\*\***CALL FOR APPLICANTS\*\***

The Maritimes-Guatemala Breaking the Silence Network (BTS) is pleased to launch a call for people interested and/or engaged in solidarity and human rights locally and abroad.

* **Applications to the Solidarity & Human Rights training** *(May 30th & 31st)* are open to anyone seeking to increase their knowledge of solidarity and human rights. This two-day training will help participants gain a deeper understanding of the practice of solidarity in the context of BTS’ three decades of work in Guatemala, and its relevance for community engagement in Canada.
* **Applications to the Cooperant Program** *(May 30th to June 3rd)* are open to anyone seeking to increase their knowledge, skills and practice of solidarity and human rights by serving as a Human Rights or Community Development Cooperant in Guatemala starting as early as the fall of 2020. As a BTS Cooperant you will support Guatemalan organizations engaged in the struggle for human rights, land defense, food justice and education.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Review the *‘Background Information’* section contained in this package.
2. Determine whether you are applying to the 2-day training or to the 5-day training to serve as a Cooperant in Guatemala.
3. Fill out the corresponding sections of the application outlined below and submit by **Monday March 23rd, 2020** to [BreakingTheSilenceHiring@gmail.com](mailto:BreakingTheSilenceHiring@gmail.com)*.*

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| *Applicants to the 2-day*  **Solidarity & Human Rights Training**  *(May 30th & 31st)*   * *must fill out ONLY sections A and B of the application form* * *will receive a formal invitation to attend once their application is reviewed and approved* * *invited applicants must pay a training registration fee of $100 within two weeks of receiving their formal invitation to attend* | *Applicants to the 5-day*  **Cooperant Program**  *(May 30th to June 3rd)*   * *must fill out ALL sections of the application form and send along with a cover letter and a copy of your CV* * *shortlisted applicants will be contacted for an interview in early April and if selected will be invited to attend* * *invited applicants must pay a training registration fee of $100 within two weeks of receiving their formal invitation to attend* |

*\*\*The training will take place at Tatamagouche Center in Nova Scotia. We welcome people of all ages and backgrounds to apply. Priority will be given to folks based in or with strong roots in Atlantic Canada.\*\**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Breaking the Silence is a voluntary Maritimes-based network which supports advocacy, human rights and community development groups in Guatemala working for social, economic, environmental and cultural justice. Formed in 1988 in response to the genocide, human displacement and massive human rights violations that occurred in the region during the Internal Armed Conflict, and based at the Tatamagouche Centre in Tatamagouche in Nova Scotia, BTS has developed partnerships in Guatemala since the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996. At the present time, BTS prioritizes supporting transitional justice - including genocide cases -and support for communities resisting Canadian companies imposing mining operations without their free, prior and informed consent - with a cross-cutting theme of gender justice. BTS’ work in Guatemala is supported by and closely connected to solidarity work in Canada to raise awareness about human rights violations in Guatemala, and to address the root causes of social injustice in Guatemala and in Canada. For more information on BTS please visit <http://www.breakingthesilenceblog.com>.  
  
**BTS Solidarity Philosophy**

We recognize that injustice is connected to structural inequalities within and between countries, and are committed to supporting structural transformation both in Guatemala and Canada. Our work is guided by the understanding that we need to build long-term relationships based on solidarity and mutuality. We respond to the needs and issues defined by our partners and other Guatemalans with whom we work. Our relationships are built on friendship, sharing, and dialogue as we work, learn, and grow together.

