effectiveness of EM in controlling Black Sigatoka. The leaf on the left is infected with the fungus, while the leaf on the right is healthy.

In 2010, EARTH aims to increase EM applications, with the ultimate goal of decreasing chemical fungicide applications by 60 percent.

Dr. Tabora notes that EARTH has shared the results of its research with other farms in Costa Rica, which have been applying EM on a commercial level with great success. One of these companies, Turquesa Dorada S.A., in Bataan, has eliminated nearly all chemical fungicide applications on nearly 2,500 acres of their commercial banana farm. Their experience was presented at a conference of the National Banana Corporation (CORBANA) of Costa Rica in late 2009, generating calls from banana growers around the globe.

"Banana producers are seeing that this can reduce their use of chemicals and their carbon footprint," comments Dr. Tabora.

Will this make waves in the banana industry? He believes that this research presents a real opportunity for commercial organic production in the humid tropics, or at least, a very environmentally-friendly banana.

"What this research is proving is that biodiversity works," concludes Tabora.

Using fewer chemicals promotes biodiversity as demonstrated by the presence of insects in the soil on EARTH's commercial farm.

EARTH professors and students produce organic bananas in the humid tropics

In late 2007, with financing from Whole Foods Market, EARTH embarked on a two and half year mission to produce organic bananas in a commercially viable system in the humid tropics. Led by Professor Roque Vaquero, the research has focused primarily on diversification as a means to achieving sustainability and on providing a shade-grown environment for the bananas, simulating their natural habitat in order to strengthen their leaves to better resist diseases such as Black Sigatoka.

Since mineral nitrogen fertilizers pollute waterways, nitrogen-fixing legumes were included, and four different systems were developed, combining bananas with forestry systems and fruit plantations. Vaquero's colleagues Professor Pánfilo Tabora and Professor Fritz Elango have been working with several students on the control of Black Sigatoka, which he notes is fundamental for making the project economically viable.

In the first phase of the research, EARTH wanted to determine if bananas could be produced commercially under this system.

The 2009 results show that 52 percent of the bananas produced in this system are export-quality, meaning they fit the very rigorous size and

Professor Roque Vaquero examines the nitrogen-fixing legumes planted throughout the banana plantation.

shape characteristics established by the market. Compared to the 80-90 percent range on most conventional farms, this number must be improved; however, Professor Vaquero stresses the need to consider alternate criteria for evaluating organically produced fruit.

The second phase of this research will focus on how to make organic banana production financially profitable. As a first step in this process, in late 2009, this seven-acre banana plantation received its organic certification under the United States Department of Agriculture criteria, making it possible to export "EARTH University Organic Bananas" in the near future.

Professor Vaquero and Oscar Ramos Condori ('10) prepare samples taken from leguminous plants on the farm to evaluate their nutrient content.

EARTH is experimenting with shade-grown organic banana production as a way to reduce diseases on the plantation.

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EARTH at COP15

Forestry Professor Dr. Ricardo Russo represented EARTH University as a voting member of the official Costa Rican delegation at the COP15 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark in December 2009. Dr. Russo participated in the work groups and served as the Costa Rican representative in the sessions on the UN-REDD+ Program (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries). One of the outcomes of the REDD sessions was the formal recognition of forest protection as key to reducing global carbon emissions in the final Copenhagen Accord.

EARTH students receive sustainability prize

For the first time ever, during the 2009 commencement in December, a $10,000 prize was awarded by The Sustainability Laboratories to the graduation project that best fulfilled the principles of sustainability. The winners were Valodia Flores of Nicaragua and Keylin Soto of Costa Rica, who developed a project for the sustainable management of high-impact solid waste for the communities of the humid tropics. The Sustainability Laboratories (www.sustainabilitylabs.org) works to research, develop, demonstrate and facilitate adoption of breakthrough sustainability practices in all parts of the world.

ASHA provides grant for the construction of green academic buildings at EARTH-La Flor

In June 2009, with a $600,000 grant from US AID American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA), EARTH University began the construction of new academic facilities at its EARTH-La Flor Center in Liberia, Guanacaste, Costa Rica. These buildings, which include student dormitories, classrooms, office space and a faculty apartment, will combine vanguard technologies and materials that minimize environmental impact and conserve water and energy. The facilities will generate up to 20 percent of their own energy and will reuse 80 percent of the wastewater.

