MISSION AND APPROACH

The mission of World Leadership School is to empower young leaders to find innovative solutions to the world’s pressing problems. We do this by partnering with K-12 schools to make the shift to 21st century learning. We help our schools create student-centered learning environments where students learn to think critically, communicate across cultures, collaborate, and find creative solutions to problems. In the process, young leaders find their voices.

COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

At World Leadership School, we use the term “Collaborative Leadership Programs” to describe all of our student travel. Collaborative refers to all the relationships and learning that happen when students work alongside peer students and local leaders from the host community. Our Collaborative Leadership Programs follow the learning paradigm of disconnect, decenter, and re-envision. Participants disconnect from technology and their normal rhythms of life; they are pushed off balance, or decentered, through new experiences and cross-cultural immersion; and they study local leaders and learn alongside local students in order to see things from new perspectives and re-envision their place in this world.
Peru is the most ecologically diverse country on the planet, home to 87 of the world’s total 104 ecosystems. The Atacama Desert, the driest in the world, sprawls across much of Peru’s Pacific Coast. The Andes, snow-capped and covered with glaciers, rise above 22,000 feet to form the world’s second-highest mountain range. On the eastern slope of the Andes, mountains give way to the cloud and rain forests of the Amazon basin.

Peru’s cultures are as diverse as its geography. Peru’s first organized city-states worshipped at stepped adobe platforms on the coast 5,000 years ago, even before the Egyptians were building their pyramids at Giza. And as the Roman Empire spread across modern-day Europe, Peru’s first empire states were moving like wildfire across the Andes. The Chavin and Tiahuanaco cultures established patterns of religion, commerce, and architecture that culminated in the Inca Empire. When the Spaniards arrived in Peru in the 1530s, the Inca Empire extended along much of the western coast of South America. The Inca legacy continues today in the lives and language of eight million Quechua-speaking highlanders. Peru’s coastal people are a complex blend of Peru’s indigenous peoples, which mixed with African slaves brought to Peru during colonial times, Japanese and Chinese workers that came to Peru in the 19th century, and waves of immigrants from Europe. In the Amazon, there are 43 distinct ethnic groups, each with their own language.

GLOBAL ISSUES BACKGROUND

Peru’s economy is based mainly on exports of raw materials from industries such as mining, oil, natural gas, agriculture and fishmeal, though tourism and other services have grown recently in importance. Peru was one of the most important holdings of the Spanish empire, and Peru’s indigenous peoples were subjugated during Peru’s three centuries of colonial rule. Despite a land reform movement in the 1960s and an emerging middle class, much of the country’s wealth
remains concentrated in the hands of a few powerful families. This uneven distribution of wealth helped fuel the Shining Path terrorist movement from 1980 to the mid-1990s. Peru built many rural schools in the 1990s, but the quality of education remains low. Schools are overcrowded and underfunded, and teachers receive little training or support. Schools are regularly shut down due to national teacher strikes calling for higher wages. The lack of access to quality education has many associated consequences, among them higher levels of poverty, illiteracy, and underemployment. In Peru, 50 percent of the population lives beneath the poverty line.

Peru also suffers from a range of environmental problems that are caused in large part by the abuses of mines, fishmeal factories, oil and natural gas wells and pipelines and processing centers, illegal lumber operations, and other extractive industries. These industries have operated with little oversight in Peru for decades as a result of a weak political system that is cash-starved and corrupt. Legislation governing extractive industries, and regulatory agencies, is improving in Peru but lags well behind other more developed nations.

IMPORTANT TRIP INFORMATION

Our host community is Infierno, a community of Ese’aja people in the Amazon rainforest. The Ese’aja are a formerly nomadic people who are adapting to modern life while still retaining their remarkable cultural traditions. The Ese’aja elders speak the Ese’Eja language, but most of our homestay families (and especially their children) are fluent in Spanish. The Ese’aja have a remarkable knowledge about rainforest plants and animals, which is passed down from generation to generation. They are in the midst of establishing stable communities, such as Infierno, with health clinics, schools, and other amenities. To reach Infierno, we will fly into Puerto Maldonado from Cusco and drive a half hour into the community. Upon arrival, students encounter the remarkable smells, sounds, and humidity of the Amazon.

