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Med school bound and on a humanitarian mission



Recent graduate Jeff Cumplido pointed to his work with the University's Social Enterprise Institute as the No. 1 reason for his undergraduate success. Photo by Mary Knox Merrill.

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Recent Northeastern graduate Jeff Cumplido is on a mission to bring health care to the most impoverished countries in the world.

"I want to make sure that accessibility to health care is improved through initiatives that I start," said Cumplido, who graduated earlier this month with a degree in **biology**. "Health is the baseline for everything."

Cumplido, who will enroll in Tufts University School of Medicine in the fall, hopes to address health disparities among minority populations as well as the integration of economic development and health care.

He credited his experiential learning opportunities at Northeastern for attuning him with this career path, and pointed to his work with the University's Social Enterprise Institute as the No. 1 reason for his undergraduate success.

The institute gives students the opportunity to become globally aware business leaders, by enabling them to help build micro-enterprises that cater to the poor in developing countries.

Dennis Shaughnessy, founder and director of the institute, recognized Cumplido's commitment to social entrepreneurship by awarding the recent graduate a \$10,000 scholarship to support his continued education at Tufts.

At Northeastern, Cumplido led a number of the institute's key initiatives, including its first field study program to the Dominican Republic. He examined the success of a micro-finance program for impoverished small business owners, witnessing the power of using business principals to solve some of the world's most pressing social problems, such as poverty and health disparities, and learning "more in four weeks than I ever had before," he said.

Two years ago, he helped found Northeastern DRYVE (Distributing Resources to Youth through Volunteer Efforts), a student-run organization that aims to improve the lives of underprivileged youth worldwide.

In March, he led a DRYVE team to Los Alarizzos, Dominican Republic, where they rebuilt a private school for undocumented Haitian children and stocked it with donated school supplies.

Cumplido noted that the organization plans to expand its focus to include a program on addressing health-related issues in impoverished countries.

For someone who names Dr. Paul Farmer —cofounder of the international health and social justice organization Partners in Health — as one of his heroes, Cumplido has set the bar high. But with Northeastern's help, he's prepared to leave his humanitarian mark on the world.

"My experiential education at Northeastern has taught me how to teach myself and be independent," he said.

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