Valodia Flores ('09) (left) and Keylin Soto ('09) (right) celebrate the recognition of their graduation project at the 2009 commencement ceremony.

Stimulating development through entrepreneurial education

The journey to becoming a job creator

Recognizing the role of business ownership in stimulating rural economic development, entrepreneurship is an integral part of EARTH's academic model and one of its four guiding pillars. EARTH seeks to prepare job creators rather than job seekers.

One of EARTH's keystone courses is the *Jorge Manuel Dengo O. Entrepreneurial Projects Program,* where all students develop a business venture from beginning to end during their first three years at EARTH. Small groups of four to six students decide upon a business activity related to agriculture and natural resources, conduct and defend a feasibility study evaluating financial, social and environmental criteria, borrow money from the University and carry out the project. After repaying their interest bearing loan, the group shares the profits.

Entrepreneurial project builds skills for the future

Wolfgang Werner is a second year student and a partner in the six-member company Biorem-5, which produces a natural pest repellant for agricultural and household uses. Their formula is based on EM® (efficient microorganisms) technology combined with other ingredients such as chili pepper and vinegar. It is currently being purchased by EARTH's dairy farm to control ticks on livestock and by the academic farms for controlling leaf cutter ants in crops. Since beginning production in February 2008, the company has earned $3,000 in profits with sales of approximately 180 liters per month.

When asked what they've learned from the experience, they cite the importance of tolerance and effective communication as key elements of the teamwork that is essential in running a business. In addition, the project has expanded the team's perspective of what is possible.

Josué Beltetón Salazar ('11) (left) and Wolfgang Werner ('11) (right) mix a batch of natural pest repellant as part of their entrepreneurial project.

"When we came to EARTH we thought agriculture was just about planting crops, but this has opened our eyes. There are so many areas to have an agricultural business. This really gave us a global vision of our possibilities," remarks Wolfgang.

Wolfgang has always known that he wanted to have his own business and this experience has only strengthened his resolve. "To be honest, I had no idea that running a business would be so complicated—and this is just a small project. The real world will be even more complicated, but after this experience, I am ready for the challenge," he concludes.

Josué Beltetón Salazar ('11) of Biorem-5 showcases his company's product during the International Rambutan Conference, held at EARTH in 2009.

"EARTH gave me the motivation to start my own business"

Manfred Kopper ('07) from Costa Rica was a student at EARTH when a comment his mother made about a tearless onion gave him an idea—jarring fresh chopped onions. Manfred dedicated his fourth-year graduation project to this endeavor and upon graduation immediately set out to market the product.

Without assets of his own, Manfred didn't qualify for a bank loan, but he found a group of investors to provide financial backing. With this capital, Manfred founded the company, Productos K y C, S.A. (www.productoskyc.com), which today produces a line of pre-cut jarred fresh onions, as well as pickled vegetables. He comments that the


Manfred Kopper ('07) at his factory in Cartago, Costa Rica exemplifies the entrepreneurial qualities that EARTH promotes: innovation, social and environmental responsibility and long-term vision.

permitting process required to start the business was overwhelming and that people tried to take advantage of him because of his lack of experience. However, the Entrepreneurial Projects Program served him well, "It gave me really solid experience that other people my age normally don't have. I already had an idea of how to run a business."

In addition to growing his own onions, Manfred sources vegetables from approximately 15 small-scale farmers in the community near his company's facility.

As part of his environmental commitment, he has provided training to these farmers in agricultural best-practices, helping reduce their use of agrochemicals. He also convinced the company's partners to invest in a water decontamination system for the company's plant and has a solid waste management program that creates organic fertilizer for the small farmers that supply his produce. Socially, the company has made it a priority to hire single mothers, currently employs 10 people and is working with the community's schools and leaders on various social programs.

Kopper jarred onions are currently sold in several major upscale and mid-range supermarket chains in the Central Valley of Costa Rica, and his pickled vegetables are being sold in more than 3,000 small markets throughout Costa Rica. Manfred hopes to begin exporting his product in 2010.

Productos K y C offers a line of pre-cut jarred fresh onions and pickled vegetables that are sold throughout Costa Rica.

"I had always wanted to have my own business, but the motivation to do it came from EARTH," concludes Manfred.

