



RICHMOND VALE
ACADEMY



Climate Activist
6 Months Program

Welcome to Richmond Vale Academy

Richmond Vale Academy (RVA) is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) located in beautiful St. Vincent and the Grenadines dedicated to creating a sustainable future through ecological farming, environmental projects, and volunteer programs. Using our unique ethos of communal living, research, ideas, experimentation, and building on the principles of Participatory Action Research; Richmond Vale Academy trains participants from across the globe to become Climate Activists.

Our Climate Activist Program provides a global framework for understanding climate change and trains participants on how communities can manage and adapt to the challenges of poverty and climate change using proven and emerging solutions for implementation at the local level.



Program Structure



Gaia Warns You – 2 weeks

Learning about climate change and the consequences, while exploring possible solutions.

Digging Deeper – 2 weeks

Studying, investigating, and debating the effects climate change and poverty has on people and our planet.

Making RVA Climate Compliant – 1 month

Preparing and implementing initial Climate Compliance actions using Richmond Vale Academy and the Climate Center as testing grounds while learning about ecological farming and community mobilization.

Making St. Vincent Climate Compliant – 2 months

Working with local communities in St. Vincent and the Grenadines to reduce global warming and climate change.

Our Next Large Endeavor – 2 weeks

Mapping St. Vincent geography, demography, and public systems, while learning from people in the communities about their perspective on the future for their nation and the Caribbean region.

Sweet Follow Up – 2 weeks

Visiting former RVA projects and providing aid to keep the projects going.

Telling your Story – 2 weeks

Spreading the word about climate change and the consequences at seminars and school presentations in creative ways to bring the message to many people.

Our Proud Legacy – 2 weeks

Taking stock of what has been accomplished, sharing findings, discussing procedures, and project status with the next team.

A Glimpse of What You Will Learn



GAIA Warns You and Digging Deeper

- What is climate change?
- What creates the climate crises?
- Adaptation and mitigation
- Possible solutions
- Deforestation worldwide
- Plants and trees combating climate change
- Climate vulnerability in the Caribbean
- GMO & Seeds – Food and Power
- Regenerative farming and soil health
- Food and health

A Glimpse of What You Will Learn

Making RVA Climate Compliant

- Developing water collection systems
- Increasing the production in ecological/organic farm
- Starting up a production of sheep
- Doubling up the number of plants in the nursery
- Developing the production of staples in the forest garden
- Learning about community mobilization
- Approaching the communities
- Teaching in a community
- Learning about ecological farming



Making St. Vincent Climate Compliant

- Working with projects related to food, water and energy security
- Trapped in poverty
- Poverty and poverty alleviation
- The international banking system
- The 1%
- A visit to the Botanic Garden
- 12 actions to alleviate the conditions of poor communities
- Ecological/organic farming methods

A Glimpse of What You Will Learn



- Building the knowledge base for a new 10-year Climate Compliance Conference

Our Next Large Endeavor

- Talking to people from all walks of life in St. Vincent
- Field trips and data collection
- Investigation and the scientific method of learning
- The art of interviewing
- The art of data collection



Sweet Follow Up

- Visit prior RVA projects and people working on them
- Support the families and community members to maintain interactions with their farms, home gardens, or other projects they are engaged with

A Glimpse of What You Will Learn



Tell your Story and Our Proud Legacy

- Crafting The Message
- Creating multimedia presentations
- Creating a video
- Writing an article
- Training public speaking
- The concept of Open Future
- Ponder on the future of St. Vincent and the Caribbean
- Handing the torch to the next team Hosting a big event
- Closing a chapter and open the next

Projects

Ecological Farming

Growing, selling, and buying food locally, rather than importing it from other parts of the world, is sustainable and beneficial for health and the local economy. RVA is a partner in starting up home gardens and small ecological farming with families across the islands.



Coastal Protection

The Richmond Coastal Wetland is a critical area which supports the overall biodiversity of many species of fish, shellfish, birds, and marine mammals.

The Richmond area, the only wetland area of this kind in St. Vincent, has been severely damaged over the years. This is due to climate change related disasters and companies mining the mountains.



Water

Clean drinking water and adequate water for farming is an increasing challenge for poor farmers around the world.

RVA is a partner for water solutions in St. Vincent and the Grenadines with water harvesting systems, natural gray water filters, and hydroponic solutions.

Ecological Farming



Ecological farming ensures healthy farming and healthy food for today and tomorrow, by protecting soil, water and climate. It promotes biodiversity and does not contaminate the environment with chemical inputs or genetically engineered plant varieties.

