

# Youth Missions Trip Guyana, South America

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Feb 2024

By Jessica Eison



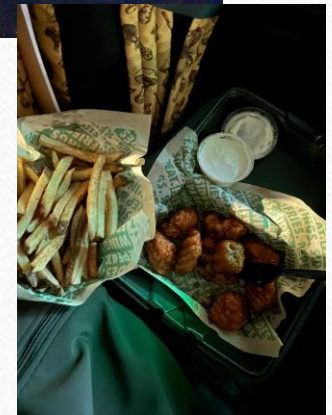
# Headed out from Willow, AK!

- We gathered at the church to pray about the trip and pack the tents and food/snack supplies into 3 checked bags. After that we had a quick pit-stop in Wasilla then off again to the airport in Anchorage, everyone was excited and nervous about the trip, mostly.





*...And so the Adventure begins...*





It took a while to get there, it was worth it.

2/7-8/24

We left Willow, Ak at 8:30pm Feb 7

We arrived at the mission house in Georgetown, Guyana at 2:10am (local time) Feb 9<sup>th</sup>

Total of around 24 hours





# The Mission house, Georgetown, Guyana



2/9/24





# The Zoo 2/10/24









# 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Services

2/11/24

- Bro. Truitt, Karissa, Kailyn and I stayed in G-town and attended church there, afterwards ate at Vashti's (the pastor's wife)





# Monday

2/12/24



We left the mission house for the 12-hour drive at 2:30 AM and stopped at two different gas stations, one right outside of Georgetown around 5:30 and yet another around halfway there at 9:10 AM. We stopped at 6:53 AM for a quick break and walk-around. We arrived at the camp site in Kurukukari at 2:06 PM, we set up tents while some of the Guyanese ladies made dinner, while they prepared dinner some of us went to the dock to do some fishing. The campsite is on the Essequibo River.



## Camping at Kurukukari campgrounds





The Guyanese took care of the cooking for us, it was really good! There was also a ton of ripe fruit trees.







# Tuesday

2/13/24

We started the day off by fishing on the dock (after eating breakfast) when the campground owner's son came down the trail on a tractor and said he could take the entire group (there was 20 of us) to an island farther up river, the catch was the boat could only hold 2 people, so it might take a bit. So when we got to the small island we fished, wrote in the sand and swam a little, when we all got back to camp it was time for lunch and to start getting ready for the service.



# Tuesday continued

2/13/24



- We had to get across the river using a charter boat. The first service in the bush was held at the village just across the river named Fair-view. We were expecting around 20 kids.... 70 came, both the children's and the evening services were great and very emotional. It was moving to see so many kids wanting to hear about Jesus.





# Wednesday

2/14/24

We woke up and started packing up camp, than ate breakfast. Only I couldn't pack my backpack very fast, and hadn't eaten breakfast so the group had me go eat while they finished packing for me. We left the campground at 9:30. We had left the bus across the river so it took a while to get everyone to the crossing. While we waited for the guys to get the bus one of the youth leaders gave all of us valentines day candy. We had a about 2-3 hour drive ahead of us.



# Wednesday Continued

## 2/14/24



We ended up not using tents and got to use the little huts. We went to Wowetta village to minister, but the lady running the place had told everyone the wrong date. Instead of leaving and joining the other group we joined some kids playing soccer close to the building. They were so excited that a group of Americans were in their village and were playing soccer with them! We told them about the service, they said they would come and bring the all the kids, and tell them about the soccer game. The kids did come back bringing friends with them the following day. It was a amazing service.

