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JoLt'08 Participants

Joe Andrews

Joe is eighteen years old and coming to the end of his time at Lipson Community College, Plymouth, where he is studying ICT, Media and General Studies. He is hoping to go on to Nottingham Trent University to study for a degree in ICT. If he is successful, he will have had a truly remarkable year.

He lives at home with Mum, Dad, sister Holly and brother Jack. Cerebral palsy has not held Joe back! He has collected Bronze, Silver and Gold Medals, competing in the Ten Tors Jubilee Challenge over the last three years. In contrast he is quite an accomplished armchair sports fan, knowledgeable on many sports and never far from the remote control!! His passion is football and he's looking forward to telling everyone on the trip about his beloved Plymouth Argyle!

Since learning he had been chosen for JoLt 2008, it's been difficult to get Joe down from the ceiling, but he's extremely grateful to his family, friends and staff at College for helping him with many fundraising events and to the JoLt Trustees for giving him this 'Once in a Lifetime' opportunity to travel, achieve and make many new friends.

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Annabel Asole

Annabel is an exceptional individual. She has a personal charisma which becomes apparent very shortly after you meet her. Her determination to succeed, her resourcefulness and willingness to commit to hard work, despite her disabilities, provide encouragement, inspiration and support to those around her. Annabel commits herself wholeheartedly, not just in work, but to any activity she chooses to undertake. Her own enthusiasm for overcoming barriers acts as a catalyst for all who work with her to find alternative methods and routes to achieving the end product, rather than just accepting 'Oh, Annabel can't do that!'

Annabel has been a student at Gumley House Convent School for the last seven years, and is an infamous figure to all those who have been a part of Gumley, students and staff alike! She is an incredibly talented and confident individual, who, despite her disability and speech difficulties, is quite partial to public speaking regarding not only her condition and the effects it has had on her life, but also in order to fund-raise for her school and Kenyan communities. It is a pleasure to know Annabel, and I know that we all respect and admire her for herself and for her achievements.

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Roxanne Batley

Roxanne is sixteen years old and lives with her mum and younger brother Jake. She first found out she had Von Hippel-Lindau syndrome (VHL) in 2002 through a blood test and this was because her mum had found out she had VHL in 2001.

They were living with her step dad in Northern Ireland when her mum started seeing black spots. Immediately she went to the doctors, who sent her straight to hospital where she underwent a series of tests. After all this confusion a doctor came and said to her, 'You have VHL syndrome.'

Since then her Nan and auntie have died because of VHL. Her Nan's case was rare as she had no clinical problems until she was 76.

VHL is a genetic condition involving the abnormal growth of blood vessels in some parts of the body which are particularly rich in blood vessels. People with VHL are also at a higher risk than normal for certain types of cancer. With age, chances of getting ill increase. This is very traumatic for families, who have to undergo many hospital trips and tests and cope with the stress of not knowing what the future may bring.

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Corrie Bingham

Corrie Bingham is eighteen years old. She has cerebral palsy which affects all her limbs. She is in her last year of A Levels and would like to be a teacher one day. She lives with her parents and older brother and sister near Weston-super-Mare. Corrie enjoys having a laugh (her laugh is a little bit loud!) and socialising, though she's a bit worried that she might run out of things to say on the journey. Mum and Dad don't think that will be a problem! Listening to dance and surfer dude music is her favourite as the beat puts her in good spirits. She supports Chelsea FC and intends to get to one of their games some day. She was absolutely delighted to have been chosen for the trip as she has always wanted to travel.

She is desperate to see all the different types of animals in Africa and July can't come quickly enough! Corrie is very kind and caring and is always sensitive to other people's feelings. She loves to bake and cook and her vegetable lasagne is a wonder. She would like to thank everyone involved for all their kindness, hard work and effort in organising this fantastic opportunity

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Paul Blackham

'I was born in Nottingham in the Queen's Medical Centre, 15th September 1992. I have seven brothers and one sister. I have been in foster care since I was seven years old and have lived in lots of places.

I am now living in Torquay with Dave and Sue. I already knew Sue because she works for the Family Support Workers scheme and used to take me out to the cinema and swimming. I have had my ups and downs because it has been difficult coping with so many moves.

