



PRESS RELEASE - UPDATE

Saturday 22nd September

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His Royal Highness The Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex KG GCMG visits the United States

British Royal visits New York City during his US visit, as part of a yearlong program of engagements in support of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award

Groups of young Americans, have had the opportunity to meet a British Prince this month, as His Royal Highness The Prince Edward visited the United States.

The visit has seen His Royal Highness - who is Chair of The Board of Trustees of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation - attend a range of engagements over 12 days, in support of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award USA.

Prince Edward's visit concluded in New York City, where he personally met and congratulated 12 young Americans, who are amongst a select few to have achieved the Gold standard of the globally renowned Duke of Edinburgh's International Award.

HRH Prince Edward said: "It has been a pleasure to visit the United States and meet some of the young people and adults who are making The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award USA a reality. The Award is focused on encouraging young people to do things which they are passionate about and hold an interest in. Real Tennis – also known as Court Tennis in the United States – is something which I myself did for my Gold Award more than 30 years ago and I have thoroughly enjoyed being able to relive my own Award experiences in this way during my visit.

Discussing the Gold Award Ceremony in New York this weekend, His Royal Highness said: "It was a great honour to spend time with such inspiring young people, hear about their Award journeys and celebrate their achievements. Achieving your Award – and particularly your Gold Award - is not an easy task. It requires commitment, tests your resilience and challenges you to step outside your



comfort zone. But it also opens up many opportunities for young people and enables them to be their own agents of change, both for themselves and their communities.”

The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award encourages young people between the ages of 14 – 24 to challenge themselves through a personalised program of skill development, physical activity, voluntary service and adventure. By pushing young people outside of their comfort zones, they can discover the power of their potential and find their own purpose, passion and place in the world.

HRH has been visiting the United States as part of a year-long program of activities to celebrate, raise awareness of and drive support for the inspirational activity of young people and volunteers around the world, who make up the 1.3 million participants and 200,000 volunteers in more than 130 countries and territories involved in the Award.

Merrill Ann Culverhouse, a high school senior from Opp, Alabama, was among today’s Gold Award recipients. Culverhouse has words of encouragement for any young person pondering whether to begin their Award journey: “Do it, because there’s no time like the present and it’s such an incredible opportunity to see yourself - from the past until now - become a totally different person and flourish.”

Elizabeth Higgins-Beard, Chief Executive Officer of The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award USA says: “As The Award comes to America we now can offer the world’s leading youth achievement award to our own young people. Ask anyone from abroad about the Award and likely they will tell you it celebrates what young people are capable of. For involved young adults, the Award challenges them to reflect, dig a bit deeper, and perhaps try something new. For young adults with little access to camping, hobbies, sporting, volunteerism or mentorship, the Award can push them to learn new skills and grow. Each young person builds their goals and through perseverance gains insights.”

Over 700 young people have had the opportunity to participate in The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award in the USA. Whilst it’s in its infancy, Award USA is growing due to rising interest in and demand for customized extra-curricular activities and activities that allow young people to discover their passions as well as to connect with their communities.

His Royal Highness is dedicated to supporting organisations and causes which provide opportunities to, and champion young people. Further, The Earl and Countess of Wessex also founded The Wessex Youth Trust in 1999, which offers grants and support to charities which help young people. The Wessex Youth Trust supports more than 150 causes around the world.

HRH The Prince Edward is himself a Gold Award holder and has thus been involved since his youth in the Award and its mission to inspire, guide, and support young people in their self-development and recognize their achievements.

Following his own personal Award journey, HRH has also completed a series of Real Tennis (also known as Court Tennis in the United States) matches during his visit. His Royal Highness developed a passion for the sport more than 30 years ago, when completing the physical recreation section of his own Gold Award. Achievement of the Gold Award requires participants to successfully complete five sections: Service, Skills, Physical Recreation, Adventurous Journey and a Residential Project.

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Access to content

Pool footage available on provided link. Photography of His Royal Highness's visit is available on request.

For more information, please contact Mary Gibson: marygibsonink@gmail.com.

About The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award USA

- The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award USA is the world's leading youth achievement Award, available to all young people aged 14-24, regardless of their background, culture, physical ability, skills and interests
- It is delivered around the world by schools, colleges, universities, employers, social clubs, uniformed and non-uniformed youth organisations, young offenders' institutions, religious organisations, sports clubs, and a range of other civic organisations
- Founded in 1956 by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, the Award enables young people to learn, develop and thrive through non-formal education, equipping them for life



- It challenges participants, pushing them to their personal limits and helping them to discover they are capable of so much more than they ever thought possible
- Since its launch over 60 years ago, millions of young people have participated and received Awards, with millions more benefiting from its impact in communities around the world
- More than 1.3 million young people have participated in the Award in the past year, across 130+ countries and territories
- Over 700 young people have had the opportunity to participate in The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award in the USA. Whilst it's in its infancy, Award USA is growing due to rising interest in and demand for customized extra-curricular activities and activities that allow young people to discover their passions as well as to connect with their communities
- Find out more about The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award USA by visiting <https://usaward.org/>