

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IU Kokomo grad uses dental skills overseas

KOKOMO, Ind. — When Indiana University Kokomo student Joseph Logan went on a humanitarian trip with one of his professors, he chose to stay with a local family, rather than staying in a comfortable hotel.

“I knew that by living with a local family, I would be immersed in the language and culture, and have more of a life-changing experience,” Logan said.

He plans to return to Cartagena, Colombia, after graduating from IU Kokomo Tuesday (May 8). Logan, who is among 493 students graduating this year, is majoring in biology, with a minor in chemistry.

Chancellor Michael Harris congratulated Logan for taking advantage of one of the campus’ many overseas studies opportunities.

“We encourage our students to expand their horizons with one of these excellent programs,” he said. “It helps prepare them to live and work in our global economy.”

Logan aspires to attend the IU School of Dentistry fall semester 2013. He’s already had some practice working in a clinic at Grissom Air Reserve Base, where he is a reservist.

Logan first volunteered with Fundacion Cartagena Global in 2011. In addition to working with other students at a children’s hospital, he gave the children fluoride treatments and toothbrushes he asked north central Indiana dentists to donate.

He said while he was helping the children, he also gained experience in dental work, which will help him in his career.

“As I did the fluoride treatments, I did visual exams and assessed the overall health of each child’s mouth,” he said. “It was really poor for some of them. It makes you appreciate the quality of the care we have here.”

Logan plans to go back to Colombia again, and may start a dental health program there, possibly in partnership with a dental school.

J.R. Pico, lecturer in Spanish, was impressed with Logan’s desire to become more fluent and to learn more about the culture and people. Logan asked him for extra work, so he could learn dental health terminology in Spanish.

“You can treat patients more effectively when you can speak their language,” Pico said. “There aren’t many people who would make the extra effort to learn their language, rather than expecting them to speak English.”

Logan is glad to be one step closer to fulfilling his career ambitions.

“I’ve wanted to be a dentist for a long time, and I am finally getting close to that goal. I can see myself practicing for a while, and then teaching. I think I would enjoy that.”

Indiana University Kokomo serves north central Indiana.

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