

Biking to bring education to Nicaragua

SCHOOLBOX



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CHRISTINE WOOD/STAFF WRITER

Ilan Levy cycled through Sechelt June 6 on his quest to raise \$100,000 to purchase 8,000 school packages for children in Nicaragua.

While the first leg of Levy's tour was on the Coast, he will cycle a total of 8,000 km to reach his goal with Cycle 4 SchoolBOX.

"I hope Cycle 4 SchoolBOX inspires Canadians to take a moment and think about those less fortunate and take that simple step of a small donation that can give a kid a notebook — and more importantly a chance at something better," Levy said.

Cycle 4 SchoolBOX is fundraiser run through the Canadian non-governmental organization SchoolBOX, which builds schools in Nicaragua and equips children with the school supplies needed to learn.

SchoolBOX began after the organization's founder Tom Affleck gave a young girl in Nicaragua a notebook and a pencil as a small gift.

"Her father, seeing her new gift beamed and said 'now that you have a notebook and a pencil you can go to school.' He [Affleck] was completely stunned that 50 cents worth of supplies meant this little girl could go to school," said Rachael Gardiner, the campaign coordinator for SchoolBOX.

Affleck shared the experience with friends and family, who were eager to help.

Together they started raising funds to purchase basic school supplies for children in Central America. Today SchoolBOX helps thousands of children go to school and is building schools and working in close to 50 communities across the country.

The Cycle 4 SchoolBOX campaign encourages those who want to help to cycle for pledges to purchase school supplies for would-be students in Nicaragua.

Levy was inspired by the challenge and took a leave of absence from his job in Toronto to cycle 8,000 kilometres with Cycle 4 SchoolBOX. His tour takes him from Vancouver to Newfoundland and he hopes to inspire people to give to the cause in every community he visits.

"Ilan isn't just a man of action, he's an inspiration," Affleck said.

"SchoolBOX is committed to supporting the right of every child to a basic education and Ilan's incredible journey will bring this message to communities across Canada."

To make a donation go to www.cycle4schoolbox.com.



Christine Wood photo

Ilan Levy rode through Sechelt on his 8,000 km bike tour to raise \$100,000 for SchoolBOX, an organization committed to building schools and providing school supplies for children in Central America.