

Trip of a lifetime

RMIT University student Merrilyn Kerr is embarking on a trip of a lifetime with the Oaktree Foundation's Our Generation Challenge.

Kerr, who is completing a Bachelor of Applied Science (Laboratory Medicine), departed this month for Africa after her final exam. She is excited by the possibility of making a contribution to developing countries.

"As a young person I feel so blessed to be given such an amazing opportunity to help those in need. I have always felt passionate about helping others, which is what attracted me to Medical Science," Kerr says.

"In the third year of my degree I completed most of my work placement at the Victorian Cytology Service.

"At the end of the placement I was offered a position as trainee scientist and have been working part-time at the Cytology Service for the last year-and-a-half. I feel so lucky to

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have graduated with two years of work experience."

The Our Generation Challenge involves a 15-day field trip to Rwanda, Kenya and Malawi. It aims to bring together key decision-makers, connecting young people, United Nations agencies, governments and businesses to work towards the achievement of the UN's millennium development goals.

Assistant national director of the Oaktree Foundation, Kate Brennan, says "in a world where one fifth of humanity lives in extreme poverty, it falls to our current generation to use their skills to address the situation.

"Merrilyn's knowledge in haematology and the education she has received at RMIT gives her skills which are invaluable for this trip.

"Merrilyn is a role model to students her own age, showing that tackling poverty is a challenge that our generation can successfully address with passion and energy."

The Oaktree Foundation has mobilised more than 3000 young volunteers around the world and has raised more than \$500,000 to support projects in South Africa, Ghana, The Philippines and East Timor which provide educational opportunities for young people.



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