Alumnus beats all odds to become a business leader

José Antonio Pacheco Tzul ('94), the fifth of seven siblings, grew up in the remote indigenous community of Patzarajmac de Totonicapán in western Guatemala. After attending a military/agricultural high school in the department of Retalhuleu, Guatemala, José Antonio studied at EARTH University thanks to a scholarship provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Following his graduation in 1994, he briefly worked as the general manager of a banana operation in Tabasco, Mexico and later joined a major agricultural conglomerate in Guatemala. After approximately three years, he began to seriously


"I feel 100% fulfilled personally and professionally. What I like most is having my dream of my own company come true," remarks Alex Pacheco ('94).

consider the possibility of starting his own company.

In early 2000, with the production of his first product (a calcium-based fertilizer), he resigned from his job and together with a partner founded Enlace Agropecuario S.A. (ENLASA, www.grupoenlasa.com) with just $2,500 in personal savings and family loans. In addition, through a special University financing program called IATSA offered to EARTH alumni, he was able to obtain the capital required to introduce his product in Costa Rica.

By 2003, ENLASA had developed more than 12 product lines and had begun exporting to Nicaragua, Panama, Honduras, Ecuador and Chile, in addition to Guatemala and Costa Rica. Currently, the company offers more than 50 products for the agricultural and livestock sectors and operates offices in four countries. The rapid expansion of his company would not have been possible without the 17 EARTH alumni who work for ENLASA in different countries. In total, ENLASA employs 50 administrators and technicians.

ENLASA's working capital has multiplied by a factor of 39 since the company's inception nine years ago and it boasts major multi-national clients that generate hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue for the company each year.

José believes that ENLASA is an example of entrepreneurial initiative, showing that it is possible to build something from nothing with just hard work and ethical principles. He adds that ENLASA provides dignified working conditions and opportunities for young people.

The company recently formed an alliance with an EARTH alumnus to establish the ENLASA Foundation, which seeks to improve access to higher education for economically-disadvantaged young people and promote excellence and improvements in established universities. The company already contributes to EARTH University's alumni-financed scholarship program, known as Hijos de la Tierra.

"I feel 100 percent fulfilled personally and professionally. Success is being able to do what you enjoy, regardless of the salary. What I like most is having the dream of my own company come true."

José Pacheco (´94) (left) pictured with EARTH alumni who work for ENLASA, admits that his company's rapid expansion would not have been possible without the 17 EARTH graduates who work with him.

News Briefs

Danish foundation supports the Entreprenurial Projects Program

The FAHU Foundation established a $60,000 revolving fund to finance student entrepreneurial projects. Initiating with the 21 student projects that began in 2009, this fund provides student-run companies with start-up loans, which are paid back with interest at the close of the three-year program.

EARTH Yogurt hits the skies

In August 2009, EARTH's all-natural brand of yogurt debuted on select Copa, Taca, Iberia and American West flights departing from Costa Rica as part of meal services on these airlines. All profits from the sales of EARTH University brand products support scholarships, research and University operations.

EARTH introduces all-natural household cleaner

After a period of trial on the EARTH University campus, EARTH's commercial enterprise added a chemical-free, all-purpose household cleaner to its product line-up. Developed in conjunction with a distributor, Lifeem's active ingredient is EM® (efficient microorganisms) technology. The product comes in several different fragrances and is sold throughout Costa Rica.

Providing opportunities to young people who want to make a difference

Honduran student gives back to his country during his internship

For his third-year internship, Allan Ruiz ('10) knew he wanted to return to his native Honduras to try to make a difference. So in August 2009, he began a three-month internship with the Bayán Association, based out of their office in La Ceiba.

The Bayán Association (www.bayan-hn.org) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization in Honduras that offers relevant and meaningful rural middle and secondary education programs in remote communities in order to promote self-reliant development. Allan's connections to the Bayán Association run deep: he is an alumnus of a Bayán school in Ciriboya, Iriona, a remote village in the department of Colón and was a tutor at that school before beginning his studies at EARTH.

For his internship, Allan was assigned to work on the final productive practical experience that forms part of the Bayán Association's educational model in which students operate a small-scale chicken business. His role was to document the experience in seven schools and make improvements to the program so that it could be implemented in the 12 other departments where the Bayán Association operates in Honduras.

