



Calle 4 entre 5ª y 10ª Avenidas  
Playa del Carmen  
Q. Roo 77710 México

School: 52 (984) 803-3535  
[info@americamaya.com](mailto:info@americamaya.com)  
[www.americamaya.com](http://www.americamaya.com)

Foundation: 52 (984) 803-1118  
[info@americamaya.org](mailto:info@americamaya.org)  
[www.americamaya.org](http://www.americamaya.org)

For More Information, Please Contact  
Brenda Long Alfaro  
Founder & General Director

**Guiding Education**  
*through*  
**CYBERCREATIVITY®**  
*... into the Future*

## **MISSION**

*The América Maya Foundation is a  
community based educational partnership  
offering Mexican Mayan children and their families  
a lifetime of opportunity by  
providing educational, cultural and health care programs  
based on ... respect for the dignity of others;  
an appreciation of a diverse, democratic society;  
and the mastery of communication through the development  
of technological, scientific, rational, creative and social skills  
– to empower achievement and quality of life.*



**Lamat**  
Armonía  
Harmony



**Muluc**  
Imaginación  
Imagination



**Men**  
Visión  
Vision



**Cimi**  
Sabiduría  
Wisdom

# AMÉRICA MAYA®

# CYBERCREATIVITY®

## Fundación América Maya, A.C.

Tactile Creative Learning while Developing Positive Internet Exploration

*school libraries*

*reading for enjoyment*

*leveled readers*

*phonics*

*creative writing*

*manipulative math*

*investigative science*

*interactive computer education*

*art & music*

**freedom**

**to think, express and create your own thoughts!**

### Project Description

**Project CyberCreativity™** is an educational mission to develop long lasting opportunities for lower and emerging middle class Mexican Mayan children and their families through education and health care while preserving and conserving their cultural heritage.

The pilot school, **América Maya School, S.C.** is an **International CyberCreativity® School** utilizing the creativity model of William Fox Elementary School in Richmond, Va., which was named one of the "Target's Top 1,000 Schools" in 1999, and blending this with cybertech education in a creative tactile educational environment with cyberspace learning, which emphasizes that **"education can be engaging, effective and fun."**

### Project CyberCreativity™:

- **Crosses** grade levels Pre-School through High School, blending bilingual (Spanish/English) tactile creative learning and cyberspace technology, with an emphasis in math, science and literature.
- **Initiates** international communication and understanding using videoconferencing as an innovative strategy for strengthening learning and planning skills.
- **Integrates** key learning skills such as project planning, email communication, appointment setting, composing questions for research, arranging for interpreters when necessary, creating art and music, writing presentations and letters, producing cyber media web sites and more.
- **Forms** an international partnership for

**CyberCreativity™ Learning**

## Key Objective for Project CyberCreativity™

The key goal of **Project CyberCreativity®** is to combine an inspirational tactile creative learning environment with cybertech virtual learning and communication.

Specific student outcome objectives are to:

- **Create** an inspirational learning environment
- **Inspire** teachers and students to learn through creativity
- **Imprint** *positive web learning and communication usage*
- **Develop** creative critical thinking skills
- **Experience** reading as an integral part of learning
- **Increase** effective oral and written communication skills
- **Learn** scientific techniques and logical progression
- **Use** distance learning and virtual learning as a research tool
- **Apply** technology to data collection and information sharing

## Team & Advisory Members

The **CyberCreativity®** "Advisory Board" model utilized in the América Maya School, S.C. ([www.americamaya.com](http://www.americamaya.com)) creates an effective and entertaining curriculum that meets the needs of students, parents, teachers and future employers. Introducing teacher and parent participation in actual curriculum planning is a critical component within **CyberCreativity®**. Using this effective international business model will foster positive International-Mexican communication, aid in solving cultural differences and concerns, and create a more diverse educational curriculum and experience.

The concept of an "Advisory Board" drawn from a diverse professional and population is foreign to the Mexicans style of business and private school structures. This open inclusive planning model is almost non-existent in Mexico, resulting in rigid, autocratic systems, which punishes enthusiastic teachers, students and parents and discourages outside involvement. In fact, independent thinking and creative methods are rarely used in most of the schools, both private and public.

Diversity in our team and advisory committee is paramount. Men and women of varying ages from several national and professional backgrounds will guide the future of **Project CyberCreativity™**. Currently the International and Mexican team members are:

**Brenda Long Alfaro**, Co-founder and Managing Director, developed the concept of *CyberCreativity*<sup>®</sup> from her experience as a mother, educator and business consultant. Her background includes extensive experience in business as an investment broker, commercial lender, business consultant, and indigenous and tribal art gallery owner in her native city Richmond, Virginia. She is a co-owner of **AJUA! Maya**, a successful Mayan-Mexican Grill House and Salsa Club ([www.ajuamaya.com](http://www.ajuamaya.com)), a founder of the América Maya School, S.C. ([www.americamaya.com](http://www.americamaya.com)), and an active participant in the Mayan community in which she resides. She holds a B.A. in English Literature with MBA studies from Virginia Commonwealth University.