I am now trying to forget what's happened in the past and look towards the future. I am very grateful for this opportunity to go to South Africa and am very much looking forward to it. My hobbies are to play Basketball, DJ, MC, play on the Playstation, listen to music (generally Will Smith, 50 cent, Ice Cube, Dr Dre, Snoop Dogg, Xzibit and Eminem) and to watch, do and play wrestling. My favourite wrestlers are Kane, The Undertaker, Big Show and Batista. I really like school and I get on well with all the teachers and pupils and have made lots of friends. I go to Paignton Community and Sports College.'

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Charlotte Clancy

Charlotte is sixteen years old, and lives in Stanmore, Middlesex. Charlotte is an only child, and lives with her parents and her beloved King Charles spaniel, Alfie. She has recently moved out of mainstream schooling to New College Worcester which is a school for partially sighted and blind people.

Charlotte has just started her GCSEs and her favourite subject is drama. An aspiring actress, Charlotte has spent holidays in drama workshops and dancing classes at Sadler's Wells. She is a very energetic person and enjoys a variety of sports, including horse riding, trampolining, football, climbing and skiing.

In her leisure time, Charlotte enjoys listening to audio books. Her favourite books are the Harry Potter Collection. She also enjoys a wide variety of music ranging from rock to R&B. She enjoys watching football, supports Chelsea and has been to Stamford Bridge many times. Her favourite player is Joe Cole. Charlotte is not your average tomboy; she takes a particular interest in fashion and enjoys shopping with her friends.

Charlotte is eager with anticipation; she feels extremely privileged to have been chosen for this trip of a lifetime and is looking forward to facing new challenges and making new friends.

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Natasha Davies

Natasha was both amazed and thrilled to be offered a place on Journey of a Lifetime. It was not at all what she had expected or could ever have believed possible when she first had her spinal cord injury in 2004 and was lying in Guy's Hospital, paralysed below the chest (cause of viral infection still unknown). Now seventeen and studying for A Levels at mainstream school, Natasha is a quiet girl but with strong determination to have a go at most things despite the obvious difficulties of being in a wheelchair. She has just passed her driving test and can now drive herself to wheelchair basketball (the nearest club being an 80-mile round trip), friends' houses and the gym but needs a sat nav to find most other places (do they have a sat nav on Journey of a Lifetime??).

Natasha is a keen member of the Rushmoor Mallard Marvels Basketball Team and the Vixens 2 Women's Team, training every weekend and playing regular matches. In between, she enjoys spending time with her friends and is looking forward to making new friends on Journey of a Lifetime. She was lucky enough to go on a sit-skiing trip a few years ago and would love to go again one day. For 2008, however, a dream is about to come true as Africa has always been on Natasha's wish-list of places to visit.

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Jordan Dibble

Jordan is fourteen years old and is currently studying for his GCSEs at Joseph Whitaker Foundation School in Nottinghamshire. He is excelling in his school work and eager to take on new adventures. Jordan is diagnosed with a severe visual impairment and lives with his family who are very supportive. Through their commitment to meeting his needs and his determination he has accomplished a great deal. His disability has never stopped him helping others and he has an excellent team spirit.

Jordan is a very active person and he enjoys outdoor activities that demand courage, energy and enthusiasm. For example, he is a member of the Air Cadets and frequently takes part in very challenging outdoor activities. He has completed the Duke of Edinburgh Expedition as part of the Bronze Award, St. John's Ambulance Young Lifesaver Plus Award and contributed to a sports club for visually impaired youngsters.

Jordan is caring and supportive and enjoys making new friends. He is a good listener, can always be relied upon and a hard worker. He has endless enthusiasm and determination and a desire to learn about different places and people. Jordan's Journey of a Lifetime is the perfect opportunity he needs to boost his confidence and self-esteem. This will be a life-changing experience and a major achievement for Jordan, and he truly deserves it.

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Tom Evans

Tom Evans is seventeen years old and lives in Eastbourne with his mum, dad and younger brother.