In addition to his work with the Bayán Association, Allan traveled 45 minutes every day from La Ceiba to work with communities in the Municipality of Masica located in the Pico Bonito National Park (PBNP) in the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor. The mayor had received an invitation to apply for a community improvement grant from the European Union, but needed a proposal to submit. Working with groups of young community leaders, Allan helped develop two proposals: one for the construction of artisan stoves that would reduce wood consumption by 95 percent and eliminate smoke inhalation, and another for the construction of hydraulic latrines.

During his third-year internship, Allan Ruíz ('10) worked to document and improve upon the practical component of the Bayán Association's rural education program, in which students operate a small-scale chicken business.

Of the 45 projects presented in mid-October, these two proposals were among the 24 selected and will receive $27,000 in financing in January 2010 for their implementation. These programs will benefit 220 families in 10 rural communities in this region and will be implemented by the group of young community leaders who collaborated with Allan on the proposals. Allan adds that the stoves will help reduce deforestation in this protected region, and both projects will be an important improvement in the quality of life for the residents of these very humble communities.

Reflecting on his experience, Allan feels proud of what he accomplished in just three months, particularly given the political turmoil in Honduras in the second half of 2009.

"I feel really good; in spite of the political situation, I was able to achieve a lot during my internship, professionally, personally and for my community. This experience is going to benefit me a lot in the future."

With just one year to finish at EARTH University, Allan has his sights set on returning to Honduras, "I would like to do a market study of larger-scale chicken production and start my own business in this area. I see this as being a potential source of employment and progress for my community."

He concludes by reaffirming his commitment to the values of EARTH, "I want to work for the common good and be of service to my community."

Allan's studies at EARTH University have been made possible thanks to a scholarship provided by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

Allan Ruiz ('10) with students from a Bayán Association school during his third-year internship.

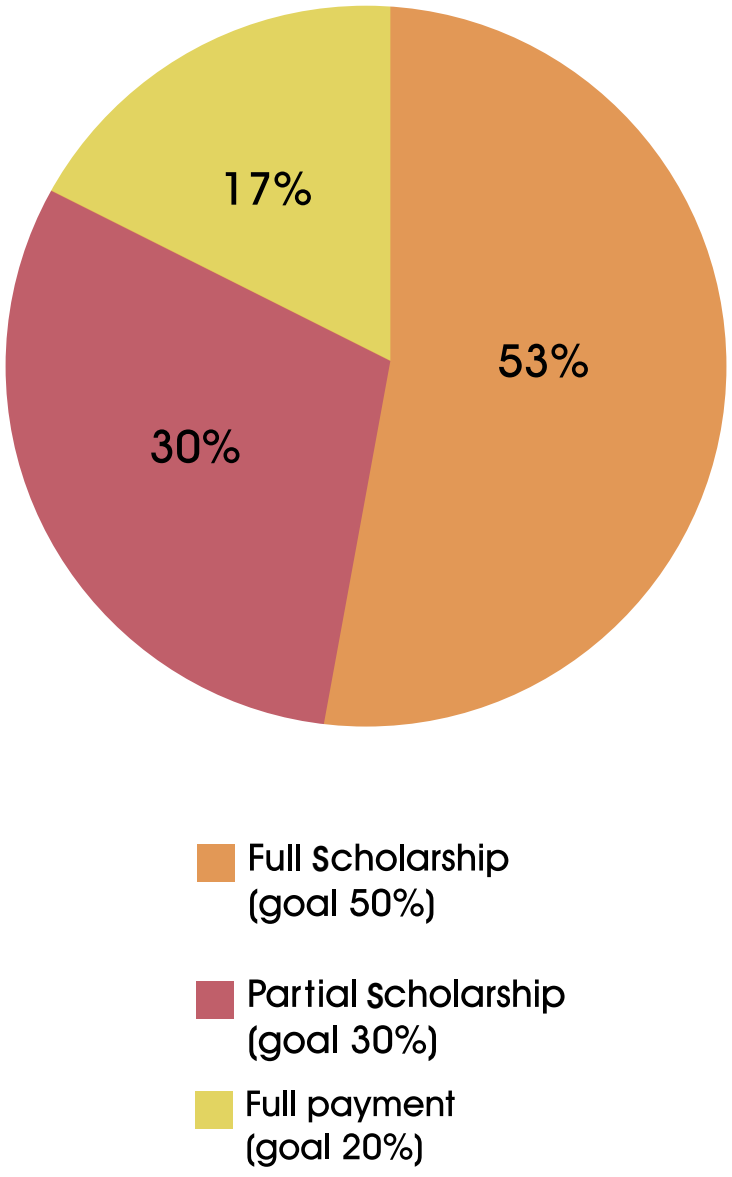
Allan Ruiz ('10) worked with young community leaders to develop a financing proposal for improvement projects to benefit 10 communities in the Pico Bonito National Park.