**Jorge Luis Alfaro Mérida**, Co-founder and President, has over 20 years experience as a business executive in the USA and Mexico. His extensive experience includes import/export, hotel and restaurant management, business development, and executive workshops for bicultural businesses between the USA and Mexico. Originally from Tuxtla-Gutierrez, Chiapas, Mexico, he spent over 17 years in the USA before returning to Playa del Carmen, Mexico where he is a co-owner of **AJUA! Maya**, a successful Mayan-Mexican Grill House and Salsa Club ([www.ajuamaya.com](http://www.ajuamaya.com)), a co-founder of the América Maya School, S.C. ([www.americamaya.com](http://www.americamaya.com)), and active member of his Mayan community. He holds a B.S. in Business Administration.

**Sara K. Moen**, Early Childhood Director came from Sammamish Montessori School in Redmond, Washington to Playa del Carmen, Q. Roo to implement the educational model, *CyberCreativity*<sup>®</sup>. Her focus in education is to create a positive learning environment in a multi-cultural classroom, which incorporates learning through *CyberCreativity*<sup>®</sup> utilizing daily practical life tools and toys, art, dancing, writing, language development, science and mathematics. She is a co-founder of the América Maya School, S.C. ([www.americamaya.com](http://www.americamaya.com)) and holds, with honors, a B.S. in Psychology from University of Washington.

**Steven J. Moen**, Director of Technology is a Microsoft Certified System Engineer with over nine years of result oriented experience in trouble-shooting, mentoring, training and product development in a customer based environment. After working with Microsoft for over 10 years, he redirected his career by co-founding the América Maya School, S.C. ([www.americamay.com](http://www.americamay.com)) to focus on incorporating technology in the classroom as a positive, integral educational tool. He studied Computer Science from University of Phoenix.

## Grant Request

**Project *CyberCreativity***<sup>®</sup> opened in May of 2003 with América Maya Preschool, implementing the *CyberCreativity*<sup>®</sup> program. Its first three students began with full scholarships – two 3 year olds who are Chamula Indians from Chiapas and one 7 year old who family is also from the Pacific coast of Chiapas. Not only have these three lucky children been provided a fantastic educational opportunity but also they and their families have been provided nutritional and health care by being a part of this program. This is the foundation of the *all-inclusive* América Maya program – education, nutrition, health and culture.

The Lower School program began in January 2004 and Middle and Upper School programs are planned by August 2004 or 2005. This project is funded through a combination of private pay students in the América Maya School and students who receive full or partial scholarships through grants and donations to the Fundación América Maya, A.C. ([www.americamaya.org](http://www.americamaya.org)).

Founding partners Jorge Luis Alfaro Mérida and Brenda Long Alfaro have infused their own capital, along with hours of sweat equity over a four year period, and have committed to maintain the basic expenses. In addition, founding partners Steve and Sara Moen, who came from Seattle to make this project a reality, have invested more than 18 months of living expenses and many hours and days of sweat equity to open and operate the **América Maya Preschool and Lower School** with the Alfaros.

The América Maya School, S.C. offers 30% of its students financial aid through scholarships provided through the Fundación América Maya, A.C. It is considered critical that a strong base of 70% paying students be built in order to ensure the monthly operating expenses of the school. Also, more importantly, the América Maya School can promise ongoing education, year after to year, for those students on full scholarship, in the event not sufficient income is derived from grants and donations to support the scholarship children.

### **Sponsoring Non-Profits**

**Fundación América Maya, A.C.** is a registered Mexican non-profit, which was formed in May 2003 to support the scholarship program for the América Maya School and other projects in the future. In order to receive tax deductible donations from foreigners, we need to have the help of non-profits in other countries. Immediately, we are in need of sponsorship from US and Canadian international charities and are looking for the same from Europe and other continents.

If you can help us with that or have contacts we can make, please send email Brenda Alfaro at [info@americamaya.org](mailto:info@americamaya.org)

### **Corporate Sponsor (All numbers in USD)**

**Fundación America Maya's** is seeking a corporate sponsor to jumpstart this educational and health mission through a grant which will be used for land acquisition to build the América Maya School side by side with a residential subdivision, medical/dental clinic, and a Mayan Retreat and Educational Center for the conservation of the Mayan culture and customs. The actual construction beyond the initial facilities needed by August 2004 would be implemented through the "Build a Bond" program.

