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# CONNECTIONS

Raleigh International Alumni Magazine

Summer 2015



## Meet the Entrepreneurs

Volunteers use enterprise to combat poverty

## Sia's story

From venturer to Fieldbase Support Coordinator

## Chain reaction

Charles Sanford completes epic cycle ride

## Bright spark

Brandon of Borneo's incredible Raleigh journey

**Raleigh**  
International

Since it was founded in 1984, Raleigh International has created a global community of more than 40,000 inspired and inspiring people, committed to making a positive difference in the world.

It's thanks to you, the thousands of volunteers who have committed your time, energy and passion to support us that we're able to deliver lasting change in the countries and communities we work with.

In return, we hope you've gained lifelong lessons and friendships and feel inspired to become a more active global citizen. No matter where they are or what they are working to achieve, Raleigh people make a difference. Raleigh is not just an experience; it's a multicultural, passionate, global team working together to change the world.

We'd love you to stay in touch after you've hung up your rucksack. There are reunions, societies, newsletters, events, training and talks to keep you connected. You can volunteer, teach, mentor, fundraise and learn. Whether you've just returned from expedition or you set sail with Operation Drake 30 years ago, the alumni programme is a network of friends and resources to help you continue your Raleigh journey.

## This issue of Connections was produced by



**Mike Butcher**

As Senior Communications Officer, Mike finds ways for alumni to stay connected with us, including overseeing the production of this magazine. An impassioned alumnus himself, he also spends time spreading the word about Raleigh in the media.



**Shalini Rawlley**

Content Officer Shalini is responsible for sourcing stories, images and information from our projects in rural communities by liaising with local project partners, local staff and volunteers. She also provided several editorial contributions to this magazine.



**Madeleine Somerfield**

Raleigh's Senior Designer, Madeleine manages all things visual at Raleigh, designing most materials for print and web, briefing and managing photographers and creating the visual aspects of this magazine.



**Anna Waters**

Communications and PR Intern Anna provides support across the Communications team, managing content received from our international offices and helping to develop engaging written materials, including several articles in this magazine.



**Laura Woodward**

Communications and PR Manager Laura is always building relationships with the media and opinion formers. She also oversees alumni relations and somehow found the time to help with production and cast her eye over the magazine copy.

## Connect

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## Welcome



**Resilience. At Raleigh, it's a word we use often.**

When I speak with alumni, I frequently hear about the challenges they overcame on programme; how they battled obstacles as a team, and how they gained new skills and became resilient as a result.

Of course, volunteering with Raleigh is a two-way process; our volunteers also support communities around the world to become more resilient. In this issue, we shine a Project Spotlight on the Raleigh ICS Entrepreneur programme, where volunteers are supporting young aspiring entrepreneurs in Nicaragua and Tanzania, providing the motivation and self-belief they need to build a sustainable livelihood.

You will have heard about the devastating events in Nepal. We've had an advance team in the country for several months, making arrangements to start new volunteering programmes there. The earthquake has created many new challenges but reinforced the need for our work and we remain committed to the Nepali people and to starting operations there. As you will find out on page 4, our planned programmes include helping communities to become more resilient to the challenges posed by natural disasters and climate change.

In this issue we also check in with our alumni societies, including a brand new society in the unlikelyst of locations, along with some impressive alumni fundraisers. And we leave the 'final word' with Borneo Country Director Brandon Charleston, who tells us about his incredible Raleigh journey.

If you're inspired by these stories, visit our website or get in touch with us. As you'll see in this issue, there are so many ways for you to stay involved, and we would love to hear from you.

With thanks and best wishes,

**Stacey Adams**  
Chief Executive Officer

**What would you like to see in our next issue of Connections? Let us know by emailing [alumni@raleighinternational.org](mailto:alumni@raleighinternational.org)**

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We talk scorpions, Sabah and sustainability with Brandon Charleston, Borneo Country Director

# On the ground



## **SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURS, NICARAGUA**

In the Madriz region, volunteers are supporting young entrepreneurs to develop small businesses, through delivering workshops on leadership, business planning, finance and marketing as part of the International Citizen Service (ICS) Entrepreneur programme. With enterprises beginning to take shape, the programme has been significant in tackling youth unemployment in the area.



## **PROTECTING NATURAL RESOURCES, COSTA RICA**

Volunteers have been mapping out large areas of the beautiful national park of La Cangreja, as well maintaining a large section of trails, making areas of the park more accessible. As a result, local communities and tourists are being encouraged to visit the park and bring prosperity to the area.







## SAFE SANITATION, INDIA

Volunteers have been raising awareness of the dangers of open defecation in tribal communities in Karnataka. By delivering awareness sessions alongside the provision of vital facilities such as toilets and washrooms, volunteers are contributing to the long-term positive effects of safe sanitation.



## COMMUNITY LEARNING, BORNEO

Volunteers have been constructing a community learning centre in the village of Kampung Tiku, which will be used as a kindergarten for the children, many of whom walk 90 minutes to attend their nearest school. The centre will also provide a meeting space for the hard-working women in the community.



## DAIRY INITIATIVES, TANZANIA

In Tanzania, farming and dairy production is thriving, with huge employment potential for young people. Volunteers have been supporting young entrepreneurs with pitches for funding that will make their business plans a reality, with ideas ranging from milk production to animal medication.

