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PRESS RELEASE

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Secondary School Host an Evening of Celebration

Royal Wootton Bassett Academy welcomed students and parents for an evening to commemorate and award each student's hard work and dedication to the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

This year saw the largest turn out of students receiving certificates and badges, with over 100 bronze badges being awarded along with 30 students collecting their silver and 3 receiving their temporary gold badges. Students receiving gold will be invited to Buckingham Palace for a celebration to receive their official medals.

Jo Bradshaw came along in support and to tell her story as an Everest Summiteer, Keynote Speaker, Expedition Leader, DofE Outdoor Instructor and Leadership coach. Her words left students in awe at her courage and words of inspiration. Jo fundraises for Place2Be the UK's leading childrens mental health charity and is currently completing the 7 summits.

Mrs Barnard-Williams, Duke of Edinburgh Award Manager went on to say, "Last year was full of so many ups and I feel incredibly honoured to be awarding the students with their certificates which is a celebration of those who have worked hard to achieve their bronze, silver, and gold awards. Many have overcome adversity and had memorable adventures in the past year. It is fantastic to see so many of you here. Thank you to all the staff who go above and beyond giving up their time and



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weekends to support the students, without them the award could not run here at the academy.”

Mrs Ellis, Headteacher at RWBA commented, “The shaping of student’s confidence, resilience, and the empowerment that comes enables each student to be the person they become. The expeditions require courage and bravery to push themselves beyond their personal comfort zone, to overcome the loneliness, the fear of feeling lost and the tiredness, all whilst pushing on to reach the end of each expedition. We hope the students take the badges, photos and certificates and hold them close, they should be extremely proud as they represent the very best of them.

I am very thankful to the staff who dedicate their time and care to help students achieve these medals. A special thank you to Mrs Barnard-Williams who started DofE 15 years ago with a small number of students, this year reaching the largest total of students ever enrolled on a DofE cohort at RWBA, it is a significant achievement. This would not be possible without the support, planning, time and commitment from staff, parents, and students, and I would just like to say a massive thank you to you all. I am proud to lead at this school where our students have these great opportunities.”