Richmond Vale Academy has practiced ecological farming for years and is building on the experiences from permaculture as well as other ecological farming methods. In 2021, the La Soufrière Volcano erupted and destroyed all the farm structures and fields RVA had established. RVA has started to rebuild the farm and participants coming to the programs will be part of the process and the further development of the community.

Testimonies

Acadia, USA 22 years old

The skills I obtained through RVA helped me to become qualified and get accepted as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Agriculture Extension Program in Ghana.

Those skills include permaculture garden design, immersing myself into a new culture, working with locals, teamwork, and taking a step back from my life to try and understand and accept new surroundings and people.

I believe these skills are pertinent for any kind of future job one may apply for.



Calvert, St. Vincent 23 years old

I learned to become a Gardener in 2 ways – first on the 6 months program making Home Gardens with families using Permaculture design and now as a Coral Reef Gardener with the Coral Reef Restoration project at RVA.

I learned about Global Warming and Climate Change and how it is bad for us and the health of the Earth we live in. I have grown a lot since I joined, thanks to RVA.

Testimonies

Rebecca, UK 22 years old

I have just started an EU program in Renewable Energy. Richmond Vale gave me a global perspective of many environmental issues, which helped both with my application and the work I'm now doing. It also taught me to work with people from all around the world and to unite over common goals.



Sebastián, Colombia 25 years old

Along the program, I immersed more and more into sustainable agriculture. With my experience in the Caribbean, I pursued a PDC in France and was able to achieve a job position with the local government in my hometown, where we promoted organic farming and recovering degraded soil.

Vivian, Uruguay 43 years old

During the program, I learned to listen, observed, debated, and practiced tolerance. The greatest challenge of all was getting out of ourselves and our egoism to try to do something common with people from completely different points of view, culture, language, etc. I got to know people who just gave the best of themselves at all times!



Campus Life



At Richmond Vale Academy we foster an international environment with an emphasis on inclusivity and cultural diversity. People come to RVA with different ages, backgrounds, and habits. We live together in a multicultural environment with endless opportunities to enjoy learning and living together.

Richmond Vale Academy is a center for people to meet and cultivate ideas and serves as an example of sustainable living with off grid solar energy, water harvesting, and an ecological farm to provide fresh produce for the schools' kitchen.

General daily structure*

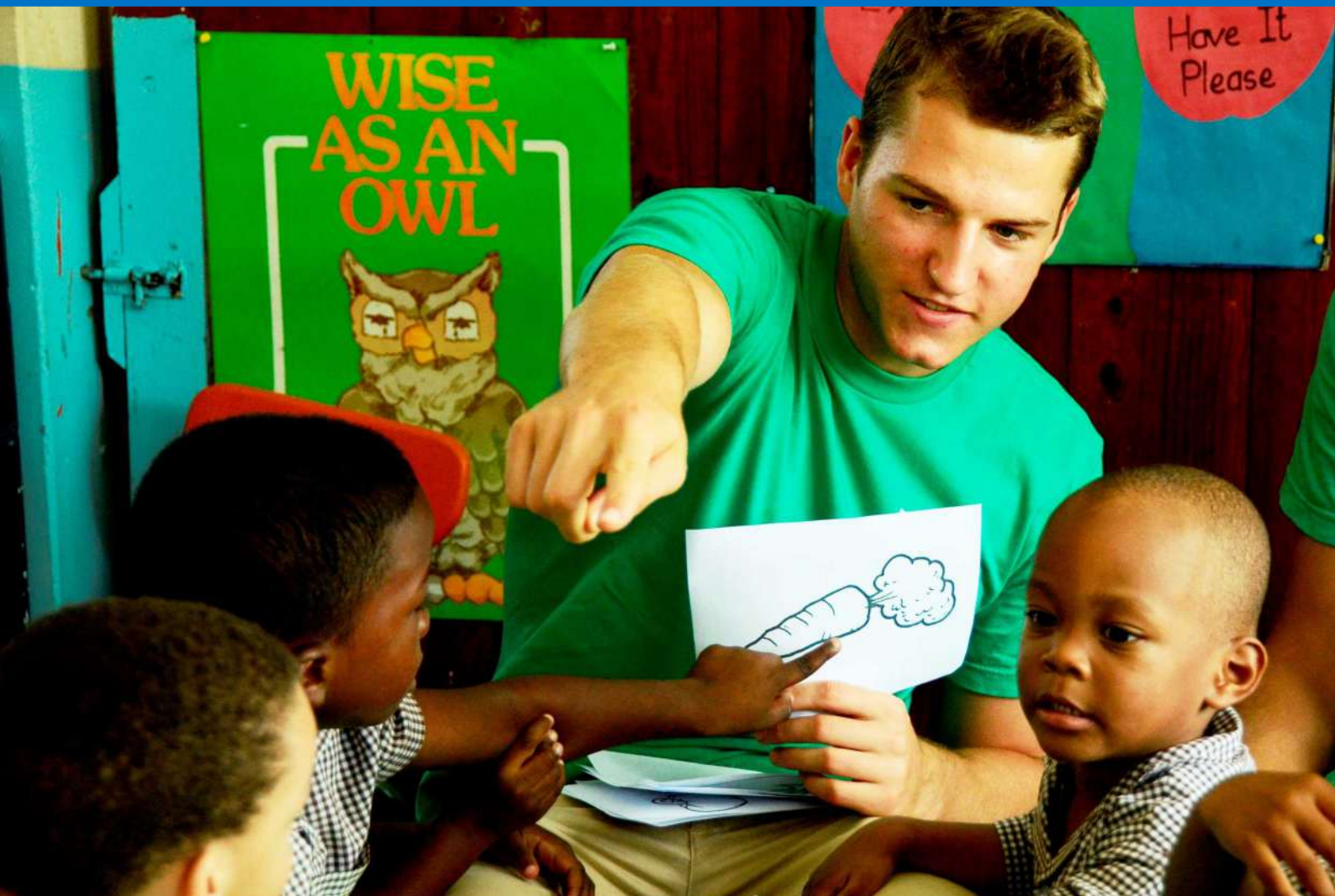
7:00	Breakfast
7:30	Cleaning
8:15	Morning lectures
9:30	Team program starts
12:00	Lunch
13:30	Team program continues
16:00	Sport and exercise
18:00	Dinner
19:00	Evening programs according to team plans