## Want more?

These are just a handful of the sustainable development projects that our teams have tackled since our last issue. Find out more at [raleighinternational.org/blogs](http://raleighinternational.org/blogs)



## NEPAL WELCOMES RALEIGH

We are pleased to announce that from 2016, Raleigh volunteers will be working alongside communities in Nepal.

Nepal is a country of stunning mountain landscapes, rich culture and fascinating history, yet it has faced many challenges from natural disasters and climate change. A team of Raleigh staff has been in Nepal since January 2015, working with local project partners to find out where our support is most needed.

Fortunately, the team is safe following the two devastating earthquakes that occurred in April and May this year. We want to ensure that we are focusing our work where it will have the greatest impact, and only where it is appropriate and safe for volunteers to work.

Following the initial set-up phase, we have appointed Country Director, Ram Risal. Ram joins us with significant experience, having worked with development organisation Helvetas in Nepal, Mali and Ethiopia.

We are now finding out how best we can support Nepal and its people with some of the challenges that lie ahead. This may include supporting young Nepali people to secure a sustainable livelihood, or in helping to provide reliable, sustainable water sources. Nepal has set targets to eradicate the process of open defecation by 2017, and we will be supporting this initiative in hard to reach communities.

If you would like to be kept up to date with our progress and future announcements regarding our work in Nepal, please keep an eye on our website!



## TIM SET FOR LIFT OFF

In November, Raleigh alumnus Tim Peake will become the first British European Space Agency astronaut to live and work on the International Space Station.

Tim believes there are a number of parallels to be drawn between space exploration and sustainable development on earth. We caught up with him recently to talk about water conservation, and showed him how to use a tippy-tap.

“From space you certainly get a different perspective on everything and some of the tasks that the astronauts have to do on a daily basis is to take earth observation photographs, for example, monitoring lakes and oceans for receding coastlines or melting ice caps so we can gain data on what is happening to our climate” said Tim.

“The Earth is everybody’s responsibility - that’s a message that we need to shout about loud and clear and if we can get that across to younger generations, hopefully that is something that will follow them through the rest of their lives”. [Follow Tim on Twitter @astro\\_timpeake](#)





## President meets volunteers in Costa Rica

The President of Costa Rica showed his appreciation for Raleigh's work on natural resources management when he met with our Costa Rica alumni society in December at the national park of Isla San Lucas. Luis Guillermo Solis saw volunteers working to maintain the island's paths, which are very useful to park rangers and tourists, and also act as essential exits in the event of forest fires.

In February, President Solis surprised us again by showing up during a campaign day in the beautiful national park of La Cangreja, where volunteers were working with the local community to lobby for the protection of the park's resources.

## PRESIDENT & RALEIGH



## RALEIGH HONG KONG SUPPORTS SAFE WATER



A huge thank you to Raleigh's Hong Kong society, which has donated £5,000 towards our water, sanitation and hygiene programmes in Tanzania. The grant helped towards funding two projects in Tanzania, the first of which took place in Miganga, where volunteers worked to install new water distribution lines and taps. The group ran awareness raising activities, mural painting and tippy-tap demonstrations. The second project took place at Mchangani Primary School in Bassadowish, where volunteers installed a much needed safe water supply to the school's kitchen and toilet blocks.

Find out more about how you can support us in improving access to safe water and sanitation. Contact us on [alumni@raleighinternational.org](mailto:alumni@raleighinternational.org)

## EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

We've been working closely with Newham Sixth Form College in East London to support students who would not otherwise have the opportunity to take part in an expedition.

"We invest in our students' all-round development as well as their academic success," said Steven Kern, Youth Activities Leader at Newham College. "Offering an expedition in partnership with Raleigh has formed a staple part of our student enrichment programme which encompasses understanding our world, our community and leadership."

Raleigh works in partnership with a number of youth volunteer groups. Together we try to make participation a reality for young people that might not be able to join a volunteer programme due to personal or financial barriers. Halima is one student who was supported to volunteer with Raleigh in Tanzania.



"I have developed myself in so many ways that I can no longer count," Halima said. "It makes you believe that you are in charge of your life and it's in your hands what you decide to do with it. It also made me realise the magnificent privileges we have that I did not notice before."

If you would like to find out more or if you represent a youth group, visit [raleighinternational.org/what-we-do/youth-partnerships](https://raleighinternational.org/what-we-do/youth-partnerships)

## India alumni take to a Global Platform

In November, George and Manjunath, two alumni from India attended an activism and empowerment workshop in Kathmandu, Nepal. During the two-week event, the pair underwent intensive training on how to bring about social change at home.

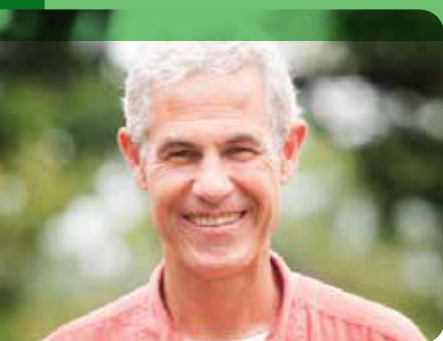
Global Platform Nepal aimed to inspire and equip young people with the confidence and skills they need to make a positive difference in their society, and George and Manjunath joined other young people from Bangladesh, Nepal, India and Tajikistan for an exciting two weeks of learning, bonding, and development.

