Are we already in July? Half the year has gone by so quickly. We have had six of our busiest months ever here at the R&S headquarters.

For my part, I have already done three trips to Abu Dhabi since January! The programme in the Middle East is going from strength to strength which means more time needs to be invested over there. We have started an exciting twinning programme between our UK and Abu Dhabi schools. If this is something your school is interested in getting involved with, then please let us know.

As for the UK, some more exciting developments. We have a new Chairman, Philippe van den Abeele from Belgium who will be leading JGI UK into a new era. We also recently published our new brochure with the endorsement of actor Colin Firth, our R&S ambassador. This can now be downloaded from our website.

In August we will have our annual R&S summit at Windsor Castle so watch this space for more news.

As I get ready to attend the Observer Ethical awards prize giving event tomorrow night where some of our schools have been shortlisted, I reflect on how far we have come from those early days when we just had a handful of students and indeed the idea was just being explored on a verandah far away in Tanzania.

What a legacy we are creating.....

Tara Golshan
Executive Director, Education
An inspirational awards celebration

The projects this year were outstanding. The fashion show was stunning and highly creative, signifying the detail and care taken to produce their garments. Our young members are highly motivated in their quest to make a difference in the world which was demonstrated by the impact their work is having on our environment and our planet as a whole.

Tara Golshan, Executive Director

Outstanding Group Award
The students from Cañada Blanch Instituto Español de Londres took the Gold Award for the Most Outstanding Group and had the opportunity to see behind the scenes at one of the RSPCA’s animal hospitals based in Mallydams, by spending a day with the vets and carers, who make such a difference to the lives of animals across England and Wales.

UNITED KINGDOM

Schools from across the UK were invited to ZSL Regent’s Park, London on 1 December 2014 to take part in a prestigious awards ceremony in the presence of Dr Jane Goodall as part of the global Roots & Shoots programme.

This year was even busier than before with thirteen schools attending to showcase a wide variety of projects, some of which had been undertaken in honour of Jane's 80th birthday in April. In addition, our sponsors the Environment Agency of Abu Dhabi had flown in to help celebrate our schools' many achievements.

Schools were presented with certificates and trophies from Dr. Jane Goodall and Celine Cousteau, granddaughter of the famous ocean explorer Jacques Cousteau, who had flown in for the event all the way from the US.

The awards ended with an amazing speech from Dr Jane, followed by another creative, inspiring and fun Trashion Show delivered by the talented pupils from Accrington St Christopher's Church of England High School and judged by Celine.

Prizes were sponsored be Quest Overseas, National Geographic Kids magazine and the RSPCA.

Most Outstanding Photograph
Hamish Duncan from Walhampton School, the lucky Winner of the Most Outstanding Photograph got the chance to become a Nat Geo Kids' reporter for a day! He spent the morning at Nat Geo Kids' HQ, met the team and found out how the magazine is created, before heading off on a special assignment as their guest reporter.

Most Outstanding Individual Award
Courtney Talbot from Accrington St Christopher’s Church of England High School won the Most Outstanding Individual Award sponsored by Quest Overseas and will receive a fully funded trip to South America or Africa.
The programme started in UAE a year ago, supported and funded by the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD). EAD has been promoting Environmental Education and awareness since its inception in 1996. EAD has partnered with The Jane Goodall Institute to establish the Jane Goodall’s Roots and Shoots Programme in the UAE.

The Roots & Shoots celebration was a huge success. Students gathered together at NYUAD to display their work and activities undertaken so far in making this world a better place through positive programmes in the areas of animals, the environment and the human community.

Participating schools included Al Muna Primary School, Al Mushrif School, American Community School (ACS), the Shaikh Khalifa Bin Zayed

Bangladesh Islamia School, the Emirates Private School and the British International School of Abu Dhabi (BISAD).

Students prepared slideshows, charts and videos showcasing their conservation projects. Each school also prepared a poem or song for Dr. Goodall in commemoration of her 80th birthday. Dr. Goodall then addressed the students and told them stories about her times with the chimpanzees and the major role her mother played in her life. Afterwards, the students had lunch with Dr. Goodall and were able to share exciting new ideas with each other for future collaborations.

NYUAD student Fisher Wu (Class of 2017) was excited to be a part of the Roots & Shoots celebration in Abu Dhabi. “I joined Roots & Shoots in Shanghai 9 years ago, since then R&S and Jane have changed my life so much. This is my third time to see her in person, but it is the first time I really spent some moments talking to her. It feels like a dream come true. It is both wonderful and amazing that I felt so much energy coming from Jane while talking to her and listening to her. She gives me reason to pursue my passion in protecting the environment.”

Alison Hibbitt, a teacher with the British International School in Abu Dhabi said that her school has an eco-club for just under a year, which will now come under the umbrella of Roots & Shoots. She expressed her views about the conference and what she thinks the club has in store for the future, saying “I will take my direction from the children. I should imagine they have been wholly inspired by this event here today. They are a very enthusiastic bunch and I know that when I get back to school I will be told about what they have planned and the ideas they got from the other schools that were here. I think from here on it will be child-driven rather than teacher-driven. I imagine in the car on the way home it will just be endless chatter about what is next for the group.”

Tara Golshan, Executive Director, Education with the Jane Goodall Institute commented on the Roots & Shoots celebration at NYUAD adding, “It is a privilege to be able to bring the Roots & Shoots programme to the UAE. We very much look forward to a very exciting partnership between NYU and JGR&S in reaching young people through education and engagement in order to protect and nurture our future planet earth.”

It was a busy week in the UAE. Accompanied by Tara Golshan (Executive Director, Education), she gave lectures at Khalifa University and NYU Abu Dhabi; numerous press interviews in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, and the first Roots & Shoots celebration at New York University.

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Dr Jane, not only our Heroine!

The BBC Wildlife Magazine recently released the top 50 list of Britain’s conservation heroes, naming Dr. Jane Goodall, David Attenborough and Chris Packham the top three!