

## **Queens University Belfast Trip to Belmont University**

**Nashville, Tennessee, U.S.A.**

June 1 – June 21, 2024



Queens University Belfast students will spend three weeks in Nashville, Tennessee living and studying on campus at Belmont University. In addition to experiencing one of the most vibrant and dynamic cities in America, students will explore the history and context of Nashville and examine some of the social and economic challenges that persist in the city. Students will engage in rich dialogue and careful analysis to discern useful insights and potential policy strategies that might support innovative solutions to address these challenges, with implications for decision makers in both Nashville and Belfast. Woven into this exploration of the Music City will be a deeply personal reflection upon each individual's strengths, values, and purpose. As students engage in efforts to make social impact, they will also explore how to live out their values now and in the future, as they are asked to contemplate the foundational question: "What's your 'Why'?"

### **Week One**

Students will learn about the history, context, politics, and people of Nashville, Tennessee, U.S.A. An examination of Nashville's role in the American Civil Rights Movement will be undertaken, and current social and economic dilemmas will be studied. Belmont University's efforts around social innovation and impact will be presented, and participants will consider the role of institutions and individuals in facilitating human flourishing at scale and assisting communities to thrive.

### **Week Two**

The social and economic challenges introduced in Week One will be investigated using data and analytic tools. Students will drive the selection of the particular issues they collectively wish to tackle (affordable housing, quality education, smart urban growth, etc.) and will transform data and information into meaningful insights. Understanding these insights will lead to the development of specific policy recommendations and strategies tailored to address the community issues researched. Meanwhile, periodic excursions to Nashville landmarks, cultural sites, and signature entertainment venues will deepen student understanding of Nashville's character as a city.

### **Week Three**

In the final week, this robust learning experience will culminate both on the social innovation and personal development fronts. Students will continue the conversation around their own sense of purpose and discernment of their unique strengths and values, while also refining strategies for community social impact in Nashville and potentially Belfast. Concurrently, students will learn how communication and storytelling can amplify the impact of their chosen social impact action steps. Finally, students will learn how this process is not a one-time undertaking, but a continuous cycle of personal improvement and social innovation that must be cultivated on an on-going basis in order to maximize both our own growth and development as a person, as well as our potentially transformative impact on our community.