“The whole training was action-packed and very informative”, said George. “It has helped us to become youth leaders who can mobilise others in our communities for social change.”

## GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR INDIA ALUMNI



## A TRUSTEE'S PERSPECTIVE



Raleigh Tanzania is an “extremely well run organisation that has a unique and deep insight into what communities think here in Tanzania”, according to Trustee Sam Parker. This was Sam's first chance to see Raleigh in action, giving him some invaluable insights to help him support the work that Raleigh does.

Sam was inspired by the flourishing Tanzania alumni society. “It is their passion and understanding of their home country that has to be nurtured to see the development work we do here continue to be sustainable”, said Sam.

## Tarihing set to power up her community

Tarihing Masanim, a grandmother from Sonsogon Magandai in Borneo has become the region's first Solar Engineer. Following a six-month course in India, Tarihing will electrify all 100 households in her community through a solar workshop built by Raleigh volunteers.

Originally a rubber-tapper, Tarihing had never left her village before she flew to the Barefoot College in India. The college aims to empower communities around the world through training unskilled, illiterate women, challenging both age and gender barriers. She returned to Sonsogon Magandai in March to put her new skills to use in engineering and maintaining solar power systems, which were provided by Sabah Women Entrepreneurs & Professionals Association, and constructed by our volunteers. Tarihing will assume responsibility of the solar workshop for a minimum of five years.

Want to keep up with the incredible work that Raleigh volunteers are carrying out around the world? Visit our blogs at [raleighinternational.org/blogs](http://raleighinternational.org/blogs)

## SABAH'S FIRST SOLAR ENGINEER





# Sia's Story

## FROM VOLUNTEER TO FIELDBASE



Sia's Raleigh journey has seen her graduate from volunteer, to volunteer manager, to a full-time role as a Field Support Coordinator in Tanzania.

"I found out about Raleigh from a friend at university. I was studying law at the time, and joined as a host country venturer. After

my expedition, I returned to university and helped to form the Raleigh alumni society here in Tanzania - we now have over 500 members! When I finished my studies, I wanted to continue to make a difference, and returned to Raleigh as a volunteer manager.

Working with venturers of all different backgrounds can be challenging, but I loved interacting with people who have different ideas and viewpoints, and it really developed my leadership skills. When I finished the programme, I felt an incredible sense of achievement. I knew that I wanted to come back and achieve even more.

I got the job as Field Support Coordinator in October 2014. In my role I support all of Raleigh's programmes; Expedition, International Citizen Service (ICS) and ICS Entrepreneur, ensuring the safety of the volunteers and making sure they're on course for completion of targets. I really enjoy the first-hand experience of project management while still getting to take part in what the group are doing, from the roots through to completion. Meeting our project partners, I understand how important the participation and engagement of the local communities is if we are to make really sustainable changes in Tanzania.

In the future, I'd like to learn more about community development work as this is something that I am very passionate about. I'm interested to learn about land laws, as this is something that is very prominent throughout Africa. I think my main focus is just to keep challenging myself as a person so that I can continue to grow and develop."

Have you thought about re-joining a Raleigh Expedition as a Volunteer Manager? To find out more, visit [raleighinternational.org/what-we-do/raleigh-expeditions/aged-25-and-over](http://raleighinternational.org/what-we-do/raleigh-expeditions/aged-25-and-over).



**"I now understand how important the participation and engagement of the local communities is if we are to make really sustainable changes in Tanzania."**





# project spotlight: ICS Entrepreneur



## COMBATTING POVERTY THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In Nicaragua and Tanzania, 52% and 68% of the respective populations live in poverty, and youth unemployment is soaring. Despite this, rural areas are providing a unique environment for entrepreneurship to thrive. Here, Raleigh volunteers are working alongside aspiring entrepreneurs to transform the economic prospects of their communities. For vulnerable communities to increase their resilience, sustainable job opportunities need to be developed which allow young people to live the quality of life that they aspire to.

For ten to twelve week periods, volunteers from the UK, Nicaragua and Tanzania work alongside young entrepreneurs to launch new businesses as part of the UK government-funded International Citizen Service (ICS) Entrepreneur programme. After receiving training from experts, volunteers deliver workshops that support the entrepreneurs in areas such as research, business planning, marketing and pitching.

While the two countries share challenges, there are large contrasts in their economic landscapes. In northern Nicaragua, a terrible drought has meant that farming is no longer a reliable source of income, despite being the default livelihood for many generations of families. In Tanzania however, farming and dairy production is thriving, with huge employment potential for young people.





## MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Entrepreneurship can accelerate development in rural areas, providing necessary services and satisfying the needs of communities. In Tanzania, volunteers are working with Emmanuel, 23, to start a business selling high quality animal feed in his community of Nkalise. Using the skills he has learned through ICS Entrepreneur, he plans to expand his business and diversify his product range, whilst raising awareness with local farmers of how quality feed can help increase the productivity of their dairy cattle. This will not only lead to more sales for his business, but also increased productivity in the local industry and higher incomes for his community.



## SUSTAINABLE BUSINESSES

Sustainability is at the heart of our work, so it's crucial to encourage entrepreneurs to develop viable and dynamic enterprises. In Nicaragua, volunteers are supporting a team of entrepreneurs to develop a bee farm, where crops are free from chemicals that could damage the environment and the health of the community. As a result, they can produce a 100% natural, high quality product which satisfies the needs of their customers.

