

University School Student Raises \$3,200 to Build House for Needy Family

When Matthew Lyn started to fulfill his community service hours as a freshman at University School, he set his sights on a four-year plan that would end up making an impact on his birthplace of Jamaica.



In 2013, Matthew went to Jamaica to document the work of Mustard Seed, a local organization dedicated to helping children whose families or governments are unable to provide shelter, food, and care. This is done with a series of communities and homes spread across Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Zimbabwe, and Jamaica. Each is staffed with nurses, doctors, cooks, and caretakers who help abandoned children with disabilities ranging from cerebral palsy to HIV/AIDS live happily and unafraid.

That trip had a profound effect on Matthew's life, and he realized how fortunate he was to



have basic necessities such as running water so easily accessible in the U.S. He was able to secure a donation to Mustard Seed after making a presentation on a community it built called Jacob's Ladder. Jacob's Ladder is a farming community that allows disabled adults with autism and other mental diseases to live quietly in the mountains. Matthew's donation helped the community devise a water catchment system (rain tanks) as well as a system to utilize the rivers traveling down the surrounding hills.

When he returned to University School, Matthew continued his fund-raising efforts and worked steadfastly as a member of the WIND (World in Distress) club on fundraisers such as the Locker Cleanout Drive. Club members sold items left behind in lockers such as binders, clothes, and jackets to raise money. They also sold school supplies and rented out laptop chargers for \$10 a day.

For Matthew's next project, he decided to work with local charity Food for the Poor, which is an international relief and development organization. It feeds millions of hungry people throughout the countries it serves. In March, he and the WIND club presented a check for \$3,200 to Food for the Poor to

build a house for a needy family in Jamaica during the Summit on Human Dignity assembly. But Matthew, who is now a senior, says there's still a lot of work to be done.

"A village can house like eight families. A school can be built for \$50,000," he said. "I just wanted to see more for the place I was born."