Tom was over the moon when he found out that he had been offered a place on this year's Journey of a Lifetime. He is looking forward to making new friends and learning new life experiences which will be valuable when, hopefully, he moves away from home to go to university. He is currently doing A Levels at college studying Art & Design and has applied to study contemporary furniture design at Buckinghamshire University.

Even though he has been in and out of GOSH since he was a baby and has undergone two major head operations and several corrective operations on his legs, he has great determination to be accepted as any other person despite his obvious physical condition.

Tom has an amazing character and personality and is very sociable, always up for a good laugh and makes friends easily. He is interested in art such as drawing and also furniture design, trains, particularly model trains and also enjoys sports especially football. He has just started taking driving lessons which will give him greater independence.

Tom intends to take many photographs of African wildlife as well as documenting his journey from a personal point of view and hopes to be a valuable team member.

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Nicola Ewen

Nicola lives in Peterborough with her sister Abby, Mum, Dad and gorgeous dog, Toby who is a Cavalier King Charles spaniel. Nicky has had Juvenile Dermatomyositis since the age of two. Calcinosis appeared at the age of five and she has been in a wheelchair since the age of seven. She has nearly finished her GCSEs at the King's School Peterborough and is hoping to achieve very good results, then carry on with A Levels and eventually University! Her career goal is to be a psychiatrist.

Although being disabled, she does not let this get her down and is always up for an adventure to explore new boundaries. The expedition will prove her determination and courage. Having nearly completed the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award, she is looking forward to this as the next big, and slightly scary, step! Being very sociable and fun, she loves to talk and get to know people. Indeed, she cannot wait to meet the team. Her favourite hobbies include singing, cricket, art, jewellery making and most definitely reading. Nicola is also an Ambassador for disabled sport for the Lord's and Lady Taverners, is a member of a couple of disability committees and on the committee for her cricket club. She also spends time each week at a Care Home where she talks with the residents and helps them with things like art crafts.

One other person you will get to know is Nicola's devoted friend Ted, who is, ironically, a teddy bear! Having been through thick and thin and numerous hospital trips with Nicola, taking him on this adventure will certainly be a new challenge for him.

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Ivana Graham

Ivana Graham is seventeen years old. She is a student at NewVic Sixth Form College where she is studying BTEC level Health & Social Care. She lives in Newham in Plaistow with her mum, step dad and twelve year old brother. Ivana has an elder sister who has a baby daughter. They both live locally and they see them when ever they have time.

Ivana is generally a shy person, especially in a new environment. Once she gets used to her new surroundings, she becomes more relaxed and starts to talk to people. She normally gets so excited and speaks so fast, that people have to ask her to slow down as they cannot understand what she says.

Ivana enjoys the company of people, and having friendships is the most important thing for her. This trip will give her an opportunity of making new friendships that will last longer and she is confident that this group will not judge her, but accept her for who she is.

Ivana's father is quite elderly. He lives in a sheltered accommodation in Stratford. He is suffering from a number of illnesses which have affected his mobility. Whenever Ivana has the opportunity to go and visit him, she helps him with the shopping and other house chores. Ivana's father appreciates it when his children visit him.

When Ivana was informed by her tutor that she had been successful, she was relieved at first as she had been waiting for quite some time for the letter. The feeling of relief suddenly turned into excitement and happiness. In her head, Ivana was picturing herself being in Africa away from family and enjoying herself with new people. In her ears, she could hear all the voices from the adults who are supporting her saying "Ivana, this is an opportunity of a lifetime" and she does believe that this is going to be a Journey of a Lifetime.

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Robert Hughes

Robert Hughes lives in Wrexham, North Wales with his parents, his two West Highland terriers, Bonnie and Megan, and two cats. He attends Rhosnesni High School where he is a senior prefect, represents his peers on the school council, and is a member of the school hockey team. He is attaining excellent grades in all subjects, his ambition being to enter university and to pursue a career in medicine.

Robert has a gentle disposition, a caring compassionate nature, and an infectious personality; a smile is never far away. He enjoys taking the dogs for a walk in the local park, doing voluntary work at the local hospital every Sunday morning. His hobbies include flat water kayaking, cycling, reading, computer games and making video films with his friends.

