

# Acton teen youngest member of Borneo research expedition

By **LISA TALLYN**  
Staff Writer

An Acton youth will be spending the next few weeks a world away from his everyday life in Acton.

Steven Slowka, 19, is heading to Indonesian Borneo Sunday as the youngest member of a research expedition team.

The expedition is organized by Ethical Expeditions and provides the chance for about 10 students to take part in either a biodiversity or cultural research study.

Slowka will be doing research and community development work with the Wehea Dayak people, a distinct cultural group facing threats from illegal logging and rapid urbanization.

He will be spending 45 days living with the Wehea Dayak people in East Kalimantan, Indonesia doing academic research of their unique culture and assisting with the development of a community-based environmental education program.

Slowka, who will be starting at the University of Western Ontario this

fall studying cultural anthropology, is thrilled to be taking part.

"I'm ecstatic," said Slowka. "It's so in line with what I want to end up doing."

His goal after he graduates is to work as a lawyer in the area of indigenous human rights for the United Nations.

He said he will be documenting and recording the Wehea Dayak's traditional knowledge of the rainforest and blogging about his experience.

"The primary objective is to assist the community in preserving its heritage, culture and ecological knowledge," said Slowka, who graduated from Christ the King Secondary School last year.

The expedition is costing Slowka and his parents approximately \$8,000 and he is hoping area residents may be interested in donating to offset that cost.

"Any donations to my trip will reap significant rewards for the Wehea Dayak people who are trying so hard to protect their pristine land and distinct culture," he said.

To make a donation or learn more about Slowka's expedition visit [www.steveninborneo.weebly.com](http://www.steveninborneo.weebly.com)



**STEVE SLOWKA**

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