

Euan Bell - Honduras 2024/2025



Project Report

On the 12th of August 2024 I set off for a year volunteering in Honduras with the charity Project Trust. After three flights and over a day travelling we landed in San Pedro Sula. I flew out with a group of 19 volunteers to Honduras where we would spend the next year in pairs placed in various areas of rural Honduras.

We began by spending the first night altogether in Yamaranguila before being taken to our own placements the next day. I volunteered with another boy my age called Tom who I met for the first time, a month prior, on the island of Coll, Scotland, during a week of Project Trust Training.

Tom and I were selected to work in a small town called Gracias which is the capital of the Lempira department of Honduras. Upon arriving in Gracias we were shocked to find that no one spoke any English. This was a big wake up call to us that we had to learn Spanish quickly! We quickly began working at the school we would be working in for the year which was called Vida Abundante (Abundant Life Christian School).



We lived together in a small basic apartment where we cooked for ourselves and washed our own clothes using a bucket of water and a washboard. The experience of living independently so far away from home was really exciting and I learnt so much from it. This is a photo of my bedroom when we arrived.



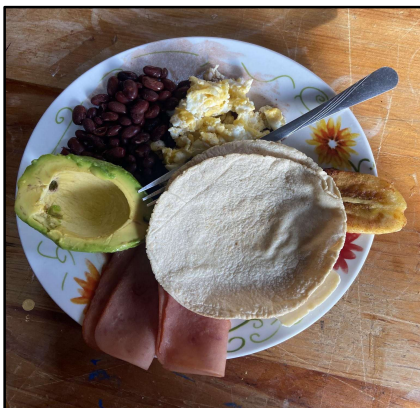
I started the year as an assistant teacher in the school from Kindergarten to Grade 4. I then transitioned to a full teacher due to the Grade 3 teacher leaving school unexpectedly. As a result, I was the teacher to a class of 28 students which was a more challenging experience but very rewarding. This new responsibility kept me productive and busier, away from school because I would have to plan lessons and mark work. In February, I achieved my TEFL Qualification which allowed me to teach with more confidence and experience. It was such a lovely experience teaching the pupils every day and watching them grow. By the end of the year the Grade 3 pupils were near fluent in English and their progress was remarkable. It was a real joy getting to know them over the course of the year and difficult to say goodbye.



Every morning, we were collected in a teachers bus and taken to school at 7am. The teachers had a meeting and devotional prayer before lessons started. The school day was from 07:20 – 15:20 and we had to wear a shirt and tie. On Tuesdays and Thursdays I stayed after school for an hour to tutor any children who were struggling. Additionally twice a week I stayed after school to play and help coach football to the secondary school team in order to prepare them for competitive matches.

On the weekends, we often took the bus to neighbouring towns to meet up with other Project Trust volunteers. This gave us the chance to enjoy the beautiful scenery rural Honduras had to offer and meet some amazing people. We visited some friends who lived with Honduran host families and over the course of the year we got to know these families really well.

Before arriving in Honduras I really had no idea what to expect the food to be like and it definitely was something which took time to get used to. The most traditional meal is called a “Baleada” which can be eaten at any point in the day. It is made with a tortilla wrap, refried beans, cheese, eggs and if you are lucky avocado! By the end of the year I learnt how to make my own home made baleadas after being taught by a teacher at school. Another dinner we ate a lot was called the Plato Tipica which contained similar ingredients and also fried plantain!



In October a group of us (Project Trust and Honduran friends) climbed Mount Celaque in Gracias which is the tallest mountain in Honduras at 2,850 metres. This was a really special experience as we camped in tents near the top of the mountain and enjoyed views from the summit at sunrise.



One of the highlights of the year was the school's culture day where the students were assigned various different countries around the world to learn about.