Robert is delighted that he has been chosen by the Trust to participate in this Journey of a Lifetime. He is looking forward to meeting and making friends with the other successful applicants, and facing the challenges that lie before them.

When asked how he was going to raise sponsorship, hr thought about a school disco, but then with a flash of inspiration said that he would do a parachute jump, which for once left his parents speechless!

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Sherry Keane

Whilst the application for the Journey of a Lifetime was going through Sherry had already made up her mind how she was going to raise money for “a wonderful cause. Even if I don’t get on it would be great if I could help others to go”. This response is so typical of Sherry.

Sherry had many emotionally traumatic experiences throughout her early life, was taken into care at a young age and moved around quite a lot. She would be the first to admit that she was not the easiest of children to cope with particularly when she had her “stubborn head on”. Sherry spent most of her early years at school outside the classroom door and she describes how the nearest she got to PE lessons was running around avoiding teachers. When she came to Wings Residential School in Cumbria, Sherry was determined to catch up on her academic studies and get an education so that she could realise a dream she had to work abroad helping people she described as not as fortunate as her. She is determined to stay focused on her forthcoming GCSE examinations in eight subjects.

Such were the levels of joy when her letter offering her place on JoLt 2008 was read out in school’s morning assembly, a box of tissues had to be passed around but this was quickly replaced at break time by a raffle ticket book as one of Sherry’s fund raising ventures swung into action. Sherry’s sixteenth birthday will be whilst she away on the JoLt expedition and she has said this has got to be the very best birthday present she could ever wish for.

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Mark King

Mark is a full time student at Stoke Damerel Community College Sixth Form in Plymouth. He is studying Childcare Level 3 and hopes to work in a nursery when he finishes his training. He lives at home with his parents and brother, and his two cats and dog!

Mark has a severe visual impairment but copes with his disability really well. He is determined to be as independent as possible but is always appreciative of his friends’ support who ensure he is OK especially when they are out together. He finds it particularly difficult at night when he has little vision at all.

Mark works hard and enjoys his course. He likes to work together on ideas and come up with plans to make things work. He enjoys having a go at football and playing pool and likes socialising with his friends. He has a special friend he will miss in particular when he is away.

Mark enjoys trying new things which give him a real sense of achievement. Mark has had to overcome many difficulties due to his visual impairment and has gained confidence through his determination to succeed no matter what. He is extremely excited about the trip and can’t wait to meet everybody before he goes.

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Shannon Lewis

Shannon is seventeen years old and has a younger brother Matthew (7) and a sister Jessica (12).

Shannon is currently studying Children's Learning and Development NVQ Level 2. She is hoping to become a family support worker to help troubled families, as she did not have the best of childhoods herself, craving every night for help but never receiving any. She hopes that becoming a family support worker will enable her to give people the help she needed. Hopefully, with a career like this she will be able to fulfil her life ambition of helping people in every way she can.

Shannon has a boyfriend called Richard. He tells her every day how much he loves her and how much he will miss her when she goes to Africa. Richard has been her rock, helping her go through tough times.

Shannon is a fun-loving, happy-go-lucky, loyal person who likes to stay positive. She enjoys helping others feel positive and happy. She always has a smile on her face (that's why they call her 'smiler'). If I could sum up Shannon in three words they would be 'a shining star' because she lights up every room she walks into.

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Melissa Lunt

Melissa is fifteen years old and prefers to be called Millie. She lives in Liverpool with a foster carer and two other girls. Millie currently attends Brookfield High School and she is now studying for her GCSEs. Her favourite subjects are: History, French, Biology, Chemistry, Travel and Tourism and she also likes English and Resistant Materials.

When she finishes school, Millie intends to go to college and then on to university to study Biology, History and French.

Millie's interests are reading, listening to music and school and learning new things. Millie's friends think she is funny, exciting to be with and she is always there for them. Millie thinks JoLt will bring out her normal bubbly old self and build up her confidence.

Millie would like to thank all of the people who have helped and supported her. You're all totally awesome dudes!!!!

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Liam McCreesh

Liam is seventeen years old and lives in Tadcaster, between York and Leeds in North Yorkshire. He lives with his Mum, Dad, and younger brother Joseph who is fifteen. He also has an older brother who lives and studies at the University of Leeds. Liam is currently in his last year of Sixth form at All Saint's where he is studying Business Studies, Geography and English Language at A Level.

