Penrith student’s 230-mile walk to school challenge raises £6,000 for charity

Monday 31 May, 2021

Penrith college student, Isaac Pullan, has received a hero’s welcome at his school after completing a month of daily 10-mile walks to school and raising more than £6,000 in aid of school children in rural Kenya.

Staff and students at Ullswater Community College were at the school gates to greet Isaac as he crossed the finish line after his final walk on Friday, bringing to an end a challenge that has seen him battle pre-dawn starts and inclement weather to cover more than 230 miles, clock up around 60 hours of walking and raise more than twelve times his original target of £500.

Speaking upon his arrival at school Isaac said of his incredible achievement:

“Doing this challenge has given me a real insight into the daily lives of so many children around the world and how walking long distances to school can impact on their learning. It has been both physically and mentally demanding which has definitely impacted on my own schoolwork; it’s hard to imagine walking that distance and then not getting a breakfast or lunch at school. But the support I’ve received – whether that’s donations or words of encouragement – as well as the opportunity to witness the amazing wildlife that is so active during the early mornings and to enjoy the spectacular scenery – when it wasn’t obscured by the weather! – has made it all worthwhile and given me the motivation to keep going and finish the challenge.”

The funds that Isaac has raised will be used by the charity African Promise in support of their work across its network of eight primary schools in Kenya, which includes providing around 2,500 children with a daily lunchtime meal. The charity’s founder and director Charles Coldman said of the difference that Isaac’s fundraising will make:

“For £6,000 we can provide around 60,000 lunchtime meals for children who would otherwise go without food at school. We cannot remove the need for them to walk to school but we can make sure that walk is a worthwhile one, including by removing hunger as a barrier to education. We are astonished at the amount that Isaac has raised and are so grateful to the family, friends and wider Penrith community who have got behind him with donations and messages of support.”

Isaac has also been well supported by staff and fellow pupils at his school whose Head of Sixth Form, Rob Jackson, said:

“This year, more than ever, we have all needed a good-news story and Isaac has provided just that. A modest and kind young man, Isaac is a wonderful role model for all our students and someone we are very proud of. Balancing his academic responsibilities with his desire to make the world a better place, Isaac is an inspiration for us all and is the very embodiment of our core values at UCC.”

Isaac is still hoping to raise more funds for the charity now that he has completed his challenge. If you would like to help him by making a donation please visit his fundraising page at justgiving.com/isaac-pullan

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