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Last Updated: 8:13 am | Friday, October 6, 2006

Jamaican teen keeps his sight with trip to U.S.

TMC student saw his plight

BY HOWARD MCEWEN | ENQUIRER CONTRIBUTOR

CRESTVIEW HILLS - O'Brian Davis was in a no-win situation. The Jamaican teenager was losing his sight and a corneal transplant was the only way to prevent blindness. But a lack of money was preventing him from getting the needed surgery.

A group of Thomas More students visiting Jamaica this summer to teach and do repair work on schools and orphanages found out about Davis' story and wanted to help.

"I was introduced to this bright young man and I was told he was going blind," said LaVon Moore, a Thomas More nursing student. "Coming from America, I could not imagine not being able to get medical care. I know every hospital in America will care for anyone that comes through the doors."

Moore works as a surgical technician for Dr. Kenneth Amend, founder of The Amend Center For Eye Surgery in Cincinnati. Without talking with her boss, she told Davis if he used the money he had saved to pay his way to Cincinnati, Amend would do his surgery free.

"I had not spoken to Dr. Amend yet, but I know his heart," said Moore. "When I returned home and spoke to Dr. Amend, he agreed.

"And we began to make plans for O'Brian to come to America."

On Sept. 21, Davis had his operation.

"I'm feeling better than ever," said Davis, 18. "I should be able to see normal again."

His plans are simple. "To see clearly so I can finish my education," he said.

Amend covered the cost of Davis' surgery and tissue.

His travel and lodging while he recuperates is being paid for by Thomas More's students and alumni.

"The Jamaica Service Learning Project at Thomas More College has provided a lot of the funds," said Moore. "The students work hard during the year raising funds to attend Jamaica once a year, and all the students - past years and present - help in some way to make this happen."

"This situation exemplifies what Thomas More College is all about," said Tom Gilday, associate accounting professor, who has led the trip to Jamaica several times. "It is a case where our students are bringing the Thomas More mission statement to life. With God's help, they have accepted TMC's challenge to 'examine the ultimate meaning of life, their place in the world, and their responsibility to others.'"

Davis will be living in the Thomas More dorms in Crestview Hills until Tuesday. He will then return to his home in Cash Hill, Hanover, Jamaica.

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