Letter to Future Global Youth Development Students from Nick Griffin

Prepare to have your world turned upside down. The journey you are about to embark on is one unlike that in any other academic field you know of. It is not the end result of having the GYD degree that changes your life, but the process to receiving it. You will look at people and at the world through a different lens, you will question your actions in the past, and struggle to find ways to solve complex social problems. You will understand what it means to sit with a person who is suffering and listen to them with presence and compassion. You will be transformed from the person you are now.

The heart of the program, the intercultural internship, allows you to practice your skills with amazing people who will inspire you as much as you hope to inspire them. As you become a part of their culture and their family you will realize how much it means to turn towards others instead of trying to stand beside them. You will recognize the creativity and talents of those you work with and start to see how these traits can help serve others in their own culture. You will be inspired to live your life differently, simply and with a purpose beyond yourself.

The final professional paper allows you a space to reflect and draw connections. In writing, you discover how everything you have done has been part of a bigger picture. You can see how much you’ve grown and learned through your experiences both on campus and by being immersed in a culture outside your own. Writing the paper is an opportunity to learn from yourself. You get a chance to see how everything you have accomplished connects to valuable skills you will use throughout your life. This is where you have the space to find your new career path and begin to set the framework for your next journey. The GYD Program prepares you to do anything you want to do in any place you want to go.