

Joseph achieves dreams

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Staff Writer

Erve Joseph knows what it is like to have his dreams come true.

Joseph was born in the mountains of Haiti with club feet, meaning his feet were turned inward so he could not walk correctly.

This semester, Joseph transferred to College of the Ozarks from Ivy Tech Community College as a sophomore. He is deciding between majoring in biology and nursing.

His family lived below the poverty line and could not afford to have corrective surgery.

"I wanted my feet fixed," Joseph said. "I didn't want to live like that."

He said he participated in activities, such as soccer. However, he said emotionally it was hard.

In his Laws of Life Essay for Character Camp, he said he was made fun of often and did not have many friends.

"These were the hardest years of my life," he stated. "I was not accepted because of something that I did not ask for in life — something that I did not have the power to control from happening to me."

After singing "Lord I Lift Your Name on High" at his fifth-grade graduation ceremony, Joseph was approached by a missionary named Linda Green who wanted to help him.

Green took Joseph to a doctor in Michigan who had the ability to correct club feet.

"The doctor did my surgery for free," Joseph said. "That was pretty much a dream come true."

After surgery, Joseph was faced with learning how to walk with his corrected feet.

"It wasn't that hard," Joseph said. "I didn't like it because it hurt, but it was OK."

Joseph said the people he was staying with while he was having his surgeries wanted to adopt him, so he could stay in the U.S. Instead, he opted to go back to Haiti so he could see his family.



Joseph

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Feet from a shaken world firmly planted

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"They knew that when I went back to Haiti, it would be really hard for me to find proper care for my feet to heal," Joseph said.

To ensure that his feet were healed by the time he went back to Haiti, Joseph attended school in the U.S. for almost a year, finishing fifth grade and beginning sixth grade.

When he returned to Haiti, Joseph said the culture was shock-

ing after he had gotten used to America.

"It was overwhelming to see how much stuff the country doesn't have," Joseph said.

After returning to Haiti, Joseph said he came back to the U.S. several times to take part in educational conventions where he competed in activities such as chess, checkers and poetry recitation.

Later in life, Joseph once again had the opportunity to make his dreams become a reality.

Doug Walker, a missionary Joseph met in Haiti, helped him attend college.

"The thing that is incredible about it is normally it would be very hard for me to go to college," Joseph said. "I was so excited that my education would help me change my country."

Walker helped Joseph attend Ivy Tech Community College in Fort Wayne, Ind.

After hearing of C of O through a friend of a friend, Joseph ended up

in Point Lookout.

Joseph's Character Camp mom, Sandra Clemmons, said Joseph shared his story one night with the men of the family during this semester's Character Camp.

Clemmons said the men were all sincere and encouraging.

"They were all just really receptive," Clemmons said.

Joseph said he would like to help the people of Haiti someday.

"You have a lot of people in Haiti that die of diseases that are curable,"

Joseph said.

Joseph said he wants to become a medical philanthropist to help equalize the level between pharmaceutical companies and poor people.

"It's not typical for a man from the mountains of Haiti to dream of becoming a physician," Joseph stated in his essay, "but this is my dream because I have faith in God. This dream I hold on to, knowing God will intervene at the right time to make it happen."