

Paying It Forward



By Donelle Manton

Pay It Forward Movie Inspires 12-year-old to Raise \$10,000 Dollars for Mazatlan's Orphanages

Every once-in-awhile, a special person comes along and inspires us with an idea that significantly changes our lives and the lives of others in ways we never imagined. For a Canadian youngster and his teacher, that altruistic thought is helping Mazatlan children 3,549 miles from Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.

In 2009, Cole Philipp completed his Montessori school training and transferred to Yellowknife's Range Lake North School

to enroll in its enhanced-French program. He was placed in Jodi Keats' homeroom and it was there his philanthropic teacher posed the "Pay It Forward" project based on a movie by the same name.

"Pay It Forward," Cole explains, "is the concept of asking a good deed be repaid by doing a good deed for someone else. The idea is that people engage in random acts of kindness and compassion with the ultimate aim of spreading kindness through our community and beyond."

Ms. Keats assigned her 7th grade students to select an organization they'd like

to help and take the project from inception to the point of initiation.

Because Cole and his family frequently visit Mazatlan, they learned from a hotel guest and staff at the Pueblo Bonito and the *Pacific Pearl* magazine about children in the orphanages and the efforts of the Tres Islas Orphanage Fund. This fund provides food, education, medical assistance and shelter for the children in five orphanages.

Even though the Philipp family hadn't visited the orphanages, Cole devoted his project to Tres Islas where 100 percent of every donation directly helps the children.

Cole contacted the founders of Tres Islas with details of his project, adding "I am optimistic that this will bring more support and money to the cause." Because Tres Islas is all about kids – having a youngster raising funds to help other youngsters – couldn't be more meaningful. Ms. Keats said Cole took the project seriously. He wrote 48 letters to jump-start his efforts. At the top of his fundraising efforts is the 'crazy funky monkey cupcake fundraisers' at his school – which netted \$1,075.60 dollars. His brother Liam's school raised \$1,050.00.

His parents, Stephanie and Jeff Philipp, are proud of their sons and actively participate in all aspects of their lives.

Cole's dad explains, "It's very important kids are mindful of other people and generally aware of what is going on in the world – at least to the degree they can understand it at this point"

His mom shares, "Everyone we've talked to has been very supportive. The project raised a lot of money outside the community, too. As parents, it's important to get involved in these extra-curricular activities and we're always glad to participate."

Of Cole's fund-raising achievement for the children in Mazatlan's orphanages, Ms. Keats said, "What Cole has been able to accomplish as a young boy is phenomenal. Cole has amazing leadership capabilities; he's determined. He's not the type of child to say he'll do something and then not follow through. Cole's not a taker; he's a doer. He has the uncanny capability of

reading situations others cannot. He's extremely charismatic, passionate and compassionate – traits you don't often find that go hand-in-hand. I'm so proud to know him."

Tres Islas will divide the money among the five orphanages to meet various needs identified by the orphanage directors. Cole will participate in stewarding his donations and will keep his website updated with the progress.



Cole and his teacher, Jodi Keats

To contribute, please visit Cole's website at <http://web.me.com/cole.philipp> or visit Tres Islas' website at:

www.orphanagefunds.org and make your donation in honor of Cole Philipp.

On behalf of all the children in the orphanages, the Tres Islas Orphanage Fund board of directors gratefully thanks and salutes Cole Philipp for making a lasting, positive difference in the children's lives.

As for Cole, he pledges to continue his efforts "to make the world a better place" and asks all people to, "please contribute to pay it forward and help the world."

With his example to follow, the world couldn't have a better leader to show us how to "Pay It Forward."

The expression "Pay It Forward" is used to describe the concept of asking that a good deed be repaid by doing a good deed to someone else.

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