

Petersfield student promotes fair trade

By John Towns

Imagine doing your job - or any job - for pennies a day.

It's an unfortunate reality for workers across the globe - and it's a reality Petersfield's Nick Reid wants to change.

Reid, a 17-year-old Grade 12 student at the Comp was profiled during International Development Week last week by the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation for his efforts as an advocate of fair trade products.

Reid was profiled along with eight other young Manitobans as part of the MCIC's I Am Making a Difference campaign.

Reid's interest in fair trade is thanks in no small part to time he's spent working with his father's business, Clondeboye-based Green Bean Coffee Imports, a certified Fair Trade coffee roaster.

"When my dad started his coffee company, I got involved right from the get-go, and he's been going with fair trade and organic products only," recalled Reid.

"I guess the more I worked with him the more impassioned I got about the subject and really started trying to spread the word to people."

In the ensuing years, Reid has made it a point to try and convince people to buy products that were made by workers earning a fair wage.

"If you were to get a pay cut, and were only paid about, I don't know, a dollar an hour, that would be the pay level of a lot of the world. It's the situation that a lot of farmers and workers in a lot of parts of the world find themselves in," he said. "I've been trying to get all my friends to really start thinking about what they're buying and where it comes from."

Reid says that while some people ignore



Petersfield's Nick Reid was one of eight young Manitobans profiled for International Development Week 2011 by the Manitoba International Development Council's "I Am Making a Difference" campaign.

Photo: Courtesy of MCIC

his message, if he can get just a few of them to take it to heart he feels he's made a difference.

"Some people just sort of try to shrug it off and don't think about it, or they don't like to think about it. Some people actually do take it to heart, though, and try and find fair trade products if they can," he said. "It's about people getting involved and really showing them that some people can actually make a difference."

Earlier this year, Reid was one of six students involved in the writing and record-

ing of the song "Get Up!" as part of the I Am Making a Difference campaign, which encourages young people to make a difference in the world any way they can.

"That was a really cool experience," recalled Reid. "It was actually pretty cool to get into the studio. The guys there were really helpful in giving us tips on how to write the song and helping us brainstorm a lot of ideas."

You can view the video of that song on MCIC's website at <http://mcic.ca/makingadifference/video/get-up-music-video/>

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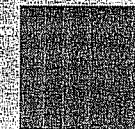
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