



## **Christine Smith (Belize)**

**IMBA, 2009**

**Executive Director, RESTORE Belize**



This time, we invited Christine Smith who graduated from IMBA in 2009. After graduation, she has been working in several government agencies in Belize. She has multiple roles at the same time now. She's an Executive Director at RESTORE Belize, a consultant in a private consultancy company, and also an adjunct lecturer at the University of Belize. Christine is definitely a slashie! Let's see how she uses what she learned in IMBA to impact Belize!

When Christine was studying in IMBA, she was inspired from several courses, like marketing, financial management, and economics. The IMBA experiences means she can combine science and business fields and understand these two worlds. This made her be able to operate comfortably in education as well as business.

The organizations Christine have served shared the same goal, that is to make their country better. The agency she mainly works at now is RESTORE Belize. The purpose of this agency is to improve citizen security and the quality of life for the citizenry of Belize. As an Executive Director, Christine did a lot of things to impact the society. RESTORE Belize has several key programmes that targets building capacity of young people by ensuring that they have access to meaningful education. For example, they execute "Early Warning System" to detect and respond to children at-risk of dropping out. Moreover, they have "I AM BELIZE Scholarship Programme" to increase the secondary school completion rates.

Everything Christine did in her career has social impacts. From her perspective, social impact is to



use the abilities to help people to change the dynamics of their lives. Before studying in IMBA, Christine used to be a teacher. In her opinion, teaching is very crucial in terms of social impact because education is a way for people to find better opportunities. Education opens doors and allows persons to build bridges. As the Director of Youth Services, her focus was on Positive youth development and creating a platform for youth leadership. She was instrumental in the development of the Youth Development Policy for Belize a policy that was youth-led. Positive youth development is important, since it empowers young people to be able to understand that they have values and can also create values. As the National Director for the EMPRENDE Programme, the focus was on Entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship also considered as social impact, as it gives persons the ability to develop solutions to many of the problems faced by society.

Review Christine's career so far, she really did many things to try to make the people in Belize have better life quality. All her roles have been in line with building capacity of individuals so that they can improve the dynamics of their lives. Furthermore,

being an Executive Director at RESTORE Belize, she has the responsibility to make the Citizen Security Policy a living document. A country where citizens feel secure offers a greater quality of life. If a country has high violence index, it will not attract the tourists to come which means foreign investment will also be low, which can lead to decrease in opportunities for residents of the country. When people can find a platform to reduce crime and violence, not only people but also the economy will grow.

About Christine's future career plan, she mentioned she will be working in RESTORE Belize as the Executive Director at least two years. After retiring from government, she may probably go to the private sector and be a consultant as a full-time job to assist the young generations to develop their skills and start their own businesses. She will keep impacting the society to make her country better even though she retires.

Christine would like to give some suggestions to the students. She recommends every student equip themselves with strong communication skills, not only oral but also written. Also, computer and customer service skills are essential transferable skills for the world of work. For the changing world, she also reminds every student to be adaptable to every situation and to learn from each experience. In addition, the most important for the current students is to think what goals that you would like to achieve in life during school time.

In the end of the interview, Christine expressed her appreciation to the staffs of IMBA. They assisted her a lot and made her feel at home. She will not forget the memories in Taiwan. We also expect one day she can come back to Taiwan and share more about her outstanding experiences!

*Interview date: July. 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020*