

Dubai's young can ditch the shopping malls this summer

11 March, 2008

Raleigh International will be giving young people in Dubai the chance to take advantage of a constructive, off-the-beaten-track adventure this summer.

With the end of the academic year looming, Raleigh International will be calling on Dubai's youngest generations to make the most of their summer holidays, when the UK-based youth charity visits schools and colleges across the city in March 2008.

The UK-based youth charity has organised meaningful and challenging expeditions to awe-inspiring locations around the world since 1984, and while volunteers from the United Arab Emirates have taken part in Raleigh International's expeditions in previous years, this will be the charity's first visit to international schools in the Middle East – organised in response to a surge of enquiries received from young people in the region, who are keener than ever to make the most of their summers by volunteering on worthwhile projects.

Raleigh International will be talking with pupils and parents from Jumeirah College, Wellington School, the Dubai American Academy and Dubai College on Tuesday 18 and Wednesday 19 March 2008, about the opportunities to volunteer on Raleigh International's intrepid four-, five-, seven- and ten-week expeditions to India, Malaysia, Costa Rica and Nicaragua – where young people living in Dubai can develop their skills, explore remote locations, take part in adventurous physical activities and make a real difference to local communities and their environment.

Raleigh International's ten-week expeditions incorporate three distinct phases: the community phase could include projects such as building a kindergarten in a remote village in Malaysia; the environmental phase could include assisting with elephant and tiger conservation work in India's national parks; and the adventure phase can see participants take part in a challenging 19-day trek through Costa Rican jungles. On the five-week expedition participants can choose a community or environmental project and take part in a team-based adventure challenge.

Raleigh International's structured expeditions offer a diverse, safe and supportive experience, which will see young people from Dubai, around the world and the host country working together on sustainable projects with long-term benefits.

With a rare chance to discover new cultures, develop indispensable life skills, rise to demanding physical challenges and make friends for life, it is easy to see why Dubai's youngest generations will be ditching the air-conditioned aisles of the city's shopping malls in favour of an all-together more worthwhile summer with Raleigh International, when the bell chimes for the end of the school year.

Members of the public are invited to attend Raleigh International's talk at Jumeirah College on Tuesday 18 March at 7pm, for more information contact Jumeirah College on 04 395 5524. For more information about Raleigh International's volunteering opportunities visit www.raleighinternational.org or call +44 20 7371 8585.

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Notes to editors:

Formed in 1984, more than 30,000 people have been on 250 expeditions to over 40 countries with Raleigh International in the past 24 years, including young people from the UK and around the world, as well as 'at risk' youths. The opportunity to fundraise is fundamental to the experience, and young people are asked to raise Dhs22,050 for a ten-week expedition or Dhs12,900 for a five-week expedition.

For more information about Raleigh International and the charity's visit to the Middle East please contact Rachel Collinson on +44 20 7183 1293 or +44 7908 732890 (mobile number), or email rachel.collinson@raleigh.org.uk. Rachel will be in Kuwait on Sunday 16 and Monday 17 March 2008, and in Dubai on Tuesday 18 and Wednesday 19 March 2008.

Interview and photography opportunities with Raleigh International representatives and former volunteers from Dubai will be available at the talks – which members of the media are warmly invited to join. High-resolution images of Raleigh International's volunteers and work around the globe are also available on request.