**Overall Objectives**

Using an experiential, participatory learning approach, participants will:

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| ***2-day***  ***training*** | * Deepen their understanding of the history & philosophy of BTS * Deepen their understanding & practice of solidarity * Consider complexities & challenges inherent to solidarity work * Engage in personal & collective reflection on power, privilege and oppression * Be introduced to helpful approaches and tools for engaging in solidarity work |
| ***5-day***  ***training*** | *(in addition to those above)*   * Clarify their understanding of the Cooperant Program, including roles of short and longer-term cooperants, BTS policies, and expectations of cooperants * Consider possible dilemmas, challenges, difficulties that cooperants may face * Learn about possible responses to challenges faced in this line of work * Receive training in security and preparedness when working overseas * Share BTS financial support information and fundraising strategies to prepare for a possible Cooperant Placement in Guatemala * Discern their suitability to participate in the program at this time, with the final decision made by the Training Leadership Team |

COOPERANT PROGRAM SUMMARY *(for Cooperant Program applicants)*

Building on past internship and accompaniment experiences, the Cooperant Program was designed to create and implement a progressive program based on the priorities of BTS’ human rights and community development partners, who are seeking Canadian collaboration at this critical time in Guatemala’s history. Through this program, BTS hopes to strengthen and deepen our solidarity work, both in Guatemala and in Canada. Our goal is to form a cohort of 6-8 short & long-term cooperants who will serve with BTS partners between 2020 and 2021 for periods of 1- 3 months as Human Rights Cooperants or 6-12 months as Community Development Cooperants.   
  
**Role of short-term Human Rights Cooperants**

Short-term placements respond to urgent human rights needs of our partners and are open to applicants with previous experience as an intern, human rights accompanier, international observer, or equivalent experience. Short-term cooperants must meet the following requirements:

* Be available to travel to Guatemala between the fall of 2020 and the spring of 2021 to serve for a period of 1 to 3 months in response to urgent, immediate needs of BTS partners
* Be able and prepared to provide emergency human rights support for individuals and communities under threat, which may include: providing a physical presence in communities; traveling with individuals; documenting human rights violations; preparing Urgent Actions for Canadian solidarity actions and international response; keeping the Canadian Embassy informed of the human rights situation on the ground.
* If necessary, be present at court cases including cases involving: criminalization of community members and leaders resisting the imposition of extractive industries without the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Mayan and Xinca communities; cases of Mayan women testifying after suffering sexual violence by the military and civil patrols during the internal armed conflict.
* Be capable of support witnesses in line with BTS policies and philosophy
* Support BTS to disseminate information to Canadians, the international community, and the media in regards to the ongoing struggles for justice in Guatemala

Some short-term Cooperants may have the option to select their placement dates in consultation with the BTS Lead Cooperant and partners in Guatemala.

**Role of Longer-term Community Development Cooperants**

Longer-term placements respond to BTS partners’ requests for solidarity support in community development projects and are open to applicants who have strong interest and skills related to the needs of our partners in Guatemala. Longer-term cooperants must meet the following requirements:

* Be available to serve for a period of 6 months to a year starting in either October of 2020 or January of 2021 in projects determined by BTS partners
* Be prepared to take on a work placement to provide community development support in areas and ways that are identified and guided by our partners based on their needs.
* Be capable of living in a small community and act as a liaison between BTS and one of our partners through the support of the Lead Cooperant and other BTS staff
* Have an interest and skills to develop and foster relationships based on trust, mutuality and cooperation with BTS partners as well as local communities in Guatemala
* Support BTS to disseminate information to Canadians, the international community, and the media in regards to the ongoing struggles for justice in Guatemala

**Cooperant Expectations**

* **Flexibility:** Cooperants must be flexible, understanding that the needs and priorities of BTS partners may constantly shift and change. Placements require a willingness to value and prioritize the development of human relationships and accompaniment of community processes rather than expecting high levels of personal achievement, since this may not be a realistic goal.
* **Cultural & Language Competency:** All cooperants must possess or have a strong desire and commitment to actively develop strong intercultural skills (including awareness of social location, power & privilege), as well as language proficiency. A minimum of intermediate level spoken Spanish is highly encouraged and/or the cooperant must undertake further Spanish language training in Guatemala prior to their placement.
* **Reflection:** The Cooperant Program encourages mutual support and cooperation, requiring cooperants to participate in constant reflection and communication with the BTS Lead Cooperant and other peers. Cooperants must be prepared to share their thoughts and feelings as well as their joys and struggles with other cooperants.
* **Communications:** BTS asks all cooperants to report regularly on their experiences to the BTS Network and beyond including local support committees, media, social media, and other organizations as appropriate.
* **Training:** Cooperants must participate in all program trainings including the Solidarity & Human Rights Training as well as the in-country orientation, mid and end of placement trainings.
* **Forming Support Committees:** We strongly encourage each cooperant to form a committee whose purpose is to offer moral and financial support while on placement, and to share reflections to this as a way to engage them in post-placement sharing.
* **Participation in BTS before and after Placement:** Individuals selected for the Cooperant Program are strongly encouraged to attend the BTS Annual Gathering where they will meet BTS members including former cooperants and human rights accompaniers as well as Guatemalan partner guests. It is also BTS’ hope that cooperants will continue to be engaged with BTS after returning to Canada.