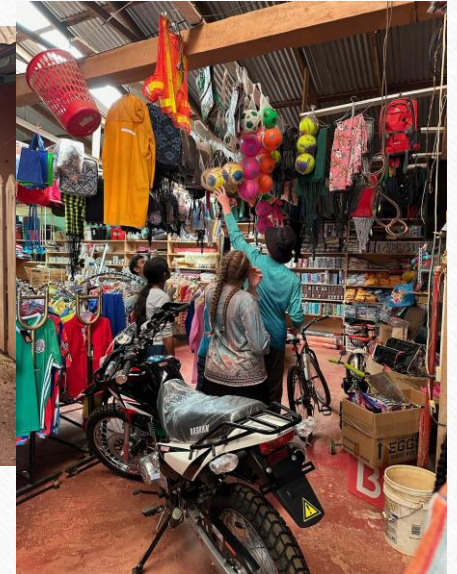




# Thursday

2/15/24

- Later that day we headed back, stopped to get gas and check out the local store. It was very full and had a surprising amount of products for the remoteness.





# Thursday Continued

2/15/24



- We started the day off with a hike up a hill, the Alaska group thought the hike was easy, the Guyanese not so much. There was a nice breeze on top so that was a nice break. On the way back downhill all of us heard a rattlesnake \*what we thought was a rattlesnake\* the other girls ran down the trail leaving me alone, but I froze since that's what the Guyanese leader told us to do. Only I heard him behind me a few minutes later (after he caught up), and he was laughing. LAUGHING well it turns out Guyana has a beetle who sounds just like a rattle snake, the only difference is that the rattle is slower. After the hike my hiking boots self-destructed so I had to wear sandals for the rest of the trip (yes even in New York)





# Thursday Continued

2/15/24

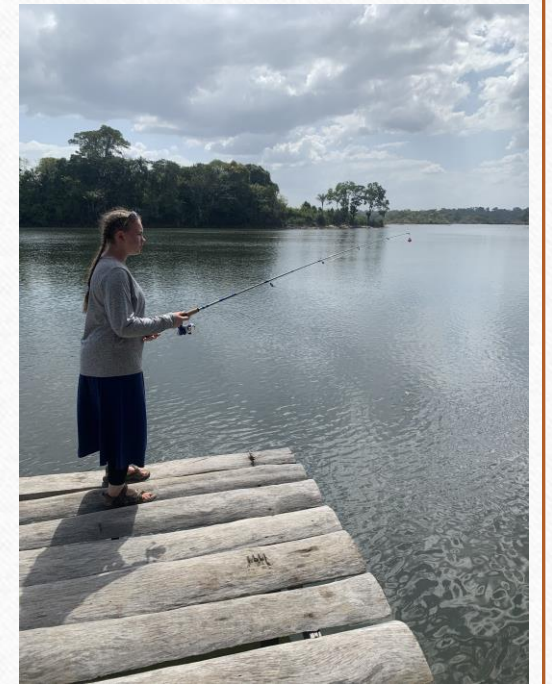
The kids that we had played soccer with the day before kept their word. They didn't just bring more kids, they brought every single kid. Some even brought their baby siblings. After the children's service we gave them candy and a craft. Turns out the kids had told the entire Wowetta village, and all of them came they were so hungry to hear about the Lord and to hear from the Americans, in fact they were so happy to get to hear us speak that they sang a welcoming song for us. After service and we were back at camp we decided that since the Guyanese had us try some of their 'junk food' they could if they wanted try some of our 'junk food' as in instant ramen, only two of them wanted to try. The older one ate with a fork like us, the younger one ate ramen in true Guyanese style, with his hands. Both of them loved the ramen.





# Friday

2/16/24



Once again we packed up camp by around 9:30, we got to the charter boat around 12:30, the boat had just left and wouldn't be back from the other side for about 45 minutes, so while we waited the Guyanese decided to introduce us to a game called 'The Dogs And The Bone' It was really fun to play, we stopped at the campground we had camped out at two days prior, we ate lunch and fished some more. We then got back on the trail. Around 3-4 hours later we came to a sudden stop, the Lead's car had come so a dead stop and rolled a small bit, apparently his car has a problem with its EAS system a lot, it took about 10 minutes before they could start it.