Solicited Funding and/ or Donation: \$500,000 USD

### **Build a Bond**

Build a Bond is a corporate and student team building retreat project, in the spirit of "Habitat for Humanity." Within the program, team participants discover the value of other cultures and socioeconomic strata while redefining perceived individual strengths and weakness of the participants through working with Mayan artisans and contractors to build schools, clinics, homes and community centers for deserving projects. Included in this program is an introduction to authentic Mayan cleansing and spiritual guidance rituals (e.g., sweat lodges, cleansing ceremonies, seasonal rituals).

## Individual Scholarship Sponsor Donation (All numbers in USD)

**América Maya School's** first five students began on full scholarship and are continuing their studies. Currently, we have 20 students enrolled – 5 on full scholarships, 5 on partial scholarships, and 10 full pay. It is the **Fundación América Maya's** goal to provide full or partial scholarships for five out of every 15-17 students in the América Maya School. The average yearly cost of a full scholarship, per student, is \$3,000, including books and uniforms, and tax-deductible contributions or grants will be necessary to maintain the ratio of scholarship students to full pay students.

Suggested scholarships funding levels include the following categories:

(All numbers in USD)	
Founder's Membership	\$5,000
Individual Scholarship	\$2,500
Reading is Fun	\$500 and up
Science, Math and Technology	\$500 – \$1,000
Unspecified Educational	Increments of \$10

Establishment of a self-perpetuating endowment fund for scholarships and after-school enrichment activities is one of the goals of **Fundación América Maya**. It is a primary goal to offer after school enrichment classes for children who not only attend the **América Maya School** but also public school children who rarely have access to computers and whose average class size is 50 students. In addition, the facilities would be used at night to develop a continuing education and literacy program for residents, parents and professionals.

## Land Grant (All numbers in USD)

2 Hectares to Construct School, Clinic & Mayan Retreat Center (land close to Highway 307)	\$ 150,000
or	
10-15 Hectares to Construct School, Clinic, Residential Sub-division and Mayan Retreat Center (land 5-6 miles from Highway 307 on Avenida Juarez)	\$ 300,000

## Construction Grant (All numbers in USD)

School, Clinic and Mayan Retreat Construction	\$ 100,000
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## Technology and Teacher Supplement Grant

(All numbers in USD)

20 Computers with large screens and relevant software (Lower and Middle School)	\$ 25,000
Cameras and Auxiliary Equipment	2,000
Computer Carts	4,000
Ethernet Cards	2,000
Membership to Global Schoolhouse, VLT, etc.	2,000
Teacher Training & Income Supplements	<u>15,000</u>
Total Grant Request	\$ 50,000

## “Reading & Writing is Fun” Library Grant

(All numbers in USD)

Book Purchases for Pre-K through 9 <sup>th</sup> Grades	10,000
Librarian/Tutor Income Supplement	<u>5,000</u>
Total Grant Request	\$ 15,000



## Bootstrap for Literacy & Health Grant (All numbers in USD)

### Bootstrap to Opportunity

#### Literacy, Nutrition, Health & Micro Loan Program

Our full scholarship children come from hard working marginally employed families, whose parents have limited formal education or none at all. Our Bootstrap Program is designed to meet the urgent needs of these families to improve their life. Our main goals in the program are to offer them the tools to succeed in their endeavors here. It will include:

- Literacy in Spanish (reading, writing and mathematics)
- English Classes
- Nutrition and Health Classes
- Medical Assessment and Treatment, including medicines and vitamins
- Obtain Documents such as birth certificates, which are necessary for employment and enrolling their children in school, vaccination records, and business licenses.

Micro Loans to aid them in starting their own business or providing the financing for inventory. Most loans would be in the \$250 to \$500 USD range.

(All numbers in USD)

Stipend for ESL & Literacy Teacher	\$	12,000
Books & Materials		1,000
2 Computers, Software & Network		4,000
Micro Lending Fund		<u>8,000</u>
Total Bootstrap Request:		\$25,000

## Benefits to Grantors

- **Annual Mayan “Build a Bond” Convention for Grantors, Sponsors & Team Members**

An annual **Project CyberCreativity**<sup>®</sup> Mayan History and Ecosystem Exploration Convention will be organized by the **Fundación América Maya**. Grantors, Sponsors and Team Members will be teamed with parents and teachers from the **América Maya**, allowing real life to be part of each participant’s experiences. Also, teaching and construction opportunities and time with individual students will be offered.

- **Tax Deductible Contributions**

Individual and corporate grantors’ tax-deductible contribution, both cash and in-kind, will be made to a non-profit organization committed to education, and earmarked for **Project CyberCreativity**<sup>®</sup>. Individual grantors and corporate entities not only receive a tax deduction but also contribute to positively impacting antiquated educational practices and building international goodwill.