Student body profile 2009

Students by Country and Gender			
Country	Female	Male	Total
Argentina	0	1	1
Belize	7	2	9
Bolivia	3	9	12
Brazil	1	2	3
Colombia	6	7	13
Costa Rica	49	73	122
Dominican Republic	4	2	6
Ecuador	8	25	33
El Salvador	7	2	9
Guatemala	14	24	38
Haiti	2	5	7
Honduras	6	9	15
Kenya	1	2	3
Mexico	7	10	17
Mozambique	1	2	3
Nicaragua	17	3	20
Panama	8	31	39
Paraguay	3	4	7
Peru	3	2	5
South Africa	1	2	3
Switzerland	0	2	2
Uganda	1	0	1
United States	1	2	3
Venezuela	0	3	3
Total	150	224	374

Tuition profile of student body in 2009

(Includes all four class years)



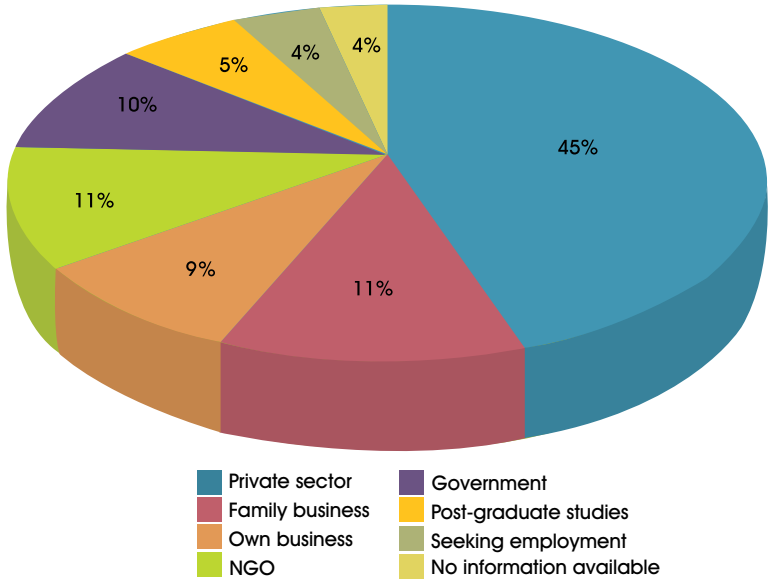
Alumni statistics and impact

Alumni by Country and Gender			
Country	Male	Female	Total
Costa Rica	297	113	410
Ecuador	176	52	228
Guatemala	130	45	175
Honduras	72	32	104
Nicaragua	56	38	94
Colombia	56	22	78
Panama	55	12	67
Brazil	48	10	58
Bolivia	32	12	44
Mexico	24	12	36
Dominican Republic	23	8	31
Belize	20	9	29
El Salvador	15	10	25
Venezuela	16	8	24
Paraguay	9	11	20
Peru	7	11	18
Uganda	5	4	9
Haiti	2	4	6
Argentina	3	0	3
Spain	2	0	2
Mozambique	2	0	2
Bermuda	1	0	1
Cuba	1	0	1
Indonesia	0	0	1
Canada	0	0	1
TOTAL	1,054	413	1,467

Key statistics

Number of alumni: 1467
Alumni working in their country of origin: 87%
Alumni working in Latin America: 93%
Percent working in the private sector: 65%
Percent with own or family business: 20%

Occupational distribution



Jasmira Del Valle Petit ('95) from Venezuela explains the packing process of Rambutan fruit to a group of producers and entrepreneurs. Jasmira is the Head of Production for Caramba Farms.

Results of the 2009 alumni impact survey

In 2009, EARTH University conducted its annual alumni e-mail survey designed to measure the impact of its alumni. Responses were received from 517 alumni, or 38 percent of the 1,368 alumni at the time of the survey.