**Summary of Important Dates to Consider**

* **May 30-June 3, 2020 ~** Solidarity & Human Rights Training
* **June 12-14, 2020 ~** BTS Annual Gathering at Tatamagouche Center
* **October 2020 ~** First cohort of cooperant departures to Guatemala
* **January 2021 ~** Second cohort of cooperant departures to Guatemala

**Program Costs**

Cooperants are asked to undertake fundraising efforts to support their participation in the program. BTS will support cooperants in fundraising, including suggesting possible sources of funding and the formation of local support committees for both moral and financial support. In the past, accompaniers and volunteers have been successful in identifying funding sources, often in collaboration with local support committees, including service clubs and university-related bursaries and law foundations.

In addition to this, BTS offers cooperants financial support in the form of:

* a return flight from Canada to Guatemala
* health/repatriation insurance (please note that all cooperants must have valid provincial medical insurance)
* $400/month to help cover in-country costs including room,board and travel *(we estimate in-country expenses at around $800 per month)*

**Self-Assessment** Cooperants may find the experience life-changing, filled with tremendous learning, growth, meaning, and fun! However, this experience will also be challenging and demanding, with ups and downs and struggles along the way. This program is not appropriate for individuals whose primary goals are personal achievement and results; rather, this program is focused on learning and contributing through developing relationships and supporting community processes, which may or may not achieve results during your relatively short stay in Guatemala. If you know that you need a clearly defined, detailed job description and a highly structured work experience and/or you have high achievement needs and want to see immediate results, this may not be the program for you.

BTS PARTNERS & COOPERANT PLACEMENTS

BTS partnerships reflect decades of relationship building and cooperation. The work of our partners is wide in scope and all placements require great flexibility and adaptability, understanding that placement descriptions may evolve and change.

**Comite Campesino del Altiplano (CCDA) / Highland Small Farmers Committee**  
BTS has worked with the CCDA since 2000 in developing a fair-trade coffee exportation relationship, through Just Us! Today, the CCDA markets its coffee, Café Justicia throughout Canada, parts of the USA and Europe. In Guatemala, this translates into hundreds of families benefiting from higher prices that fair trade guarantees, organic compost for future crops and the development of a CCDA scholarship program from the proceeds of the coffee for children of small coffee producers. The CCDA works to promote land and labour rights for small farmer families. ***Strong interest and/or backgrounds in agricultural engineering, fundraising, communications or law would be strong assets for the CCDA.***

**Mesoamerican Permaculture Institute (IMAP)**  
IMAP works to promote and foster biological and cultural diversity in Mesoamerica through permaculture design and practice. They work directly with communities and organizations in the region to integrate permaculture into community development for the benefit of families. IMAP’s vision is for Mesoamerican people to become the primary actors of the construction of autonomous sustainable development, to live in harmony with nature and to be a Permaculture model for the bioregion and world. Seed saving and seed sharing, health, nutrition and self-reliance are important parts of their work. IMAP offers Permaculture Design Certificate programs, as well as other learning opportunities. ***Strong interest and/or backgrounds in permaculture, marketing, fundraising or sustainable community development would be strong assets for IMAP.***