# Friday continued



- We stopped at the ‘M&D travelers restaurant and bar’ for a restroom break and to get some food & drinks, most of us got coke, some got this mango pineapple drink? We got cheese rolls and deep-fried pineapple sandwiches; both were mostly bread with a hint of cheese and/ or pineapple. We will never buy those again. At that point is when the drivers decided to not take break and we would drive all night back to George Town, which was a little over 12 hours away, and some points at that trail you were basically rock climbing, the road hurt my back soooo much the pain was probably a 21 out of 10. the drive back was very uneventful, seeing how most of everyone was asleep besides me.



# Saturday

2/17/24



- For the first half of the day we all sat around and rested, then it was time to go to the night market. Night Market is on the bad side of town which makes it a little more interesting. The market takes up a few streets, you have to walk down the middle of the road and quite crowded, you also have to watch out for cars. At one point me and one of the other girls were trying to keep up with the group, but there was no room and we had to stand slightly in the way of a motorcycle, the guy riding the bike yelled at us “GET OUT OF THE WAY CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES”. But at that point I had picked up the Guyanese accent (I pick up accents easily), so I yelled back “we ARE TRYING, there’s simply no room. We WILL move when there’s space.” the guy was so surprised that this American girl talked back and with a Guyanese accent besides being in a night market, LOL! He just stared for a minute before taking off. I enjoyed the night market a lot, it was fun!



# Saturday, continued

2/17/24

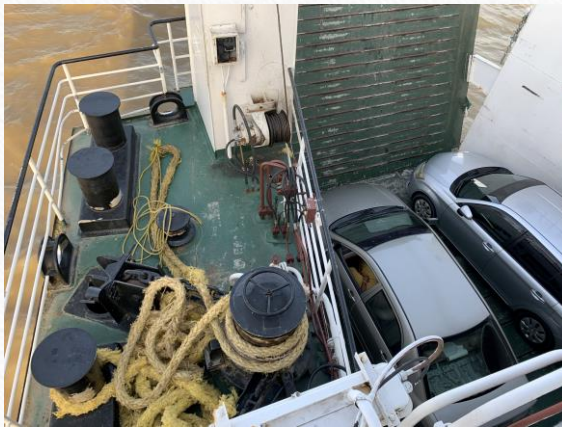


- After we left the night market we headed to the beach, where one of the men decided he wanted to show us how to play hopscotch, but the Guyanese way. I was so terrible at it the one lady was like “just give up now, the heartbreak will be less” the boy from our group was slightly losing because he was throwing the rock incorrectly so he said ‘apparently I can’t **THROW A ROCK**’ I replied ‘apparently I can’t hop’. After that one of the ladies would joke with me ‘I hope you learn how to hop’ afterwards we all loaded up into cars and went back to the mission house.



# 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday AM West Bank Church

2/18/24



- To get to the West Bank we had to wake up at 2:30 AM and drive for about an hour. To get to the barge/ferry we had to cross the Demerara Harbor Bridge, which is a floating bridge. Its an amazing piece of work. Once we got to the ferry we loaded the car and went upstairs. I don't have any pictures from the first half of the ride since it was very dark. The ferry was a 4–5-hour trip one-way. After the ferry hit the dock we unloaded the car and drove about 45 min. to the West Bank Mission house.



# 2nd Sunday AM West Bank Church

2/18/24



- The area of the West Bank is actually the Essequibo, which is what Venezuela is trying to take. At the service we had 3 people show up, a single Mom and her two kids. They are refugees from Venezuela, so they were telling us how angry they are that the country they just escaped from is taking land from a peaceful country. It was fun on the West Bank since to tell the people around there is service you would go to their door, you could call them but they like being talked to face to face. The West Bank Church is held in a guy's workshop, on the outside.