As their businesses grow, they will provide sustainable job opportunities which will allow young people to live the quality of life they aspire to, and to play a vital role in the economic development of the region.

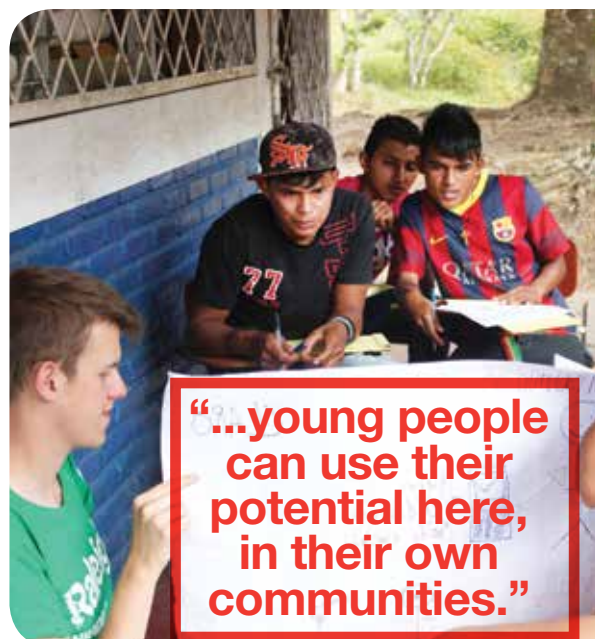
**‘As their businesses grow, they will provide sustainable job opportunities which will allow young people to live the quality of life they aspire to.’**



## SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURS ON THE JOURNEY

In Nicaragua, multiple generations of families have specialised in one trade, so it can take external inspiration to motivate entrepreneurs and create a spark of innovation. By having volunteers in the communities to provide guidance and support, entrepreneurs are motivated and given the confidence to create strong, sustainable local businesses.

As Fabio, from INPRHU, our local project partner in Nicaragua explained, “Farming is no longer a reliable way of making money. People feel like they have to migrate in order to make a living finding work in the only trade they know, which means they have to leave their families behind. We believe it isn’t necessary when young people can use their potential here, in their own communities. Raleigh volunteers living and working with the community at a grassroots level is essential. We see volunteers in the community as a two-way learning process; volunteers can be a positive influence on the entrepreneurs, and the volunteers themselves really learn how things really have to happen, giving them a realistic viewpoint on economic development.”



**“...young people can use their potential here, in their own communities.”**

The entrepreneurs are also paired with established local businesspeople, who act as mentors.

In Tanzania, our volunteers have been supporting entrepreneurs with pitches for funding that will make their business plans a reality. Nicolaus from Lukata, Tanzania is working on a business plan around milk production:

“I never thought I could actually be pitching for my own business idea. Opportunities like this are rare for someone like me. In my village opportunities are very limited and applying for a loan is normally too risky, as the interest rates are so high. However, after attending the training provided by the Raleigh volunteers I now have enough confidence to start my own business and create a new path for my life.”

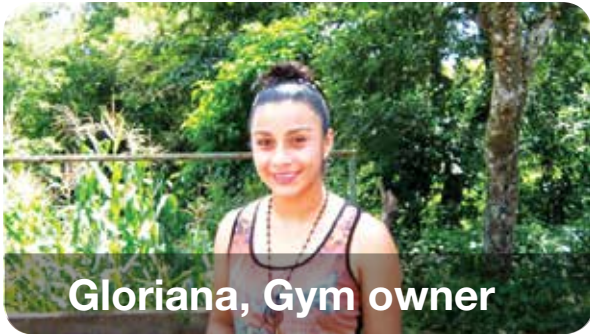
With young, local people like Nicolaus leading the development of sustainable businesses, rural communities have a much better chance of ensuring their resilience in the future.

**“Through training provided by the Raleigh volunteers, I now have enough confidence to start my own business and create a new path for my life.”**





## MEET THE ENTREPRENEURS



**Gloriana, Gym owner**

Gloriana, 22, set up a gymnasium on a small plot of land in her rural community near Estelí. With the support of volunteers, Gloriana seized the opportunity to develop her business plan, and established 'Gimnasio Cross' with boxing-themed classes, and through offering affordable access to the gym to the community.



**Lusajo, Agro-vet**

Lusajo, 26, identified an opportunity to open an agro-vet business in Mbeya, Tanzania. He plans to provide healthcare and medicine to animals, providing an increase in the health and quality of cattle and their productivity.



**Daniela, Craft maker**

Daniela, 18, established an artisan craft business in her community in Sonis. Through their business, 'Manualidades Darling', Daniela and her business partners sell handmade bags and ornaments.



**Debora, Feed supplier**

Debora, 17, wants to start a feed supply business in Kyimo. She is planning on setting up a shop which sells high-concentrated feed to the local livestock owners. Her ambition is to educate local farmers to improve cow welfare, whilst running a successful and profitable feed supply shop.



**Oscar, Chicken farmer**

Agricultural worker Oscar Cruz, 28, established a chicken farm with the aim to satisfy the growing demand of eggs in the community of Tres Esquinas. 'Don Pollo' is fast becoming the principal supplier of eggs in the community, whilst in the long term they aim to expand their production and market share into the surrounding communities and city of Estelí.



