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A LIFE CHANGING TRIP TO UGANDA

St. Ambrose College young medic Rory McNicholas says his self-financed week long trip to work in a cash starved medical clinic in poverty stricken rural Uganda has changed his life.

"Standing in this ramshackle clinic in the Ugandan outback holding a baby just five minutes after the birth confirmed that this was something I wanted to do for the rest of my life. It was a magical experience."

Rory, 17, from Appleton, who wants to apply to Oxford or Cambridge next year to read Medicine, added: "It was a life changing trip. I was lucky to go there on a shoestring budget with the charity Medcare but I'd go back again in a heartbeat to help and learn more whenever I can. It was a privilege to work alongside so many many wonderful people doing their best in poor conditions to help the local people, not just the doctors and there aren't many because to train out there is so expensive, but the medical officers, those working in the orphanages, all the staff, all the team.



"The poverty was simply jaw dropping and the problems they face on a daily, hourly basis are something we cannot imagine. I worked with this woman, or rather I should say latter-day saint, called Mary who had set up from scratch this special school that now has 140 children, the majority with disabilities, many orphaned or simply abandoned by their families.

"When I went inside they were behaving in a quite an animalistic way and it was actually a little disconcerting, but they were being cared for by these volunteers whose work was both relentless and thankless, but they were were happy to be making a contribution."

The son of an orthopaedic surgeon and a nurse, Rory added: "I visited people's homes, that were just four corrugated iron walls somehow pinned together, nothing more, but the families were happy and smiling. Those living in the first world simply cannot imagine the poverty in the developing world." Rory said: "I don't know what we can do in this country to help, save to support the charities working out there, Medicare does an incredible job and needs funds so all I would say to anyone is don't let the recent negative publicity about charities deter you from doing the right thing. What money they have is all being spent on sustaining these communities."

Rory raised £500 to fund his passage and is now continuing his fund-raising efforts to help his new friends.

Head of Sixth Form at St. Ambrose College Pauline Ridgway said: "We are very proud of Rory. He very much represents what we want our pupils to go out and achieve. Hard-working; talented and selfless, always prepared to put the needs of others first."