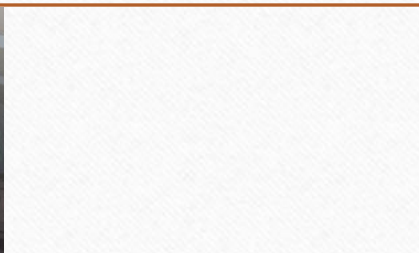


## 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday PM service, Georgetown



We were supposed to be unloaded from the ferry at 4, but when they tried to tie the ferry to the dock the rope snapped, it snapped with such a great force the one half of the rope flew passed the 3<sup>rd</sup> story of the ship and landed in the water with a like 10ft splash, it took the crew an hour to fix so we got off at 5, instead of 4. we had an 2 hour drive to get to church, they literally had to hold the service for an hour for us to get there. It was our last service there so was a bit sad.





## Goodbyes are hard....

It was very difficult for me to say goodbye to my new friends, during the evening service they had the Alaskan group go to the front and gave us cups and bookmarks and gave us all hugs. It was hard for all of us not to cry. After services we all gathered in front of the church to give handshakes, hugs, chat and take pictures with everyone. I have already since being back in Alaska chatted with 2 of my friends in Guyana. I miss them all and hope to go back and visit again.



# Shopping at Market

2/19/24



- The market was very fun! We all kind of split up, there was like 10 different stores open. It's very much like a farmers' market, but if it was just a little more packed in, and on the side of a road, so much that you have to walk in between the cars that are at the stop sign. I bought a few different souvenirs, but my favorite one is probably the Amerindian bow miniature. It's the smaller version of what the Amerindians use to hunt with. The wooden stuff at the market is all made with the local purple heart wood, which is (as stated in the name) is a purple wood, with a slight magenta coloring to it. They make quite a bit of stuff! It was hard to choose what to buy.

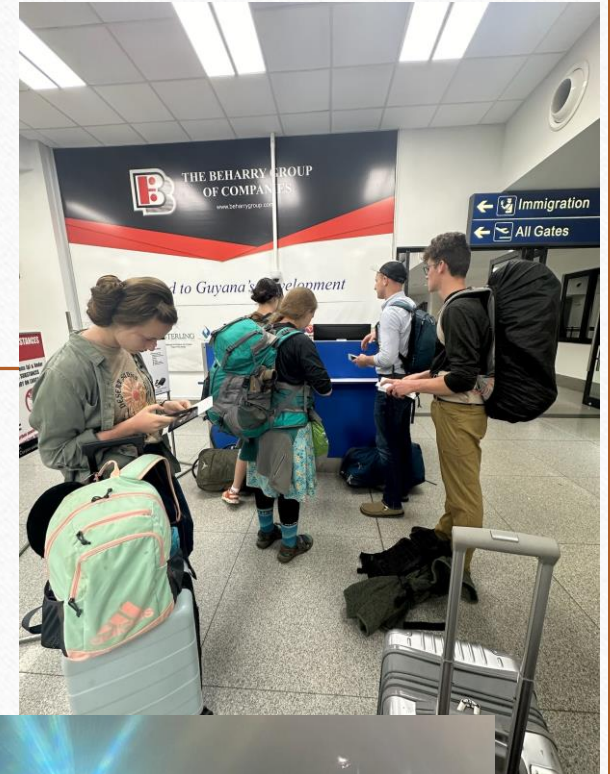




# The trip home.....

9/20-21/24

24+ hours of travel was very, VERY exhausting, especially when everyone was sad from having to say goodbye to new friends