- **Market & Brand Identity**

Contributing companies of in-kind products develop a market and brand identity with students, parents, teachers and volunteers in the exploding Hispanic growth market, without the high costs of advertising or headquarters expansion. As we are aware through experience and market studies, brand identification imprinted in the educational setting creates brand loyalty; thereby creating an increase demand for a product. This loyalty lasts a lifetime when coupled with quality and service.

- **Marketing to Hispanic Communities:**

Additional benefits to corporate sponsors would include input on marketing to the Hispanic community. Market studies and interviews cannot replace the hands on experience of living and working within a joint venture project of this kind. Although many foreign cultures eagerly embrace international products and services, these same foreign cultures have tremendous concern over the lack of First World sensitivity to particular needs, culturally and economically, that these “third world/first world” countries have.

For example, few foreigners understand the intense strain on poor and rising middle class families caused by an annual 15%-50% inflation rate experienced in most developing nation economies. When there is contact with individuals from these countries, it is usually in the internationalized tourist zones or with exceptionally privileged and wealthy members of the society and not with those living the common, everyday life. **América Maya** provides an opportunity for companies and individuals to learn and experience the true market and culture, which then provides an experienced sensitivity to a particular culture and its people.

## Project Impact

**The América Maya School** is an urban Mexican bilingual English/Spanish school that draws from a diverse national and international population. Its founders, administrators and faculty are and will be committed to innovative teaching practices and experiences to develop each child's mind and life patterns. ***An emphasis in the curriculum is the use of computers and the Internet as a tool for positive learning, healthy communication, and safe entertainment.*** Through ***CyberCreativity® education*** children imprint, at an early age, a healthy environmental use of the Internet and its resources.

Providing education to students from hardworking families, whose family income may be as little as \$250-\$500 US a month, is an important commitment for the foundation and the school. Class sizes are limited to 17-20 students per classroom with 5 of those slots allocated to full or partial scholarships. Additionally, the foundation plans to offer after-school outreach to deserving public schools, where class sizes are normally 50 students and computer access is virtually non-existent, to provide access to computers and creative education. Also, the facilities would be used at night for a continuing education program for parents and professionals.

Beyond the individual and community impact from ***CyberCreativity® education***, the Playa del Carmen location will be able to showcase this creative learning curriculum to the world. The educational methods in many countries, such as Mexico, remain steeped in the rote copying and memorization style of the 1800's. Like Reggio Emilio, Maria Montessori and others, the **América Maya School** is using the ***CyberCreativity®*** model to impact education, now and in the future.

## Measurement of Success

Assessment tools will be used to quantify the impact of ***CyberCreativity®***

- Children will keep a handwritten daily journal
- US assessment testing will be part of each child's student record
- Internet and tactile projects will be displayed and evaluated
- Self evaluation conferences and surveys with administrators, teachers, parents and students will be recorded for reference
- Development of an active parent involvement group

## Pro Forma Assumptions (in US\$)

School Year					
Grades	2003-2004			2004-2005	
	Preschool	Lower (per class)	Preschool	Lower (per class)	Middle (per class)
Class Size	15	10	30	30	10
Paying	10	7	21	21	7
Scholarship	5	3	9	9	3
Tuition	\$ 200	\$ 250	\$ 200	\$ 250	\$ 300
Inscription	\$ 200	\$ 250	\$ 200	\$ 250	\$ 300
Book & Computer Fees	\$ 200	\$ 600	\$ 200	\$ 600	\$ 800

By year 2005-2006, it is planned to offer a complete program of education for grades Preschool through 12<sup>th</sup>. Demand will be high in Playa del Carmen since the projected growth of the city is 30% for year 2004, resulting in a population surge from its current 100,000 inhabitants to over 130,000 by year 2005. With this type of built in demand, it is quite possible there will be 2-3 classes in most grades by year 2006. If that rapid growth were to occur, the **América Maya School** would be educating hundreds of students.

It is customary in the private school structure in Mexico to collect an annual inscription, book, supply and activity fees plus a monthly tuition. Although for those in first world countries may see these fees as inexpensive, in Mexico's economy they are a much higher percentage of income than a comparable school in the USA. For example, when comparing the buying power of Mexican Pesos versus US dollars, a \$300 per month tuition in Mexico would be approximately equal to \$1,500 per month in the USA plus the annual inscription and other fees.

### Summary

**Fundación América Maya**, in partnership with parents, teachers, grantors donors, and volunteers will create a New World of education and opportunity for children in Mexico. With your support, this **"CyberCreativity® World of Education"** will be realized and impact education, not only in Playa del Carmen, but also in each and every person who is involved.

# Project

# CYBERCREATIVITY®



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*school libraries*

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