



April 28th, 2015

Travel bursary to help health visitor with African charity work

Long-serving South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust health visitor Carolyn Taylor has been awarded a bursary which will enable her to do more voluntary work with the charity that she founded in one of the poorest countries in the world.

Mrs Taylor has worked as a health visitor for 40 years this year, including about 20 years in Hebburn, in South Tyneside, and the last five years in Sunderland. She initially visited Mityana, a town surrounded by villages in the central region of Uganda, in 2000, through her links with the Scouting movement. In 2007, she set up the Mityana Community Development Foundation and the charity now runs a community primary school for 500 pupils, as well as a community centre with internet café, library, adult literacy classes and a credit union.

Mrs Taylor, of Whitley Bay, was given the MacQueen Travel Bursary for Public Health Activity Abroad when the Community Practitioners and Health Visitors Association (CPHVA) presented its 2015 awards. She will use the £2,000 bursary to pay for more flights to Uganda so she can provide breastfeeding education and support and begin training local health trainers in all aspects of public health to enable them to help their communities.

She said: "I am honoured to have been presented with the MacQueen Travel Bursary. All of the charity's directors, like myself, are volunteers. Our visits are self-financed and we need to raise around £10,000 a year for running costs. This year, we are also trying to build dormitories so children in their final year of primary school, who need to achieve the level of education required to go on to secondary school but who live too far away to walk home and back every day, do not have to sleep on the classroom floor.

"I normally go to Mityana twice a year and I know the people there so well now that they're like family. They very much appreciate the help the charity gives them and it is fantastic to see what a difference we can make to their lives. I am also delighted to be able to use my knowledge and skills to further improve their health."

The Mityana Community Development Foundation welcomes donations of items, such as toothbrushes, pencils and pens. People can also sponsor animals and vital water filters to provide clean water. For more information, go to www.mityana-community-development-foundation.org.uk or email carolyn@taylor9299.freeserve.co.uk

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*Pictured above: Health visitor Carolyn Taylor with her travel bursary certificate
A classroom in one of the schools in which Carolyn's charity provides teaching*

Issued on behalf of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust by Kay Jordan

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