Liam is profoundly deaf; he wears hearing aids and lip-reads. He is a massive fan of rock music and his favourite band is the Red Hot Chili Peppers. He has been to countless concerts and loves to sing along even though he's a bad singer. He plays the guitar and the drums in his spare time; he also plays football every Wednesday night and is looking to summer when he can start playing tennis again. Liam has recently been included in a nationwide study led by Birmingham University into the backgrounds of high achieving deaf children.

In school, Liam's favourite subject is Geography- he knows where all the countries are in the world and their capital cities too. He is looking forwards to the challenge and gaining the experience that will increase his confidence in travelling.

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Christopher Rook

Chris, who is seventeen, lives in sunny Eastbourne. At the moment he is studying maths, physics and computing at Park College. He lives with his grandparents who have given him a lot of support in the last few years. He has three brothers. His older brother is nineteen and his two younger brothers are eleven and eight. Since he moved to his grandparents, he has been given a lot of freedom and spends probably more time than he should with his mates who are a big part of his life.

He has always wanted to travel as he is interested in life outside of our comfortable society and western culture and also to gain a better perspective on life, other than working and money. He hopes the trip gives him a feeling of self worth and (fingers crossed) some more confidence as he tends to only act himself round his friends and that's about it.

His interests are pretty normal, gigs, playing around on his bass and spending time with his friends on the beach, at a skate park or just watching films. He has spent a fair share of wet winter nights in worse for wear tents so hopefully a bit of warm weather should make a change. When he found out he was picked for the trip he was quite nervous. But he reckons that you only live once and few people get an opportunity like this.

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Iseabail Stonebridge

Iseabail Stonebridge is fifteen and lives on the North West coast of the Scottish Highlands with her mother and mother's partner.

She has a brother and sister and is the youngest in her family. Iseabail ,who prefers to be called Ish or Ishy, was delighted to hear that she has a place on the 2008 trip. From an early age Ish has always wanted to travel, experience different cultures and the natural world in new places.

Ish has a loving bubbly personality. She also loves films, music, and comic books. In her spare time she loves to go up the local hills or spend time with her friends. Ish also enjoys school where her best subjects are maths, geography and biology.

Sometimes Ish feels low and finds it hard to think of the day ahead as she has had a difficult time in the past with family members. This has affected her self confidence and she suffers a lot from worry and feeling inappropriately guilty. Ish hopes that the trip will tackle this and will also help kick-start her dream of working with a charity and getting the satisfaction of helping others and making their lives better. Ish also feels that the trip will give her a chance to meet new, interesting people who have overcome various difficulties like her. She does not get much of a opportunity to do this, coming from a very small village where she feels she is not getting to see the real world.

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Emma Sweet

Hello! Emma is seventeen year old and profoundly deaf. She is currently at Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education. She uses sign language and can lip read people well but sign language is her first language and part of her identity. She has a mother and a father and two sisters.

She is in her second year of a BTEC National Diploma in Health and Social Care level 3. Also after this course, she will be staying on for other year studying for two A levels, Sociology and Physiology. She is hoping to go to university next year doing a social work degree as she wants to become a social worker for the deaf and people with disadvantaged backgrounds.

She is a very active person, who likes taking part in sports and trying out new things such as sailing and surfing, which she will be doing later in the year. She is also a very sociable person who likes to go out, meeting new people and mixing with people.

Emma has a very positive attitude and doesn't feel that her deafness should hold her back and stop her from doing all the things that she wants to do. She relishes a challenge.

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Jack Titchard

Jack was born in Basildon on 23rd August 1993. He has an older brother who no longer lives with him. His mother is a single parent; his father left them when they were very young. As a result his mother became a chronic alcoholic and got involved in a damaging relationship which became extremely violent. The family ended up living in a refuge. They lived in the refuge for a couple of years. His mum is now sober and is a member of the AA (Alcoholics Anonymous). Jack attends St Peter's College and is now in year 10 studying for his GCSEs. He enjoys school but used to get into a lot of trouble. Jack would like to be in the medical profession when he is older.

