

5 December 2011

Press Release

SARAH RETURNS TO CRC TO RAISE MONEY FOR MASHI FOUNDATION

Former CRC tutor Sarah Clarke came back to the College this week to raise money for the Mashi Foundation – the charity she set up to help street children in South America.

Sarah, who worked as a specialist support tutor at CRC, left the College to work in Ecuador after seeing the plight of children living in poverty there. She now runs the charity from her home in Cambridgeshire.

She returned to CRC to set up a Christmas stall selling ‘Wapa-Wapa’ jewellery to students and staff at the College – bracelets, necklaces and ear-rings made from the Tagua nut, found in the rainforests.



Sarah Clarke with her charity fund-raising jewellery stall

“Wapa-Wapa was set up in response to the need to fund the work of the Mashí Foundation and every penny we raise helps fund the work we do with children living in poverty in urban and rural areas of Ecuador,” said Sarah.

“Because Wapa-Wapa is an ethical and sustainable resource, it also has a positive impact on the lives of the local people. It provides a source of income to farmers and supports reforestation, and as a substitute to ivory, it also plays an important part in reducing elephant deaths for their tusks.”

Sarah set up the Mashí Foundation after going to South America to work as a volunteer with children in Ecuador, helping in a street children centre, supporting young people to develop life skills, literacy and numeracy and worked independently with the children's hospital, a day centre and orphanages.

“The time I spent in Ecuador with children who were in incredibly difficult situations changed my perspective on life,” she said.

“I was driven to try to make a difference and that is why I set up the Foundation. These children are living in extreme poverty, often independently of any adult and so have to find ways to survive. They are often not able to access basic health care and education, but with some financial support, providing these services is more achievable.

“The longer term aim of the charity is to continue with its sponsor parent programme so children can remain in education. There are also many more rural communities in which Mashí would like to become involved. The nursery provision offered in Loma Grande has been incredibly successful and beneficial to the children and their families, so we would like to be able to offer that in many more areas.”

To find out more about the Mashí Foundation, see www.mashifoundation.org

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MEDIA ENQUIRIES

For more information, please contact Lynn O'Shea, Communications & PR Manager, on 01223 418773 or email loshea@camre.ac.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

Cambridge Regional College is one of the largest providers of full-time further education for 16 to 19 year-olds in the eastern region, with more than 4,000 full-time and 6,000 part-time students. Students come in from a 40-mile radius, covering Cambridge and its surrounding villages, eastern Bedfordshire, northern Essex and western Suffolk. Over 80 per cent of full-time students are aged 16 to 18 years old and come to the College after secondary school; the rest are mature students, studying on a range of Access to Higher Education and vocational programmes.