Job creators

22% of alumni report creating jobs with an equivalent of more than 3.6 jobs created for each EARTH alumni

Measuring environmental impact

Frequency of alumni influence/impact upon the environmental well-being of their communities	
Frequency of impact	**Percentage (%)**
Frequently have influence/impact	37
Occasionally have influence/impact	26
Involved in research projects with long-term potential	24
No environmental influence or impact	10
No response	13
Total	100

Top five areas of environmental impact

- Biodiversity conservation and use
- Soil conservation and management
- Water conservation and management
- Waste management
- Organic agriculture

Measuring social contributions

Frequency of alumni influence/impact upon the social well-being of their communities	
Frequency of impact	**Percentage (%)**
Frequently have influence/impact	54
Occasionally have influence/impact	23
Involved in research projects with long-term potential	6
No social influence or impact	5
No response	12
Total	100

Top five areas of social impact

- Job creation
- Improvements in labor conditions
- Improvements in equality (gender, age, ethnic)
- Improvements in the income of rural families
- Training for farmers

Volunteerism

More than 50% of alumni engage in volunteerism

Karen Obaldía ('05) from Costa Rica is the Production Manager at Plantas y Flores S.A., which exports tropical flowers and foliage.

Financial report

Ensuring EARTH University's long-term financial future

In response to the financial crisis that began in 2008, EARTH University worked with the Strategic Planning team from Cummins Inc. to develop a Strategic Financial Plan to guide its actions during the economic downturn and beyond. The plan, based on the results of Monte Carlo simulations and detailed risk analysis, took into account both external and internal factors affecting EARTH's long-term financial situation. A series of scenarios were developed and for the purpose of planning, the median scenario was selected as the foundation for the Strategic Financial Plan.

The analysis revealed that fundraising and market performance were the two most significant factors affecting EARTH's long-range financial sustainability. Cost cutting, while relatively less important to the long-term financial situation, was recognized as important in the short-term and for the message it conveyed internally and externally.

In terms of market performance, the Strategic Financial Plan predicted stagnant market growth for 2009; however, the market returns for EARTH's endowment were actually 23.5 percent. The fundraising goals included in the Strategic Financial Plan are very ambitious and require the active participation of staff, board members and friends of the University. In 2009, thanks to continued support from the University's donors, EARTH was successful in receiving several scholarship donations that covered all or a significant percentage of what is normally covered by its endowment, as well as contributions to its general operating budget. EARTH University also surpassed its cost reduction goals, saving more than $1 million in its operational budget in 2009. All of this has enabled EARTH to exceed expectations in the performance of its endowment.

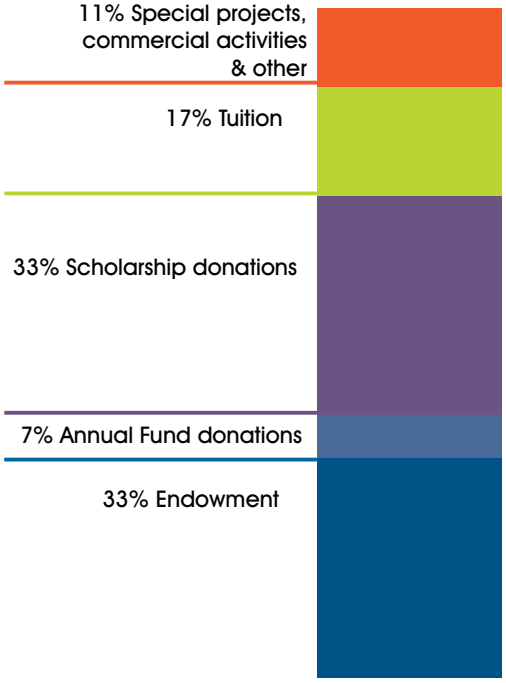
EARTH University's Strategic Financial Plan provides the Institution with a clear guide and model to respond quickly to the global financial situation and strengthen its endowment in order to buffer the Institution from potential market downturns in the future.