# New York



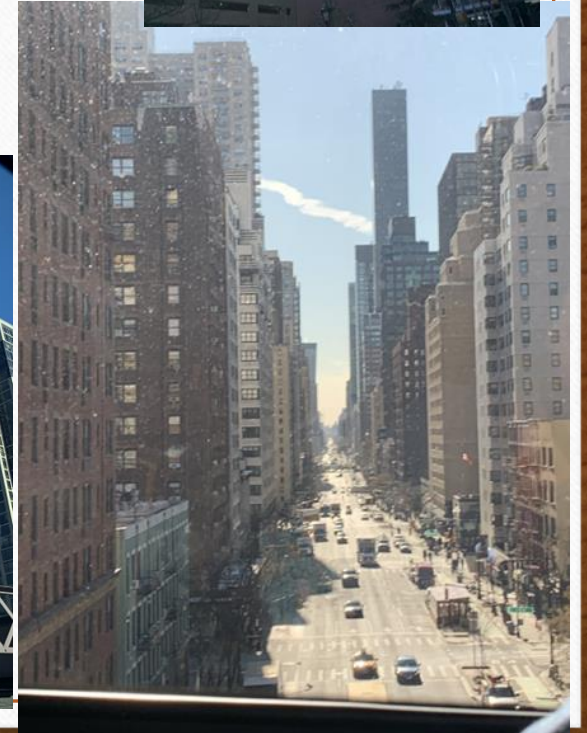
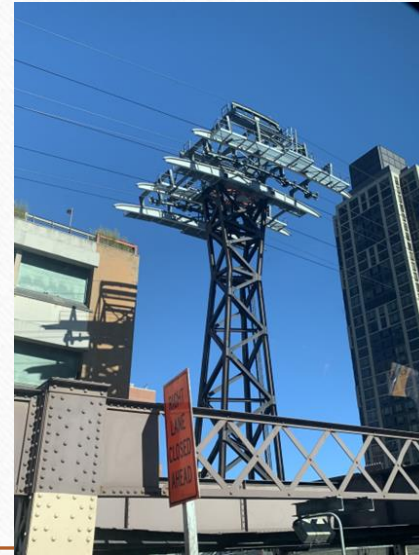
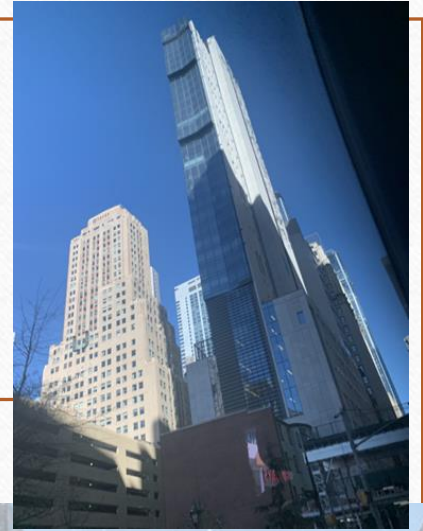
You will never believe who picked us up in New York! President Trump's Financial Advisor Paul Chester. He picked us up in a luxury van, we stopped by his aunt's house and picked her up, she's a 9/11 survivor, she was in the world trade center when the planes hit. She didn't tell many stories about it as it gives her too many horrible flashbacks. She shared stories and information on (what it felt like) every building in NYC. Paul bought us all breakfast, snacks and lunch, plus ice cream.





# New York Continued

All the different monuments are amazing! I cant remember the names of all of them. One of my favorites that we visited was the East Coast Memorial. Each wall had names engraved of the servicemen who were lost in the Atlantic Ocean during WW2. The bronze eagle statue and inscription standing guard over them all. The other buildings are just too big