Jack is 5ft11 and weighs 65kg. He can be a little erratic at times but he is much more stable now. He has learnt ways to control his anger through sports and a lot of physical activity. He is still trying to come to terms with the separation from his father. He eats a lot and has a voracious appetite.

Jack likes going to the cinema, visiting friends, going to raves and generally socialising. His hobbies are listening to music, including hip hop, urban, R&B, Garage and Drum and Bass. He enjoys watching films, especially comedy. He also enjoys reading a wide range of books. He likes sports and his favourite sport's personality is Lewis Hamilton.

His overall motive and desire in getting involved with JoLt is to discover who he is so that he can reach his full potential to be a help to others. He feels honoured and privileged to be a part of this great scheme.

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Lela Turkia

Lela generally has a very positive outlook on life. She is a great believer in fate and that everything happens for a reason. She also has a strong sense of right and wrong. The only things that makes Lela furious is when people feel sorry for her and patronize her or when she feels that she or others have been unfairly treated.

Despite her very skinny exterior, she eats like a horse and says that her "Russian stomach" can cope with anything. I have not come across anyone with so much energy and enthusiasm – but watch out, she also expects this of others.

Lela has a great sense of humour and is very inquisitive (nosey really) – she wants to know everything and has an opinion on everything and will hand it to you whether you want it or not. She talks a glass eye to sleep – hence the suggestion from various people to go for a 24-hour sponsored silence, which is a real challenge for her.

When Lela puts her mind to something, she is like a 'dog with a bone' and does not stop until she has achieved what she has set out to do. Failure is not an option for her and she seems to deal with any challenge life throws at her.

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David Ward

David is a conscientious, creative sixteen-year-old who has a tendency to over think situations and get embarrassed easily. From Runcorn (a town no-one else seems to have heard of) in Cheshire, he lives with his mum, dad and little sister, as well as an adorably tiny dog called Tilly.

He will start attending Sir John Deane's College in Northwich in September this year to study his chosen courses; drama, psychology, sociology and media studies. He hopes to use these to get a job in the media.

David enjoys listening to and singing along with music, specifically pop or R&B, and watching the enigma that is Lost, as well as QI and many music countdown shows. Lately he has started to read more, mostly humour books like QI (it's really good!) and Grumpy Old Men. As he was born suffering from amniotic banding of his feet, hands and legs, he doesn't like sport and he has difficulties in walking long distances because his legs get tired and ache easily. He wants to go on this Journey of a Lifetime to show what he can do and push his boundaries, as well as making some new friends.

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Emily Yates

Emily Yates is a Year 11 student at South Craven School who is currently studying for her GCSEs including English Literature, History, Religious Education and Drama, her favourite subjects. She is predicted A/A* grades in all subjects and hopes to achieve her potential. Emily enjoys school and has participated in the School Council for many years.

She continues to encourage the school to fund raise for local and national charities. After receiving the "Citizen of the Year" award at school for her dedication and commitment to education and the surrounding community, Emily has gained great confidence in her experience of hair modelling, her prize for this achievement.

Emily has cerebral palsy and is a permanent wheelchair user. One of her main hobbies is Wheelchair Basketball and she regularly plays for Leeds Spiders, of which she is team captain and Yorkshire U19s on a national basis. Emily is also the singer of a rock band named Bleak Prospects. The band writes their own material and hopes to be playing local gigs in the near future.

Emily is an exuberant, intelligent and responsible girl whose friendliness and kind nature help her to thrive on challenges and embrace every opportunity that comes her way.

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Georgina Bird-Lieberman

Georgina is a 28-year-old doctor specializing in Paediatrics. She is currently working at Peterborough District Hospital as a Specialist Registrar. This will be her second JoLt expedition but she has been involved with JoLt for many years and served as a trustee for three years.

Her love of working with children and adults with special needs started at the age of thirteen, when her form teacher invited her to help out on Sunday afternoons at a Mencap group. She enjoyed these afternoons so much that she continued working with Mencap throughout her remaining school years and also started to work as a volunteer for various other charities. In 2000 she realised she could combine such voluntary work with another of her passions, foreign travel and she spent two months over the summer working at a camp for children and adults with various learning and physical disabilities in North America.

