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College intern helps child battling cancer

Caleb Jones, 21, a Franklin resident and a senior at Campbell University in Buies Creek, chose U.S. Trust Bank of America (BOA) for his summer internship.

He was assigned to BOA in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. As part of the internship, students take part in a community service project. He chose the Jessica June Children's Cancer Foundation (JJCCF) on the recommendation of two college friends who participated in the BOA internship program in Fort Lauderdale the previous year.

The foundation provides financial assistance for children fighting cancer.

"I did some research and immediately contacted Sandra Muvdi, the organization's founder," Jones said. "When she told me about the families in the Advocacy Program, I knew this was the charity for me."

Elodie Euzebe is an 8-year old girl who has been battling stage IV Neuroblastoma since April 2011. She is currently at Chris Evert Children's Hospital at Broward General Medical Center, where she has been receiving aggressive chemotherapy and in several months will need a bone marrow transplant. Elodie lives with her stepmother and her three siblings. Her stepmother and her father are struggling to provide for her needs. As for her biological mother, she is in Haiti and while the two are in contact via phone, she cannot contribute to her financial needs. Elodie's health care coverage only covers partial payments for treatment and medication.

"When Elodie's social worker contacted us she made it very clear that her treatment schedule is very demanding, her stepmother is her only support at this time and she is responsible for bringing her to the hospital for treatment and testing," said Muvdi, who established



Photo/Provided

Meeting Elodie Euzebe and her family, and presenting a check to help with Elodie's fight against cancer was a highlight of Caleb Jones' summer internship with BOA.

the JJCCF after losing her only child to leukemia. Jessica June Eiler Muvdi died in 2003 at age 7.

The financial struggles of Elodie's family made them the perfect candidates for the JJCCF Advocacy Program. Qualifying families receive emergency financial relief for everyday necessities such as medical, utility, rent, mortgage, car, gas and food. The direct and tangible temporary financial assistance JJCCF provides is vital to the survival of these children while they receive cancer treatment.

Jones selected Elodie for his project because he felt she had the most financial needs out of all the eligible families. Plus, he has a 12-year old sister and Elodie reminded him of her.

"What can I say, when I saw that beautiful face and those eyes...I was a goner," he laughs.

Jones sent a mass email to members of his office at US Trust. BOA matched their donations 100 percent. Also coming through for Elodie were Jones' father, a pastor, and his church.

"It amazed me how many people were willing to step up and support a child they didn't even know and to me that shows grace and compassion," says Caleb.

On Aug. 11, at the 15th Share the Joy Ceremony, Caleb met Elodie and her stepmom Gilene at the hospital bedside and presented them with checks for more than \$2,000 which will help pay for her health insurance premium and rent.

"Caleb, Sandra and the JJCCF have been a blessing for us as the money Caleb raised will allow Elodie to continue treatment," said Gilene. "While I do continue to work and hope to return to my full-time job this month to keep the health insurance going, I am so grateful for all the hard work and time Caleb and the JJCCF put in to help my step-daughter and my family."

What was going to start out as a regular summer internship turned into a very emotional experience for Caleb.

"I got the opportunity to meet a brave, beautiful and sweet little girl and while she is currently going through a very difficult time, I truly believe she has a bright future ahead of her and I look forward to seeing how her life progresses," said Jones.

For more information on the Jessica June Children's Cancer Foundation, please visit www.JJCCF.org or call (954) 712 6322.