

Cobourg resident teaches in Uganda

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COBOURG -- A volunteer teacher trainer position took a Cobourg resident on an unforgettable African adventure.

Angela Hoselton, 26, grew up in Cobourg and is a graduate of St. Mary's Catholic Secondary School and now does supply teaching for the Waterloo District School Board. A love for the environment and teaching led Ms. Hoselton to apply for a volunteer position with the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) of Canada in Uganda. JGI Uganda and JGI Canada have developed a teacher-training workshop targeting primary-school teachers. The workshop focuses on developing lesson plans, games and activities about the environment that children can understand.

Ms. Hoselton left on July 1 for a three week trip to Uganda. The Cobourg woman said she and another teacher worked together to lead a workshop for 28 Ugandan primary school teachers. The four-day workshop focused on how to integrate environmental education into lesson plans, said Ms. Hoselton.

"The idea is the children will bring the message home," she said. The Ugandan teachers were very hardworking and motivated to learn, Ms. Hoselton said.

Uganda faces environmental challenges such as deforestation, agriculture intensification and other threats to endangered primates, according to JGI Canada. Visits to chimpanzee sanctuary and a gorilla trek renewed Ms. Hoselton's passion for the environment and conservation, she said. The primary school teacher workshop was held in Ruhjia in the middle of Bwindi National Park, a rainforest, which is home to half the world's mountain gorilla population.

"There are only about 700 (mountain) gorillas left in the in the wild," said Ms. Hoselton.

On a day off, Ms. Hoselton went on a gorilla trek. There are four gorilla families, which are habituated to humans. She saw one family including a baby gorilla and the dominant male, known as the silverback.

Ms. Hoselton visited a chimpanzee sanctuary on Ngamba Island where she prepared food and helped feed 44 chimps. The island can not sustain the chimpanzee population as it is a sanctuary, she said. A highlight of the time at the sanctuary was a forest walk with the chimps, she said. She carried one chimpanzee on her back.

"She crawled on me," said Ms. Hoselton. "They are very playful."

Other opportunities included a visit to a Ugandan school where Ms. Hoselton learned class sizes average around 45 to 50



Karen Longwell / Northumberland

COBOURG -- Angela Hoselton, 26, was one of six teacher who went to Uganda on a teacher training volunteer trip this month.

students, much larger than Canadian classrooms, she said.

Ms. Hoselton heard about the opportunity to volunteer through Wilfrid Laurier University where she completed her Bachelor of Education in 2010. She joined five other teachers on the trip. Each teacher needed to raise \$2,500 for the trip and Ms. Hoselton thanks Cobourg area community members who supported the workshop. All the funds were raised in the area with a golf tournament and a raffle, she said.

For more information on JGI Canada, visit the website at www.janegoodall.ca.