2009 Financial results for EARTH University year ended December 31, 2009

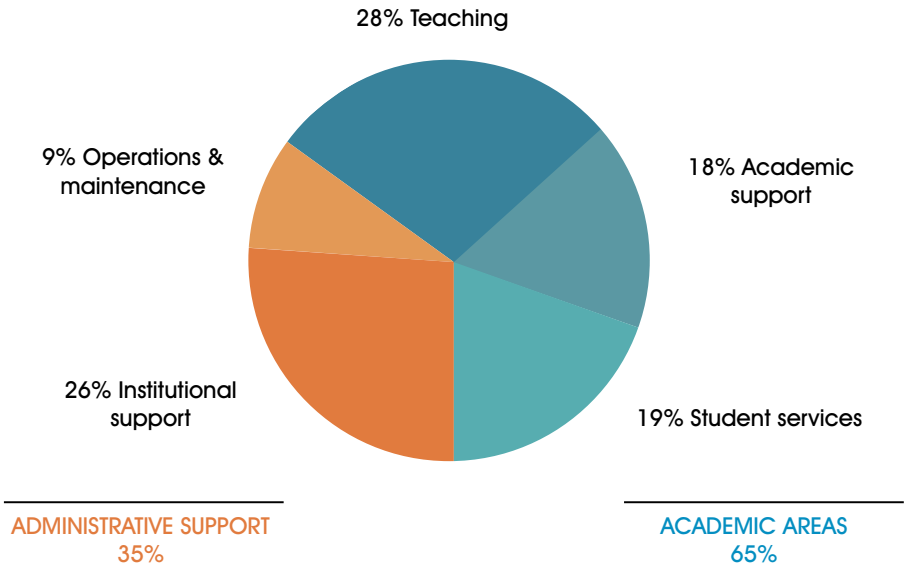
(Thousands of Dollars)

A. Revenue	
1) Tuition payments and scholarship donations	5,596.3
2) Other income (special projects, commercial activities, program and annual fund donations, etc.)	1,509.4
3) Funds provided by the EARTH Endowment	5,181.6
	12,287.3
B. Expenses	
1) University operations	11,058.2
2) Capital expenses	150.0
3) Fundraising	1,079.1
	12,287.3

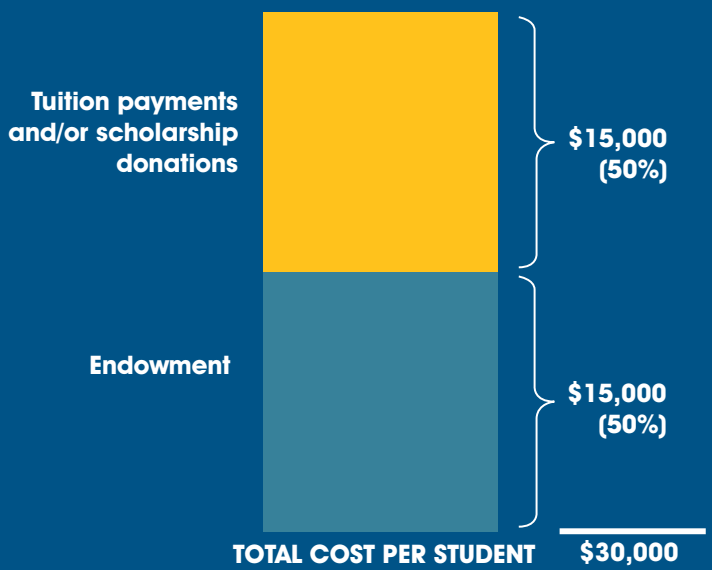
2009 University fund sources



Resource allocation
University operations 2009



Income and cost per student (2009)



Cost per student includes:

- 11 months of coursework with a 10:1 student to faculty ratio
- Room and board (3 meals/day) for 11 months
- All equipment, lab fees, books, copies and class materials
- Use of computer laboratories and library facilities
- All expenses related to academic off-campus activities and field trips
- All academic-related transportation
- Student life activities, sporting events, concerts, extracurricular classes and workshops
- 24-hour on-site medical attention with full-time physician on-staff
- Mental health counseling
- Private tutoring as needed

Development

The 2009 year was a challenging one for fundraising. In fact, the Council for Aid to Education reported that charitable contributions to colleges and universities dropped an average of 11.9 percent in the United States in 2009, the largest decline in three decades.

In line with this, EARTH University raised a total of $7.8 million (including multi-year pledges) in 2009 through fundraising activities in Latin America, the United States and Europe, compared to $8.9 million in 2008. Important progress was made in expanding the Institution's donor base, as the number of gifts more than doubled, increasing from 350 in 2008 to 724 gifts in 2009. This contributed to a record $635,181 in gifts to the University's Annual Fund, while contributions from foundations and governments represented the largest share of 2009 income.

A number of special events served to strengthen EARTH's presence in the United States and Europe, including a dinner with Ambassador Luis Diego Escalante at the Costa Rican Embassy in Washington D.C. and a similar event in London hosted by Elke and Salah Hawila.

