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YOUNG DOCTOR RORY FUNDS HIS OWN TRIP TO UGANDA TO HELP IN AIDS PANDEMIC



Altruistic St. Ambrose College medic Rory McNicholas is funding his own week long trip to Uganda to see what life is like for doctors and their patients in the developing world treating a population struggling with the AIDS pandemic.

He has spent the last six months raising the £500 needed to send him to the charity Medcare's medical centre, Wellspring, located in the impoverished town of Kamutuuza, some 60 miles south of the capital Kampala.

Rory who got 10A*s and two A's in his GCSEs and is contemplating applying to Oxford or Cambridge to read Medicine, said: "I hope it will be a life changing experience. We are lucky in this country to have First World medical care, but before I begin my formal medical training, I want to see how medical professionals work in the Developing World and the impact they can have on so many lives."

Rory, 17, from Appleton added: "I very much want to work in the NHS in the U.K. working on a face to face basis with patients and I believe this experience will sustain me through my studies and keep me focused on the positive role doctors play not just in the U.K. but worldwide."

Rory flies out to Uganda on March 6 to assist and observe in the paediatric outpatient unit, serving 12,000 children a year with a catchment of half a million children.

He said: "The majority of the problems seen at Wellspring are malaria, obviously HIV/AIDS because sadly a tremendous number of children are themselves suffering from AIDS or are orphaned due to AIDS; and various physical disabilities from hydrocephalus, cerebral palsy, clubbed feet, amputees, TB, spinal problems and rickets, many often highly complicated cases."

The son of an orthopaedic surgeon and a nurse, Rory said: "I have always loved the sciences, but I don't want to work in research; I want to work with people and make their lives better. It seemed Medicine was the obvious choice."

Head of Sixth Form at St. Ambrose College Pauline Ridgway said: "We are very proud of Rory. He is an unassuming but highly intelligent young man with a mission to improve the lot of his fellow man and he has worked ever so hard and with great ingenuity to raise the money for his own passage."

Rory's fundraising efforts have included staging a charity bonfire and bag packing in local supermarkets.