**Anton, Milk production**

Anton, 19, hopes to set up a milk supply business in his village, Kyimo, where there is high demand and low supply of milk. He hopes to modernise dairy farming in the community, buy more cows and produce a higher quality of milk.

# Business class

USING  
GOOGLE'S  
SKILLS TO  
BUILD  
BUSINESSES

## GOOGLE SUPPORTING NICARAGUAN ENTREPRENEURS



As part of our continuing relationship with Google, a team of bright minds will travel to Nicaragua in November 2015, where they will work with a wide range of small rural businesses and cooperatives that have been set up by young entrepreneurs in the area. The partnership will look to build on a successful programme in Tanzania in 2014.

Over the course of a special two-week programme, a select group of 14 Google staff will work closely with young entrepreneurs to develop and grow their businesses – looking for new opportunities and considering new methodologies that can be used in the future by both them and other new businesses.

Google will work closely with project partners to enhance the knowledge and skills of up to 60 young entrepreneurs from nine rural communities in Somoto. Crucially, this will increase the likelihood of improving their income through better-managed businesses and the ability to obtain employment.



## NEWCASTLE IN BORNEO



22 students and two staff from Newcastle University were welcomed to beautiful Borneo in March. The students, who are currently undertaking final year Master's Degrees with the School of Civil Engineering and Geosciences, volunteered on infrastructure projects in two rural communities, gaining unique experience working with limited resources in a challenging environment.

Throughout the programme the students were assessed on various criteria including leadership and professionalism, which contributed to part of their final result. "The students get an incredible overseas learning experience which will have a genuine and long lasting impact on the participants' career, and the community development.", said Dr Jean Hall, lecturer at the School of Civil Engineering and Geosciences.

## VOLKERFITZPATRICK PROVIDE MANAGERS



VolkerFitzpatrick is giving four staff members the chance to be a volunteer manager in Borneo, Costa Rica or Tanzania between June and September. The opportunity will enable their staff to make use of their core business strengths, technical knowledge and soft skills to support volunteers on expedition.

"Through contributing to infrastructure projects in developing countries, volunteer managers make a real and lasting difference. The relationship cements our connection with the importance of inspiring and empowering active global citizens to carry out sustainable development in hard to reach communities", said Sharon Lindars from VolkerFitzpatrick.

If you are interested to find out more about corporate partnerships with Raleigh, email [J.Sutton@raleighinternational.org](mailto:J.Sutton@raleighinternational.org)



# Alumni action

## RIDING RALEIGH



In memory of  
James Sanford

On May 30th, Charles Sanford and a team of 15 cycled an epic 320km from the birthplace of Sir Walter Raleigh in Budleigh Salterton to his final resting place in Westminster, all in memory of his younger brother James, who passed away three years ago.

Not only did the team complete this incredible feat in less than 14 hours, they raised a staggering £26,000 in the process. The funds will be used to build an Early Childhood Development centre in Tanzania, in honour of the work that James carried out on his Raleigh expedition in 2002.

“James’ experience of volunteering in Ghana made him extremely happy and helped to mould the resourceful, thoughtful, caring and practical young man we loved”, said Charles. “James travelled extensively in his life, and Ghana retained a special place in his heart.”

Worldwide, an estimated 200 million children a year fail to meet developmental potential often due to poverty, inadequate learning opportunities, and a lack of basic nutrition. Raleigh International volunteers help to build pre-education centres known as Early Childhood Development Centres (ECDs) for rural and remote communities, reaching the children and families who have the most need. Once built, the facility will have a long term positive impact on children and their families in the local area.

To find out more about Charles and his team’s efforts, or to make a donation, visit [rideraleigh.net](http://rideraleigh.net).



## ROB REACHES THE FINISH LINE

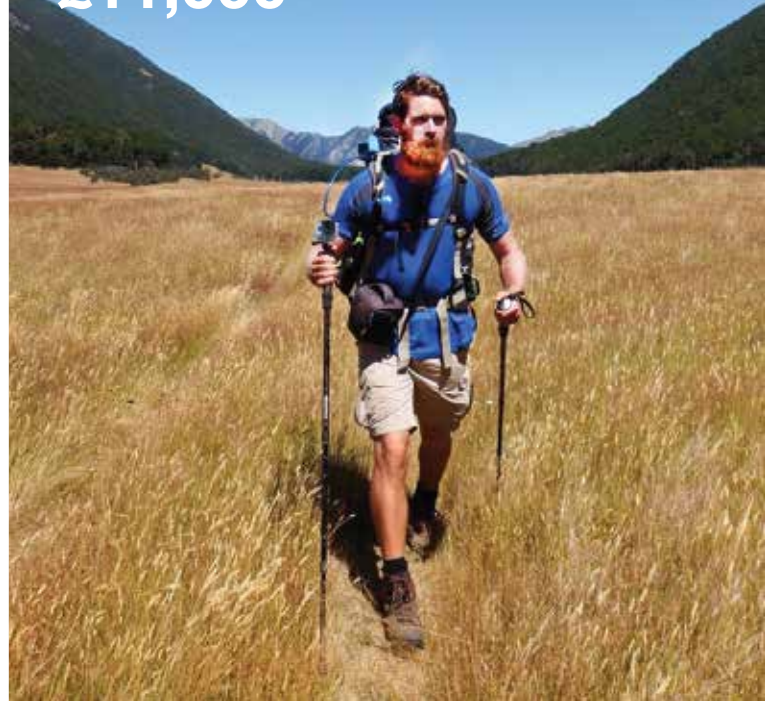
On April 4th, Rob Candy took the final steps of his 3,000 kilometre trek across the length of New Zealand – five months, one week and one day after beginning his journey. Inspired by his expedition to Tanzania in 2013, Rob decided to take on the remarkable challenge of trekking the grueling Te Araroa trail to raise money to support Tanzanian host country venturers to take part in our programmes.