She has travelled around Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand and most recently to North India and Bhutan with JoLt'06 and as a member of the all women JoLt fundraising expedition to Namibia in 2007.

In her spare time Georgina likes nothing better than indulging the competitive side of her character by playing cards or backgammon with family and friends. She also enjoys cooking for and entertaining her friends and dancing whenever possible – especially on Burns night!

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Alan Broadbent

Alan is a 25-year-old PE teacher who lives in Paphos, Cyprus. This will be his first JoLt expedition and he is really looking forward to meeting everyone, and all the challenges ahead.

After finishing university in his beloved Yorkshire, Alan travelled around South East Asia before moving to Cyprus to take up his current post in a small private school in Paphos. He is Duke of Edinburgh Award co-ordinator for the school which gives him the opportunity to see his students working in the community and achieving personal development through challenging themselves.

The summer before Alan started sixth form he volunteered at a respite centre during the holidays. The positive experiences he took from this encouraged him to continue volunteering through his school life and on throughout university. Whenever he is back in the UK he visits and helps out at the centre as often as possible.

In his spare time, in addition to enjoying the Cyprus sunshine, Alan enjoys cooking, swimming and all forms of sport, especially cricket where he plays in Cyprus League Division One (although there is only one division!!)

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Alan Buzza

Alan Buzza was originally recruited whilst teaching maths at Harrow School. That was sixteen years ago and Alan has been a leader on each of the eight JoLt journeys since then.

His work has always been with people and mostly in sport, having coached and played rugby professionally for several years as well as working occasionally as a management consultant and sport psychologist. He has also spent time as a project manager in Chile with Raleigh International, another youth development charity.

Alan has traveled in over 70 countries in a variety of capacities; backpacker, rugby tour manager, English teacher and of course JoLt leader. His 2001 fund raising trip for JoLt, however, proved the most demanding way to travel...

The challenge was to start with nothing [naked apart from a bin bag] and go for 100 days without using money whilst travelling to the four cardinal points of Britain and Ireland. Along the way he was allowed to earn and acquire up to seven possessions and obviously to collect as much money as possible for JoLt.

The challenge was met and Alan's claim to being 'the luckiest man in the world' was born out by the fact that the 100 days included an impromptu trip to Australia to collect from the British Lions fans at the third test match in Sydney. He still maintains that it wasn't as challenging as a JoLt journey.

Alan is currently Director of Rugby at Loughborough University.

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Dorothy Dalton

JoLt was founded by Dorothy with the very first expedition taking place in 1984. Dorothy has been senior leader on every JoLt expedition since then except for 1990 when two expeditions were run at the same time: Dorothy led the 1990 group to Zimbabwe and Botswana.

It was in India, where she was born, that Dorothy was bitten by the travel bug. At school, Dorothy says she was only good at one subject, Mathematics. Mathematics, like travel, has given her many years of pleasure. She taught Mathematics for twenty years, completing her career in education by becoming Headteacher of Northwood College. She went on to become Chief Executive of a national charity and Chief Executive of ACENVO, a professional association for chief executives of national voluntary organisations. Dorothy is now Editor of **governance: essential information for effective trustees**, Director of Voluntary Sector Development at Horwath Clark Whitehill, Charities Consultant at Bircham Dyson Bell and advises large charities on their governance. She is trustee of a number of charities.

Dorothy has organised and participated in several fundraising expeditions for JoLt. She has canoed, kayaked and white-water rafted the Zambezi (1993), cycled the length of Cuba (1995), crossed the Jordanian Desert by camel (1997), walked across the Andes with the help of donkeys, mules and horses(1999), completed a three-week trek on elephants in Nepal (2005) and a walking trek in Namibia (2007).

Dorothy and Bill have been married for 37 years and have two terrific sons, Mike and Tim, and two fabulous daughter-in-laws, Emily and Casey.

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Shirley Farthing

Shirley is profoundly deaf and was one of the first 'Jolters' who travelled across Russia, Siberia, Mongolia and China to Hong Kong in 1984. In 1998 she was an Assistant Leader on the trip to the Middle East and for the last four trips was one of the leaders.

