

#MonthlyMotivation: Phoebe Codrington (class of 2017)



As Putney's Junior School pupils enjoy a wonderful new playground, we catch up with Phoebe who is combining her studies with fundraising before she travels to Uganda to deliver the gift of play to children there.

What have you been up to since leaving Putney?

I am currently in my second year at the University of Exeter studying History with a proficiency in French. Since leaving Putney I have travelled around Europe with my school friends and I have visited Vietnam and Singapore with my twin, Rosanna (also class of 2017).

What does a day at University look like for you?

I like to be busy, and although History does not provide a huge number of contact hours, I manage to fill my time with lacrosse, work, going to the gym and (now) I am concocting fundraising ideas and plans for my next trip!

Where will you be visiting on your next trip?

This summer I will be going to Uganda with Exeter University's Raise and Give Society (RAG) to build a playground for a school. The charity is called East African Playgrounds (EAP). By this time next year, EAP aims to have helped half a million children.

What will you be doing as part of the trip?

During the three weeks I will not only be building in the school, but also getting to know the community. I will get the opportunity to work and play with the children, as well as a chance to trek for five days across all types of terrain to spot the last remaining Silverback Gorillas.

Have you always been passionate about charity work?

I've always had the third sector in the back of my head as a potential occupation for the future. Whilst at school I completed the Duke of Edinburgh Award and volunteered at my local vet's practice which was wonderful. I met some fantastic people and saw how a practice is actually run.

Most recently, I have been inspired by my cousin, Noah, who also studies at Exeter. He went to Uganda with the same charity, EAP, and his stories of his time there were truly inspiring; he said that building the playground was hard work, but it is so rewarding when you see the children's reactions to seeing the playground for the first time.

Why is this cause important to you?

During my time at school I was so lucky to make so many wonderful friends and to be able to socialise and play with them in a safe and secure environment; this is something that I had not really thought about when I first came to university. Since learning more about the work that EAP does, I now appreciate the value of being able to play with my friends whilst developing key social and imaginative skills in a safe environment. EAP aims to help give the gift of play to the children of Uganda who have not necessarily had access to safe play facilities; this has inhibited their ability to develop these key cognitive skills that, as a British child, I took for granted.

What challenges do you anticipate whilst preparing for this trip?

As I am only at the [fundraising stage of my project](#), I have a slightly daunting task of raising a target of £2,000!

I am prepared to have set-backs and, I know there will be times when my fundraising does not go to plan or my events are not as well-organised as I would have liked, but resilience is another thing that school and university has taught me. If you work hard, you will succeed and if you don't ask, you don't get. I am ready for the challenges that the next year is going to throw at me.

What advice would you give to Putney pupils or alumnae thinking about getting involved in charity projects or the third sector?

I would encourage anyone who wants to get into the third sector to go for it! It is a vocation full of diversity in terms of the people working within it as well as the jobs available and the causes they support. As long as you are an all-rounded, resilient, inclusive person, who is willing to work in a team and put yourself out there, it certainly is the place for you. There are so many volunteering opportunities to get involved in at school (like the Duke of Edinburgh Award), university and even in the work place. Volunteering is available everywhere so look out for your opportunity to get involved!