Reflecting on his motives for undertaking this challenge, Rob said “I chose to do this for the sense of adventure, of course, but also for others who haven’t been given some of the advantages and opportunities that I have. I wanted to give them the opportunity to confront poverty and learn ways in which to combat it.”

Our programmes simply wouldn’t work without HCVs, and Rob’s support means a great deal to us. Additionally, Hi-Tec covered all the costs of Rob’s journey, and so all donations will go straight to our HCV fund. Congratulations, Rob!

If you’re inspired by Rob’s efforts and would like to sponsor him, visit [justgiving.com/alongtheringoffire](http://justgiving.com/alongtheringoffire)

3,000km  
5 months  
£11,000



# PASCHAL'S YOUTH NETWORK

General Secretary of the Raleigh Tanzania society, Paschal Masalu is devoting his time to encouraging young Tanzanian people to make a positive change in their communities.

Paschal, 21, was so inspired by his expedition in 2013 that after completing his studies, decided to use his Raleigh experience for good, launching a Facebook page in order to raise awareness of sustainable development amongst young people. "I aimed to give them the knowledge on how they can be the source of change into their own communities, whilst highlighting different opportunities for them to get involved with."

One year on, he took another step and established a youth network, named "Youth and Community Development". The network is devoted to encouraging young Tanzanians to get involved in different activities to make a positive change in their communities, and has so far driven campaigns around issues such as street children, the abuse of albino children and gender equality in Tanzania.

"One of my rules to live by is to not focus too much on small things. This is the spirit I gained from Raleigh; by working together we can make large, sustainable changes. What I can say: I am not the same as I was before."

You can read Paschal's story by visiting [raleighinternational.org/alumni-stories](http://raleighinternational.org/alumni-stories). Do you have a story to share? We'd love to hear from you at [alumni@raleighinternational.org](mailto:alumni@raleighinternational.org)



## ARE YOU A PAKISTAN 1987 ALUMNUS?



Shona Harrower is holding a fundraising ball for Raleigh International to celebrate her 50th birthday. The 'dapper' themed ball will take place this August in Edinburgh.

Shona volunteered in northern Pakistan back in 1987, and she is hoping that the money raised will enable a young volunteer to take part in an expedition. She is inviting all venturers and staff from her expedition to attend the ball.

If you would like more information on Shona's ball, contact us at [alumni@raleighinternational.org](mailto:alumni@raleighinternational.org)

Would you like to raise funds for Raleigh? Visit [raleighinternational.org/support-us/fundraise-for-us](http://raleighinternational.org/support-us/fundraise-for-us) for more information

## RALEIGH KL SUPPORTS FLOOD VICTIMS

RM



Between December 2014 and January 2015, Malaysia battled severe flooding which affected more than 200,000 people.

Raleigh Kuala Lumpur society members volunteered in one of the most affected regions, Kelantan, where they distributed much needed supplies to victims of the flooding, set up emergency relief tents with necessary resources such as thermal blankets and groundsheets, whilst providing water storage and purification equipment, solar lamps and mosquito nets.

The society also raised money for the remote Orang Asli community, a group in desperate need of support, after road systems were destroyed by the flooding, preventing access to aid. Society members took part in the annual KL Bar Run, a baton race across Kuala Lumpur's Lake Gardens, with donations supporting the Centre for Orang Asli Concerns, a Malaysian NGO involved in the flood relief work. **Great work, Raleigh KL!**





## RALEIGH... TEXAS?!

When Jonathan Ong took part in a Raleigh expedition to Usevya, Tanzania, his eyes were opened by energy of the young people in the community. "Something that struck me hard was the hunger of the local schoolboys for knowledge and success. It really made me re-evaluate my life and realise how fortunate I am for the opportunities I have been given."

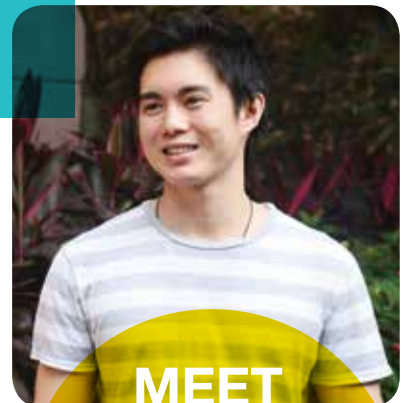
Inspired by his experience, in August 2014 Jonathan set up Raleigh Texas, a society based at the University of Texas in Austin with the aim of helping students and young people into meaningful volunteer roles. "As students wanting to be involved in our community, we found that many conventional volunteer opportunities did not fully utilise the talents of the student population," said Jonathan.