**The daily structure serves as an example and may change.*

One big obstacle to development comes from the use and abuse of alcohol and drugs. You will become a role model for the community; therefore, we have a zero-tolerance policy for alcohol and drugs.



What it takes to become a Climate Activist



- You have turned 18 years old
- You are ready to leave your home for 6 months to volunteer in a community environment 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- You have decided not to drink alcohol or take drugs for the entirety of the program
- You are eager to experience a multidisciplinary and collective based training program, which includes theoretical and practical activities
- You are ready to immerse yourself in a multicultural and diverse community
- You are ready to work on the projects that need you the most
- You are engaged with the consequences of climate change for people and the planet
- You are committed to learn about people, cultures, values and traditions, and to share your knowledge and stories with the public after your travels

Finances



Your cost for the program is USD 3,800.

This covers your basic expenses for the 6 months at Richmond Vale Academy, which includes a shared room, 3 meals a day and team program expenses such as books, films, transport and stationery.

You are responsible for your own health insurance during your stay as well as personal items such as medication, toiletries and any other personal or recreational expenses.



How to apply



Apply Online

Start by filling out a short online form so we can get to know you better.

Phone Consultations

You will receive an invitation to a session where we present the programs in detail and discuss the requirements. After the webinar, you can request individual phone consultations with an enrollment advisor to ask questions and learn more.

Choose a Program and Starting Date

Once you have learned all details, you will pick the starting date that fits you. Remember our advisors are fully available to help you decide what date is best for you.

Final Interview

Now it is time for you to finalize your enrollment. You will schedule a longer phone call conversation to go through the enrollment contract with one of our advisors and review the requirements one last time.

Paperwork & Payment

After the final interview, you will sign the enrollment contract and send your enrollment fee to save your spot.

Prepare your Travel

You are getting ready for a life changing journey! We will send you a package with some recommendations on how to prepare and we will be available to support you in the process.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is made up of 32 islands and cays, 9 of which are inhabited



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St. Vincent and the Grenadines



St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a southern Caribbean nation comprising the main island of St. Vincent and a chain of smaller Grenadine islands.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines gained independence from the United Kingdom on October 27, 1979, and became part of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Today's total population is around 111,000.

The small island nation is one of the less economically developed countries in the Caribbean. Several times the islands have been affected by hurricanes and natural disasters. The latest La Soufrière Volcano Eruption occurred in 2021.

In 2020 St. Vincent and the Grenadines made history by becoming the smallest nation to be elected to the governing body of the UN by taking up a role in the Security Council as a non-permanent member for two years. Many issues were brought to the attention of the council, such as the recognition of the link between changes in climate and economic/human security. Addressing these issues would be imperative for the survival of Small Island Developing States.



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Chateaubelair • St. Vincent and the Grenadines

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