2009 Fundraising highlights

The Cummins signature partnership

In June, the Cummins Foundation approved a $6 million grant to support the work of EARTH University. This challenge grant is payable over five years and is conditional upon EARTH meeting jointly set fundraising targets that will ensure the financial sustainability of the Institution. Over time, the Cummins Foundation grant will provide six endowed scholarships and one endowed rotating professorship.

As part of this partnership, Cummins also began providing an additional $700,000 of in-kind support in 2009, including an executive on loan, coordination of Six Sigma projects for the University and advocacy efforts for continued and expanded funding from the United States government through Cummins' Government Relations office in Washington D.C.

Open Society Institute provides scholarship support

On August 3, the Open Society Institute (OSI) awarded the EARTH University Foundation a multi-year $2.08 million grant to provide an EARTH University education to 10 African students and 10 Haitian students over the next five years. In January 2010, five students from Haiti and five from Mozambique will commence their studies at EARTH University. In 2011, five students from Haiti and five from Liberia and Sierra Leone will enter the University. The grant will cover tuition, room and board, as well as differential costs associated with the enrollment of African and Haitian students at the University.

Colombian palm oil growers fund five scholarships

In August, ASOGPADOS, an association of small-scale palm oil producers in Colombia generously granted $325,000 to support five scholarships for EARTH students coming from Santander, Colombia. ASOGPADOS is an organization established in 2002 with the objective of contributing to the substitution of illegal crops with palm oil. As of December 2009, ASOGPADOS has established 10,909 acres of palm oil in the region, directly benefiting 473 families. The University's relationship with ASOGPADOS has been facilitated by EARTH alumni that work with this organization.

Gala event

The largest fundraising event of 2009 was a Gala Dinner in San José, Costa Rica on October 1 that attracted more than 300 alumni, friends and supporters. Nineteen students acted as event hosts and conveyed the essence of EARTH to the guests, who included representatives from government and public institutions, local business leaders and presidential candidates. The keynote speaker for the event was Walter Robb, Co-President & Chief Operating Officer of Whole Foods Market. The first event of its kind in the history of the University, the Gala generated a net income of $51,580.

A group of EARTH students applaud the Institution's donors at the Gala Dinner in San José, Costa Rica.

Donations from the Norwegian and Swedish governments

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Royal Norwegian Embassy-Ministry of Foreign Affairs contributed a combined $404,000 to the University in 2009. These new funds form part of existing agreements with both governments and will cover general operating costs in the coming years. These contributions serve to broaden these two cooperative partnerships that began in the mid-1990s and continue today.

Tree planting activities

Three international corporations with facilities in Costa Rica participated in the "I Plant a Forest" program during 2009. For the second consecutive 2009. For the second consecutive year, Hewlett-Packard and more than 150 of its employees reforested two acres on our campus. During this visit, EARTH also inaugurated a computer laboratory donated by HP, valued at $40,000.

HSBC and KPMG also planted one acre each. In total, more that 1,600 trees were planted on EARTH's campus in 2009 by the more than 400 employees of these three corporations, who also received training in peri-urban agriculture.

Donation from the Government of the State of Chiapas

In the first quarter of 2009, EARTH received news that the Governor of the State of Chiapas had decided to donate $120,000 to the University to fully cover the cost of a student from this Mexican state for the period of 2010-2013. A reciprocal agreement was signed in which the University pledged to attain further scholarships for students from Chiapas and develop other joint activities in the future. As a result of the agreement, two students from Chiapas will begin their studies at EARTH in January 2010.

U.S. Embassy establishes a science corner at EARTH-La Flor

In October 2009, the Embassy of the United States in San José, Costa Rica made a $50,000 donation to EARTH University for the creation of a "Science Corner" at the EARTH-La Flor Center in Guanacaste, Costa Rica. This mini-library with a scientific and technical focus will be open to the public and will contain books, digital information, Internet access and multi-media resources.

Donors

EARTH University recognizes and appreciates the generous support of the following donors, whose gifts were received from January 1-December 31, 2009. The Institution expresses its sincerest gratitude to these individuals, businesses, foundations, governments and international organizations who make the continued fulfillment of its mission possible.

$1,000,000+
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$500,000-$999,999
U.S. Agency for International Development (ASHA)

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