**Asociación Bufete Jurídico Popular (ABJP) / Community Legal Association**  
The ABJP was established by survivors of the Rio Negro Massacre and its original legal objective was the fulfilment of the 1996 Peace Accords by facilitating access for victims of genocide and crimes against humanity to national and international legal systems and the National Restitution Commission. This work continues today through national and international channels. Because of the ABJP’s awareness of the issue of family violence in the community and the lack of response by the legal system and the community, in late 2006 it opened the Achi Women’s Office to educate women on their legal rights and to respond to issues of family violence, notably through education initiatives and the legal system. Currently the ABJP works in three streams: legal certainty and security for ancestral lands, justice for crimes during the internal armed conflict and the genocide, and the Achi Woman’s Office. ***Strong interest and/or backgrounds in law, journalism, communications, social work or psychology would be strong assets for the ABJP.***

**Fundación Nueva Esperanza (FNE) / New Hope Foundation**

In 1996, Jesus Tecu Osorio, recipient of the 2010 Human Rights First Baldwin Medal, along with other survivors of the Rio Negro massacre, founded the Fundación Nueva Esperanza. It originally offered educational support (scholarships, computer training and tutoring) to Maya-Achi youth whose parents were victims or survivors of the 1980s genocide, thus contributing to the construction of a just and democratic state. In 2003 the FNE opened the New Hope Secondary School to offer educational opportunities for youth affected by the violence and to facilitate occupational, personal, social, and cultural programs designed to overcome the causes and effects of violence. At the present time the Fundacion offers a culturally relevant bilingual education junior high school program for youth from throughout the municipality of Rabinal, many of whom board at the school. ***Strong interest and/or backgrounds in agriculture, education or fundraising would be strong assets for FNE.***

**Important Considerations** *(presented in part thanks to Project Ploughshares)*

Deciding to live and work as a cooperant means more than simply filling a position in Guatemala. Different cultural expectations, living conditions and levels of support must be considered. If you do not have a basic understanding of the history and social reality of Guatemala, we urge you to do some research before deciding whether to apply. In addition, we encourage you to take time to ask yourself (and your family, if appropriate) the questions below and consider them seriously and honestly before submitting your application.

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| **Why do you want to do this?**  Living and working in Guatemala will require adjustments in food, living quarters, daily pace, forms of entertainment, language, and companionship.   * Are you able to adapt quickly to changes in your life? * How stressful do you find change? |
| **Professional Considerations**  Conditions accompanying your placement can change, requiring great flexibility.   * How flexible are you? Do you enjoy the freedom and responsibility of using your initiative in your work or do you prefer having a prescribed plan and direction? * Do you tend to focus on results and personal achievement, or are you more interested in contributing and learning through entering into community processes? |
| **Emotional Considerations**   * Are you prepared to be separated from your friends and loved ones? * Are you creative about your leisure time? |
| **Cultural Factors**   * Are you prepared for misunderstandings? * Have you worked/lived with people from other cultures before? How did you react? * How successful were you in sharing your concerns and understanding theirs? * How would you dealwith differences in work experience, work styles and values? * How would you ensure that you don't impose your agenda on that of your partner organization, its employees and members? * Do you have experience working with people in non-traditional roles or settings? * Have you thought about how you would respond to these situations? * Do you feel that you hold open and flexible attitudes, opinions, and behaviours about people from other cultures? |
| **Physical Conditions**   * Are you prepared to live in a different climate? * Can you do without easy access to cell phones, TV, Internet, movies and books? * How do you react to physical discomfort? Insects? Unvaried diet? Lack of sleep/privacy? Digestive problems? * Are you prepared to do without most of your personal belongings? * Are you prepared to live with insecurity and restrictions on your freedom due to high levels of crime and violence in Guatemala (e.g. no travel at night)? |

\*\***APPLICATION FORM\*\***

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| **SECTION A: General Information** *(for all applicants)* | |
| **Name:** |  |
| **Address:** |  |
| **Phone number(s):** |  |
| **E-mail:** |  |
| **How did you hear about this call?** *(website, e-mail, announcement, word of mouth, social media, etc.)* |  |