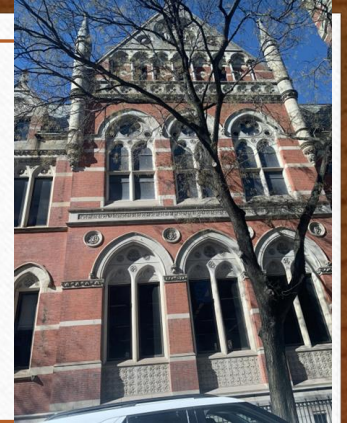
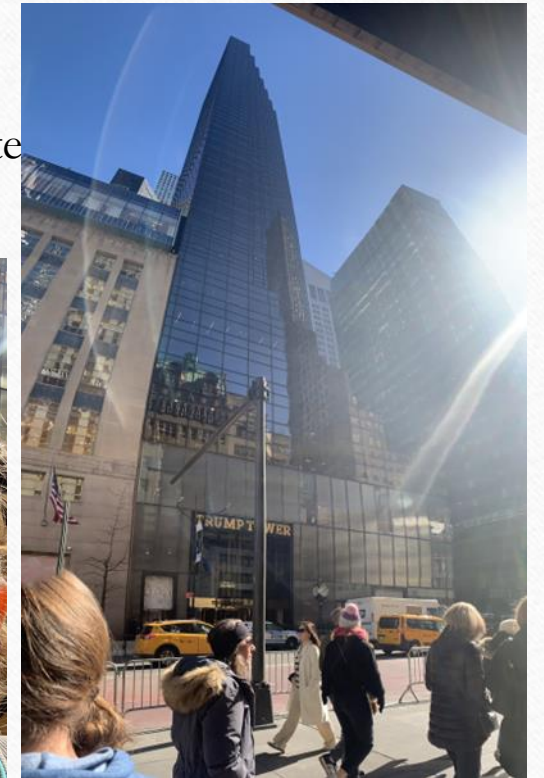


# New York continued

A little church by ground zero, the first responders and emergency staff used this initially as their base.



Trump Tower is probably my favorite building!





# Even more of New York

It was so big and so many people! I am very thankful I live in rural Alaska where life is quieter and much, much slower.





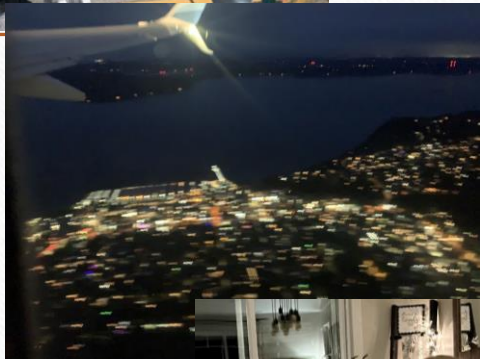
# NY > Seattle > Anchorage > Home



New York

Alaska at last. almost home!

Seatac,  
Seattle



Anchorage



Stayed with friends overnight and caught  
The flight to Anchorage the next morning.

Mom was very happy  
for me to be home!





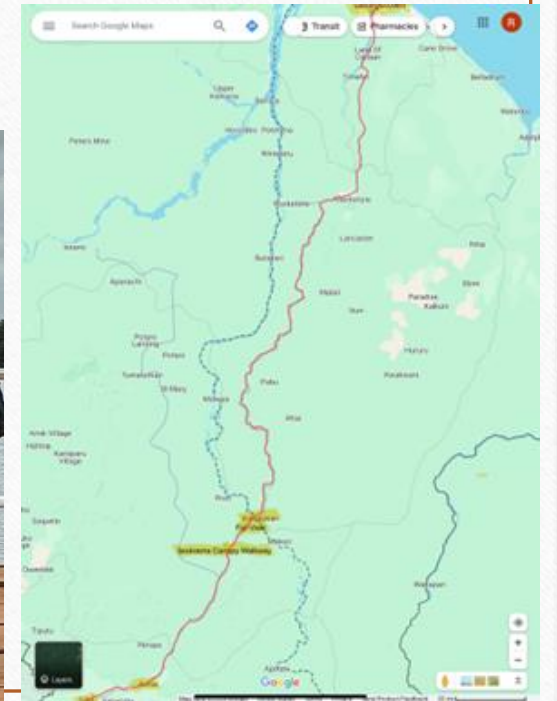
# Various Pictures from the trip







Essequibo river and group picture of us on the ferry crossing it.







Fair View church and village



The building and field we played soccer in, Wowetta





Getting ready for church on the West Bank

The view from the top of the hill, Annai Village