Shirley is married to Jonathan who is also deaf. They have two children, Kirsten (20) and Mark (17) who are both hearing.

Shirley works as a Teacher Co-ordinator for the Middlesex University validated Deaf Studies Degree, based at City Lit, London. She also enjoys helping out other tutors and courses whenever she can.

When Shirley is not busy working, her hobbies include beadcraft, gardening, decorating and being with her family. She enjoys swimming whenever the opportunity arises.

Shirley has always believed that youngsters should be nurtured to experience life as much as possible, to try all sorts of activities within their abilities, to grow in confidence and to try to be as independent as possible. How better, than being on a Journey of a Lifetime with its adventures and challenges!

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Olivia Hussey

Olivia Hussey (Livvy) is a 36-year-old currently working and living in Devon as a GP. She trained at the Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine in London and qualified in 1996. She has been involved with JoLt for the last five years and her first trip was the JoLt'04 trip to New Zealand. This will be her third trip as a JoLt leader and she has also been on two of the All Women's Fund Raising trips in aid of JoLt.

Livvy has done several hospital jobs before settling down to life as a country GP including, orthopaedics, ophthalmology, geriatrics, obstetrics & gynaecology and two years working in a busy Accident and Emergency department.

Livvy likes travelling. As well as her JoLt trips, she has worked and lived in Australia and travelled in Europe, America, Africa, New Zealand, India and Egypt. In her spare time she likes to read and listen to music but has also taken up running in recent years; running a 10 km race in 2004 to raise money for JoLt. She likes scuba diving but doesn't get much chance to practice in the cold British waters! She did try her hand at surfing once, a great West Country and Australian pursuit but gave up when she kept falling off the board!!

The JoLt'08 trip is an experience that she is very much looking forward to, not only for the chance to travel in such beautiful scenery and experience things she is otherwise unlikely to but also the chance to meet 24 interesting and special teenagers not to mention the seven other leaders on the expedition.

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Andy Lowe

Andy is Assistant Headteacher at St Paul's Catholic College, West Sussex, and has responsibility for the leadership of e-technologies in learning and teaching across the College. This role also includes the training of staff from other schools and educational authorities.

Andy was a JoLt leader in 2006, and with a passion for the natural world and the outdoors he has been training and assessing Duke of Edinburgh Expedition groups for the last eight years, running a team that take over 70 students each year on trekking and camping expeditions. As a member of the British Mountaineering Council and in the process of Mountain Leadership training, he is rarely indoors!

Before teaching in schools, Andy worked in outdoor education, having been a water sports instructor in the UK and abroad. As a fanatical windsurfer and surfer he can be found most windy days scanning the coast for the best beach.

These interests have taken Andy around the World with a soft spot for the beaches of Australia and Hawaii. With an individual fashion sense and mischievous sense of humour he will be one for the others to keep an eye out for!

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Alastair Youdan

Alastair has worked in special needs schools for the past 13 years. He is currently a senior teacher at a school on the Wirral, Merseyside. Alastair has taught all ages and has extensive experience in autism, behaviour, and emotional well being. In addition to his current role, Alastair is studying towards his master's degree in special needs.

Alastair is a tutor in Team Teach (physical intervention) and is part of a team responsible for reviewing schools for the National Autistic Society. Professionally he is responsible for behaviour, autistic spectrum disorder, and personal social health education. Alastair has been published for contribution to articles based on communication.

Following several canoe trips in the Alps and various rugby tours, Alastair joined an expedition to mountain bike across the Tibetan plateau. During his early career Alastair taught disadvantaged children in New York. Alastair feels strongly that everyone should receive the opportunities he was fortunate enough to have.

Alastair has county honours in rugby, mountain biking, and swimming. He remains an active sportsman and currently lists snowboarding, rugby, and wakeboarding as ongoing developments!

Alastair is looking forward to his second JoLt expedition, having enjoyed the successful New Zealand journey in 2004. His responsibilities included risk management, website update, and media for the trip.

Having never visited Africa, Alastair is more than excited at the prospect! Alastair's ambition for the trip is to ensure it truly is a Journey of a Lifetime.

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