Introduction

A group of 10 students from Wick High School located in the most northerly county in mainland Scotland called Caithness gathered together in their 6th year and wanted to make a difference during their summer break before they went on to pursue our University Degrees.

We will be discussing about the Belize Trip and how it went on to shape our Journey throughout University.
Stage 1 - Conservation
Chiquibul National Park

During this part of our trip we were involved with conservation and this allowed us to get a grasp on the environmental issues in Belize and what can be done to help.
Duke of Edinburgh Expedition

- This was arguably the most challenging part of the trip
- For a lot of the group it pushed us out of our comfort zones
- For others it allowed a chance to show leadership
Volunteering

- We all volunteered at various places: a school, a retirement home, an iguana reserve and a medical clinic.
What was the immediate impact on our return home?

“Upon returning home I feel the experience had a immediate impact as I realised how much easier life in the United Kingdom is due the amenities so readily available to us.” - Josey

“Returning home I was much more appreciative of life in Scotland and the everyday things that we all take for granted. Seeing how happy people in Belize were with a lot less reinforced this” - John

“When I returned home I was inspired to make change for the better for our natural environment both locally and regionally, Seeing the border between Guatemala and Belize made me realise the true costs of deforestation ” - Ryan
How did the Belize experience shape your future thoughts and choices?

“The Belize experience in total shaped my future choices and thoughts, especially with regard to my university career and my decision to pursue law” - Josey

“The trip to Belize was the start of a journey that led me towards studying international development at postgraduate level” - John

“The trip to Belize helped me volunteer more for my University giving me the confidence to achieve success” - Ryan

“After experiencing the animal life in Belize during the conservation part of the trip, I was incredibly motivated to pursue my university degree in animal biology” - Liam
Did it lead to any other big experiences?

“The incredible experience I had in Belize motivated me to pursue other volunteer opportunities in the Global South and in 2016 I participated in a development project in Uganda and joined the committee of a charity that carries out sustainable development projects overseas” - John

“Belize was my first taste of travelling and I loved it! Since then I’ve went on to volunteer in Africa and work in the US. The trip to Belize allowed me to see what the world had to offer and the confidence to pursue other adventures!” - Jenny

“Making a difference through voluntary work in Belize was so inspiring so I then went on to do further voluntary work such as at an orphanage in Tanzania” - Robyn

“The Belize trip gave me the confidence and love of travelling which led to me to undertake a comparative study requested by the University of the Highlands and Islands in Dayton, Ohio” - Ryan
How do you feel you developed personally during the experience and now thereafter?

“The whole experience changed my outlook on life, boosting my confidence, motivating me to take new opportunities, and helping me to overcome challenges” - John

“This experience changed my perspective on the opportunities presented to me, it gave me more motivation to achieve my life goals and the essential skills I am now needing to continue my development” - Josey

“I developed the interpersonal skills which helped me work on my dissertation study and therefore to complete my honours degree, something I originally never thought was achievable” - Ryan
If you had to advise others to do something like that why would you and what advice would you offer?

“I would advise anyone to do a similar experience as us as it is the singular best thing I have ever done, it has allowed me to become the person I am today and has made me totally focused” - Josey

“Anyone considering an experience like this should definitely go for it and don’t turn down the opportunity, it will give you a story to tell to for the rest of your life” - Ryan

“From personal experience of applying to university and for graduate jobs, international experiences like ours in Belize are so important to stand out from the competition” - Jenny