"We wanted to make students more invested in their community by providing them with opportunities to work with the leadership of non-profits in Austin and apply what they have learned inside and outside of class. In turn, non-profits benefit by gaining the opportunity to tap into the wealth of intelligence and creativity of UT students."

"With Raleigh Texas now registered as an official UT student organisation, we are coming up with new ways to grow as an organisation and to engage students in continuing development of social and professional skills, beyond just the scope of their specific volunteer roles."

We're optimistic about what this semester has in store for our organisation and we will be continuing to share the story as it unfolds!"

Are you interested in setting up your own society? Get in touch with us at [alumni@raleighinternational.org](mailto:alumni@raleighinternational.org)

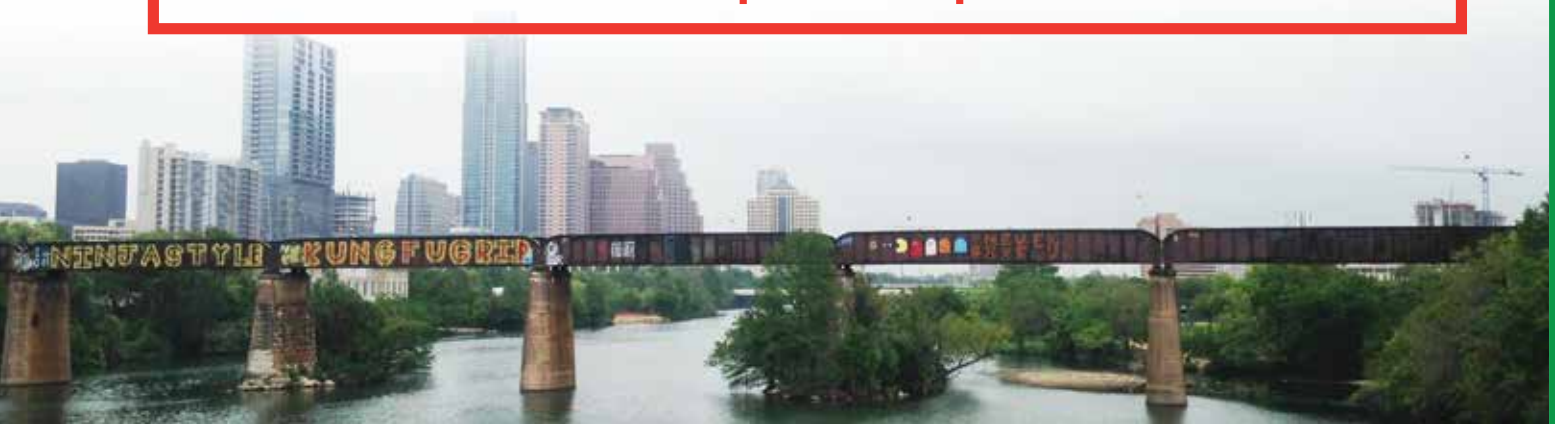


MEET  
JONATHAN,  
FOUNDER  
OF  
RALEIGH  
TX



[raleightexas.org](http://raleightexas.org)

**"We wanted to make students more invested in their community by providing them with opportunities to work with the leadership of non-profits in Austin."**



# Bright spark Brandon Charleston

I first encountered Raleigh in 1991. I'd just finished a three and a half year electrical apprenticeship with the South-Eastern electricity board. Each year, they sent two commercial venturers on Raleigh projects, and I saw an advert in the company magazine which said 'Adventurers wanted'. I was instantly drawn to it; I'd never even been overseas before, apart from a day trip to France.

I felt like I was applying for something quite extraordinary, quite special. I didn't expect to get a place and remember thinking 'Well, I'll apply and won't get it, but at least I can say I've tried, and won't have that regret'. But I was invited to an interview, then to a selection weekend on the south coast of England with about another 100 people. I was put through my paces for 36 hours, and got my certificate at the end of it, which as many people will remember, was a badge of honour.

I was selected to go on Expedition 92A to Chile, and couldn't believe it. My first expedition broadened my outlook on the world; I met so many interesting people, saw new possibilities of what I could do with my life, and discovered what I was interested in and capable of. The most memorable person from my Raleigh journey was probably my project manager in Chile, Andy Wahid, who went

on to be Country Director in Borneo. I remember watching his management style and being in awe of the way he dealt with people and got the best out of our team.

After my expedition I went back to work for the Board, and soon got promoted. When they advertised again in 1996 I thought, 'maybe they should be sending volunteer managers too'. So I convinced them to send me for a second time, and when I was 25 I went to Borneo as a Logistics Manager.

**"Wow, back in 1992 I never thought that would be me."**

After such an incredible experience, I started to feel disillusioned with my vocation. After completing a Masters degree in Management at the University of Leeds, I signed up to go to Ghana in 2001, fulfilling an ambition to be a Project



Manager. Before that expedition I saved up and bought a Leatherman multi-purpose tool. I staved off a scorpion with it, unlocked a lock to get my valuables and all sorts of things to get me through that expedition.

That expedition was really formative for me. I met my wife, though we didn't get together until we arrived home, but 18 months later we were married, and now have two children. While I was out there I kept coming across different cultural issues which were connected my recent studies. I wrote a paper called 'Cross cultural management issues on expedition' and posted it in an envelope to Raleigh head office, and they invited me in for a conversation about it.