Puerto Maldonado is a 30-minute flight from Cusco and is just 55 kilometres from the Bolivian border. This whole area of Peru contains some of the world’s most bio-diverse rainforests. We will spend the majority of our time in the community of Infierno. Here we will have plenty of time to explore the rainforest and understand the daily life and traditions of the Ese’aja people. Each student is encouraged to participate in the daily life of local families by speaking Spanish or Ese’aja, playing with children, and working in the household. Students often say that the bond formed with their host family was the highlight of their program!
During much of the program, students will spend time during the day with host families who have been carefully screened and selected by World Leadership School. Host families treat students like family members and serve nutritious meals that include plenty of grains, vegetables, soups, chicken, fish, and jungle fruits such as granadilla.

After our stay in Puerto Maldonado, we will fly back to Cusco in order take three days to see the Sacred Valley, Machu Picchu, and Cusco, the former capital of the Inca Empire. We begin by staying in Ollantaytambo, an Inca village in the Sacred Valley. Life goes on in the Sacred Valley much as it has for centuries. Most local families farm potatoes and quinoa, maintaining the agricultural traditions of their Inca ancestors. The ruins and agricultural terraces of their Inca forefathers are scattered among the hills above town. The Sun Temple, in the center of Ollantaytambo, contains examples of Inca stonework second only to those at Machu Picchu, a 2-hour train ride downriver.

### PROGRAM FEE

The fee for this program is $4250 based on a minimum of 10 paying students. The program fee includes:

- All logistical coordination and in-country arrangements
- In-country transport, including charter transport and airport pick-up and drop-off
- Accommodations, including eco lodges and homestays (where applicable)
- Nutritious snacks and meals
- Cultural presentations, adventure activities, rental gear, entry fees, and tips
- Pre-program, program, and post-program Learning Sessions for middle and high school students
- Veteran instructors who are trained in wilderness medicine
- Community coordinators who live year-round near the community and maintain relationships of trust with local leaders
- Risk management protocols and 24-7 emergency communication
- Emergency medical, evacuation, and international liability insurance

**THIS PROGRAM FEE DOES NOT INCLUDE:**

- Immunizations
- Airline baggage fee
- Personal spending money for souvenirs, snacks, soft drinks, toiletries, and other personal spending
- Personal medical insurance (all students should have U.S. health insurance)
PAYMENT AND PAPERWORK SCHEDULE

● October 25 – Financial Aid inquiries made to Kip Digges by 8:00am
● November 8 – Begin filling out World Leadership School online application
● November 8 – First payment due to Ms. Anthony or to Mee Wong in the Gilman Business Office (minimum $500 deposit)
● January 17 – All World Leadership School forms due online
● January 17 – Second payment due to Ms. Anthony or to Mee Wong in the Gilman Business Office
● March 6 – All Gilman Global waiver forms due to Ms. Anthony
● March 6 – Full balance due to Ms. Anthony or to Mee Wong in the Gilman Business Office

STUDENT DONATIONS

Students get more out of our Collaborative Leadership Programs when they prepare ahead of time and develop a personal investment in the Community Project. World Leadership School also needs to forecast donations ahead of time in order to plan Community Projects effectively. We therefore ask that each student raises money for programs in Latin America. All donations go directly to the Community Project and are essential to the impact we have in our partner communities.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

● Students should have a satisfactory level of physical fitness in order to participate in manual labor and other physical activities, such as hiking.
● Students and parents, along with faculty, are required to complete all required World Leadership School forms, including the Application and Terms & Conditions, the Acknowledgment and Assumption of Risks & Release and Indemnity Agreement, and the Medical Form. Terms and Conditions can be viewed online. As part of the application, students must respond to a detailed questionnaire expressing their reasons for wanting to go on the trip.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND SAFETY

We strive to responsibly manage risks. Our itineraries minimize highway travel and maximize immersion in rural communities that we know well. We update our risk management protocols, integrate feedback into program design, and invest in safety and communication equipment. Despite these efforts, World Leadership School cannot guarantee safety nor can it eliminate the inherent and other risks of international student travel. Gilman chaperones are first aid and CPR certified, as well as all Gilman chaperones will have taken a risk management training course run by the Global Education Benchmarking Group by the spring.
**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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