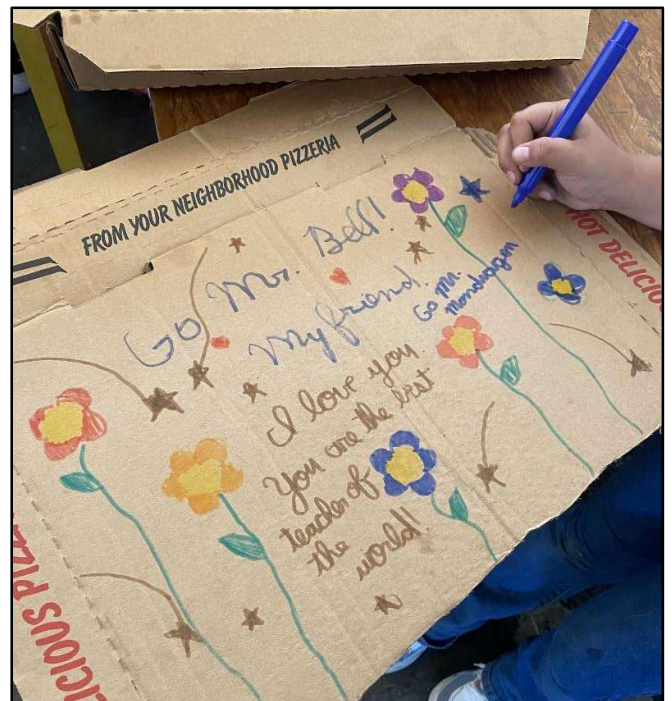
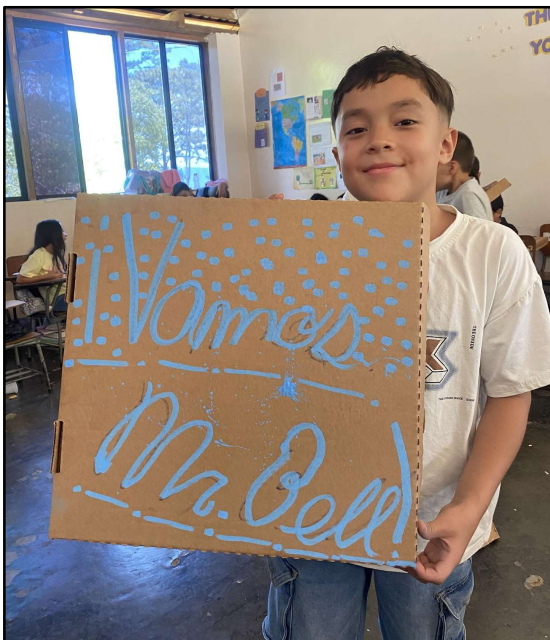
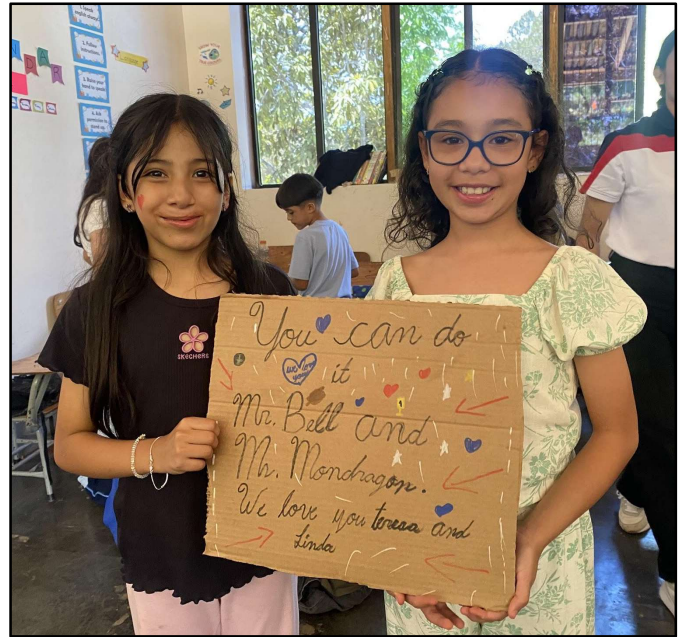
One of the groups of pupils in Grade 2 were given Scotland as their country and they wore amazing tartan outfits! The kids hugely enjoyed this and looked forward to the occasion for weeks.



We were lucky enough to spend our Christmas and Summer holidays on the Bay Islands which are located to the North of Honduras! During this time I managed to complete a diving course and meet people from all over the world. Over the summer I also really enjoyed trying other activities including kayaking, zip lining and my personal favourite wakeboarding!



On the last day of school there was a students versus teachers football match which was great fun and had a big crowd of pupils watching. Before the game my pupils in Grade 3 innovatively made banners and signs out of pizza boxes to motivate me throughout the match. I have attached some photos from the game and the pupils below.



Over the course of the year I had the opportunity to form connections with so many people in the community. We lived very near the school which meant we got to know lots of parents from the school who we often chatted to and visited. The Honduran teachers at the school were extremely welcoming to us and always made sure to include us in their weekend plans or events. One stand out weekend was celebrating Thanksgiving with all of the staff together all of us bringing food to contribute. I became really close with the teachers I assisted with at the start of the year and will always be grateful to them for their help settling in. Outside of school we made friends with the boys our age playing football in the local team who we would see all over Gracias.



I truly believe that this year was an exceptional experience filled with memories I will cherish forever. I had the chance to put myself outside of my comfort zone and travel to the other side of the world to teach at a school and I am extremely grateful for this. I loved the opportunity to learn Spanish while abroad and I am very happy to return home speaking with conversational fluency. Honduras has without a doubt helped me grow and left a lasting impact on me. I will never forget all the amazing Hondurans I met and the lifelong friendships made. Most importantly I would like to thank my family, friends and charities for their support in making this once in a lifetime opportunity possible!

