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# Young go-getter heads charity

**Student is already a dedicated humanitarian**

By SEAN MASON  
for Metro Toronto

Most teenagers probably spend their time at school doing the three H's — homework, hanging with their friends, and hoping for a date on a Friday night. Shamir Mohamed Jr. is more than happy to add another 'H' to that list: helping children with AIDS in Africa.

In 2004, at the age of 16, the high school student from Rummymede Collegiate started a registered non-profit or-

ganization called Children's AIDS Health Program. Its purpose is to help provide treatment for AIDS in children under the age of 16 through raising awareness and funds for this cause.

Shamir's decision to embrace the fight against AIDS was a simple one. "Every 10 seconds someone dies of AIDS. The disease doesn't receive the publicity it deserves. Kids should have the opportunity to be kids," he says.

Shamir's community involvement began in Grade 9 with his desire for leadership experience. He organized 30-hour famine events at his school to raise about \$17,000 for charity.

Not wanting to settle for fundraising on such a small scale, Shamir did some homework in February 2004 on what it would take to start a non-profit organization. By October of the same year, he had his own charity registered with the Ontario government.

Children's AIDS Health Program has raised about \$5,000 to date, with 92 per cent of that going directly to the patients in the form of anti-viral medication. The money is being sent to specific AIDS orphanages in Tanzania and South Africa. Shamir is planning to spend two months in those countries this year to ensure the funds are going to those who need it the most.

He has also created a website, [LetsStopAIDS.org](http://LetsStopAIDS.org), in both of Canada's official languages, which he speaks fluently. Shamir credits his parents with providing moral support for his vision as well as assisting with the bank and government documentation.

While his school initially expressed concerns about his plans, he says, they are now more supportive.

"Discouragement encourages me even more," he says.

Shamir is in the process of bringing his message to universities across Canada as well as one school in Tibet.

He is planning a 24-hour wake for March 10, 2006, in which university students would stay awake for 24 hours to promote AIDS awareness.

In addition to being a social activist,

Shamir is also the Toronto District School Board's SuperCouncil presi-

dent, as well as a recipient of a 2006 Top 20 Under 20 Award and a 2004 DareAIDS Leadership Award.

He manages to juggle these activities by taking time management courses, yet still has time for cross-country running, swimming, wrestling, and curling.

Shamir plans to attend university and take courses in health studies, to learn more about the disease that is killing so many of the world's children. He hopes to eventually help build a health-care centre in a developing nation that will specialize in treating young patients with AIDS.

Shamir Mohamed Jr., a Toronto student who started an AIDS charity.

NICOLE HANCOCK/DAREAIDS



## children's AIDS health program

In 2004, Shamir Mohamed Jr. started a registered non-profit organization called Children's AIDS Health Program:

- Children's AIDS Health Program's primary objective is to be an organization that helps provide treatment for AIDS for children under the age of 16. It encourages youth to be involved with this cause. The goal is not only to educate children with AIDS, but also to educate others to prevent AIDS. Their long-term goal is to build a health-care centre in devel-

oping countries specializing in AIDS for children. On Dec. 1, Shamir launched a campaign directed towards youth and university students.

- He is currently in the process of speaking to several universities to host the organization's grand event on March 10, 2006. The event is called the 24-hour wake. University students would stay awake for 24 hours (which they probably already do) to promote AIDS awareness.

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