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Kathy Borlik - 2 May 2008

Her goal is to aid African refugees

For the next year Lauren Groth will be helping people at the grass-roots and loving every minute of it. Lauren will be the project manager in Kala Refugee Camp in Zambia, Africa, for FORGE (Facilitating Opportunities for Refugee Growth and Empowerment).

She will be leaving in June for her assignment. This world traveler is the daughter of Larry and Penny Groth of South Bend, and she is a graduate of Adams High and Northwestern University.

For the past two years, she has lived in South Africa. But right now, she is back home again in Indiana and she wants to share her story.

FORGE assists with women's shelters, preschools and libraries for refugees.

"The refugees within the camp I will be working at are Congolese. They were forced to flee during the outbreak of civil war."

She explains that they are restricted from leaving the camp and must rely on the international community for food, clothing and basic supplies. Many live on one meal a day. If there is peace in the region, the refugees can return home and lead their lives again. But they need assistance on many fronts, such as education and skills.

FORGE, which was started in 2003, creates opportunities through education for the refugees.

Lauren hopes to raise at least \$5,000 for the organization in the next month. "I'm willing to talk to any group that is interested in the cause," she said.

E-mail her at groth.lauren@gmail.com for more information. Or you can call her at (574) 850-0945.

Lauren can't even fathom the challenges of the next year, but she wants to be part of the solution to some big problems.