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| *Please use an X to specify which of the following you are applying to:* | |
|  | **Solidarity & Human Rights Training** *(May 30th & 31st)* |
|  | **Cooperant Program**  *(May 30th to June 3rd)* |

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| **SECTION B: Getting to know you** *(for all applicants)* | |
| *Please make sure to answer each question to the best of your ability. Answers should be 2-5 sentences long.* | |
| **What is your hope for participation in the BTS Solidarity Training?** |  |
| **What question are you currently holding about your commitment to solidarity and social justice?** |  |
| **How have you expressed your interest in or commitment to social justice in your life?** |  |

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| **SECTION C: Cooperant Program** *(for Cooperant Program applicants)* | |
| *Please use an X to specify which of the following you are interested in:* | |
|  | **Short-term Human Rights Cooperant**   * *I am available for a period of 1 to 3 months* * *I possess previous relevant experience* |
|  | **Longer-term Community Development Cooperant**   * *I am available for a period of 6 to 12 months* * *I possess previous relevant experience* |

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| **SECTION D: Personal Information** *(for Cooperant Program applicants)* | |
| **Date of birth:** |  |
| **Country of citizenship:** |  |
| **Do you hold a valid passport?** *If so, indicate the country where the passport is issued along with the number and expiration date* |  |
| **Do you hold valid provincial health insurance?** *If so, indicate the province where your health card is issued along with the card number and expiration date* |  |
| *Please list two emergency contacts including their name, phone number, and your relationship to them:* | |
| **Emergency contact 1:** |  |
| **Emergency contact 2:** |  |

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| **SECTION E: Language Skills** *(for Cooperant Program applicants)* | |
| **What is your first language?** |  |
| **What is your Spanish language proficiency? *(fluent, advanced, intermediate, beginner, none)*** |  |
| **Please respond in Spanish: ¿Dónde aprendiste español?** |  |
| **Do you speak any other languages?***If so, which ones?* |  |

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| **SECTION F: Health Information** *(for Cooperant Program applicants)* | |
| **Do you have any health concerns, allergies or illnesses? If so, please describe.** |  |
| **Have you been under a doctor’s care or received prescription medicine within the past year? Explain.** |  |
| **Will you need to take any special medical supplies with you?** |  |

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| **SECTION G: Life Experience & Skills** *(for Cooperant Program applicants)* | |
| *Please make sure to answer each question to the best of your ability. Answers should be between half a page to one full page.* | |
| **What life experiences, education, or training have you had that is relevant to this program?** |  |
| **What experiences have you had living and working with people of other cultures, backgrounds or life experiences?** |  |
| **How would you plan to deal with the various physical discomforts and emotional stresses you may face?** *(These may include difficulty in communicating in a second language, slowness in getting your placement off the ground, differences in values with Guatemalans and other foreigners, dealing with common crime and violence as part of daily reality, sexism, exhaustion, heat, unfamiliar food, lack of privacy, disorganization and disagreement within organizations).* |  |
| **Describe stressful situations you have experienced and how you have dealt with them** |  |

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| **SECTION H: Knowledge of Guatemala** *(for Cooperant Program applicants)* | |
| *Before responding to the following question, please read the Travel Advisory for Guatemala on the Canadian Embassy in Guatemala webpage. Answer each question to the best of your ability. Answers should be between half a page to one full page.* | |
| What will you do you minimize security risks while in Guatemala? |  |
| Please indicate in page or less your understanding of Guatemalan history and the present political, social, economic, and cultural context. |  |

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| **SECTION I: Further Information** *(for Cooperant Program applicants)* | |
| Is there anything else you would like us to know about you? |  |

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| **SECTION J: References** *(for Cooperant Program applicants)* | |
| *Please provide us with the names, phone numbers, and emails of three persons who are willing to act as references for you. They should include people who can comment on your personal qualities, your education or training, and your work experience. We do not accept written references.* | |
| Reference #1: |  |
| Reference #2: |  |
| Reference #3: |  |

*Thank you for your interest in the BTS Cooperant Program!*

*We look forward to reviewing your application*