This led to me pursuing further study on the topic as a doctoral researcher, which took me back to Borneo in 2004. During my studies I worked with Raleigh on programmes with the British Council in Indonesia and the Philippines; as well as on Leadership Development expeditions in Namibia. I got my PhD in 2008 and applied for a research post at Raleigh as part of a knowledge transfer partnership with Birkbeck College. When that came to an end, Raleigh opened up a new position as Training and Development Manager at head office, and that was my role for a couple of years. I then became Monitoring and Evaluation Manager for just over a year, and then jumped at the opportunity to be Country Director in Borneo.

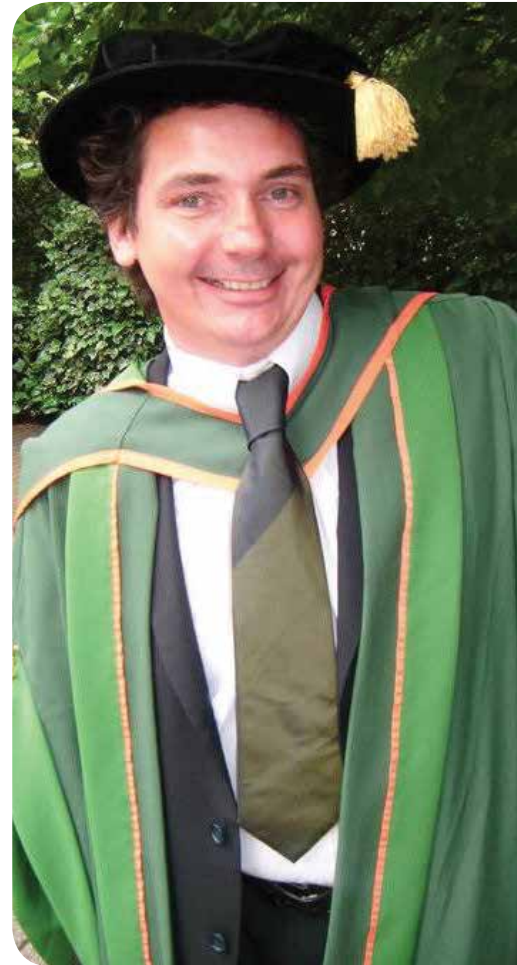
There are many people in Borneo who don't have access to safe water or basic sanitation, or to pre-primary education, and a lot of the work that we do here helps people in remote rural and marginalised communities. It's also a mega-biodiverse place, and we play an important role in the conservation of protected rainforests. Although there are really good protection policies in place, the research knowledge base is very incomplete, and researchers have a lot to do to strengthen the case for continued protection. What will the long term benefits of preserving our rainforests be? Many of those benefits are unknown, we don't actually know what we've been losing and what benefits there could have been; not least the carbon capture, mitigating climate change or just for its own beauty.

Many things have kept me connected to Raleigh all this time. Every time I've been involved I've been part of a great bunch of people from all walks of life. I've made lifelong friends that I'm still in contact with after 20 years. I've always loved learning, and through my whole Raleigh experience I've learned so much in every single role.

I think Raleigh is learning and growing too, it's a different organisation to what it was 20-odd years ago. Raleigh has developed and made itself more relevant to international development and issues in the world. It's making itself more purposeful, more connected to the current problems of the world, and striving to continually improve our impact in communities. The work that Raleigh does on the ground and the reach that it has, as well as the impact on young people and what they get from it is unique. Seeing the venturers' bright eyes when they come to the end of expedition; they're an inch taller, and they've learned so much, and they've been inspired to continue to make a contribution to the world - that is an incredible thing to be a part of.

There have been so many proud moments. At the closing ceremony of my most recent expedition I was giving a speech to the venturers and project partners, summarising everybody's achievements. The Minister of Youth and Sport in Sabah was our guest of honour at the event, and my wife and two children were there too. I remember reflecting afterwards, 'Wow, back in 1992 I never thought that would be me'.

Raleigh still has that call to action; you can do really impactful work which contributes to tackling some of the problems in the world, and you can also grow yourself through that experience. That's really important because that's what makes Raleigh special to the 40,000 people who have taken part in it. Like many others, I still draw on the experience when the going gets tough, and think, 'well I did it on expedition, and that was tougher so I can do this now'. You can really travel a distance as an individual by taking part in a Raleigh programme, and that will always stay the same.



**WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE YOUR STORY WITH THE ALUMNI NETWORK? WHETHER YOU'VE MOVED ON TO BIGGER THINGS OR A QUIETER PACE OF LIFE, WE COULD FEATURE YOUR STORY ON THESE PAGES. GET IN TOUCH WITH US AT: [alumni@raleighinternational.org](mailto:alumni@raleighinternational.org)**



## UNTIL NEXT TIME...

**Don't just put this copy of Connections down. Get in touch with someone from your expedition that you haven't spoken to in years. Check out the alumni web pages and blog for ideas to get involved.**

**Or drop us a line.**

**We'd love to hear from you.**  
[alumni@raleighinternational.org](mailto:alumni@raleighinternational.org)





**Raleigh**  
International

**DON'T MISS OUT ON THE  
LATEST RALEIGH EVENTS AND  
NEWS. VISIT OUR WEBSITE,  
UPDATE YOUR CONTACT  
DETAILS AND STAY CONNECTED**