

# Meghan Trout

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Former Volunteer Staff Team Member

Over the years, 8 to be exact, I have always been asked what The iBELIEVE Foundation means to me. Each time I answer, it's a little different. At the beginning of my time with iB, as a delegate, when you asked me what this organization means to me, I would be able to tell you specific details about my friends or fun memories that I have associated with the workshops and the people. But now, as I get older, the answer is more about its impact in my life and it has become harder to remember the details of all the best memories. Because at the end of the day, we are never able to remember every moment of our lives, but we are able to remember how those moments made us feel.

The iBELIEVE Foundation has a way of taking an ordinary student from Appalachia and allowing them to see their potential in this world. Without iB I would not have confidence in who I am, not only as a person, but as a leader, a community member, and a friend. That's the thing about the magic this foundation offers, it brings you together with strangers that become your best friends, it gives you all the tools that you would need to succeed, and then puts you back into the real world to see what you can do with it. And 10 times out of 10, that student is stepping back into their community to make a difference.

Sometimes I ask myself if I would have made it where I am today without iBELIEVE and to be honest, maybe I would have. But, it is also hard to distinguish a time before iBELIEVE, because with this organization, it doesn't just give you friends or teach you leadership skills, it changes you as a person. iBELIEVE's lessons are in everything that I do and how I lead, without even realizing it. I am not the same Meghan I was 8 years ago, in fact, I am better, and a large part of that is because of The iBELIEVE Foundation.

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