Kid Wonder

August 15, 2011 By Lauren Tuck

Jordan M. was born in the spring of 1998. Addicted to crack and diagnosed with fetal alcohol syndrome and HIV, he was abandoned by his birth mother. Luckily for the lone baby boy, he was adopted him when he was 5 days old. Throughout his 13 years, his family has adopted five more children, two dogs, two cats, three birds, a guinea pig and fish.

Despite his (literal) shortcomings—Jordan says he is very little compared with his teammates—the sports superstar has prevailed on and off the athletic fields. May 2011 marked his fifth AIDS Walk Charlotte, in North Carolina and he has raised more than $31,000 for the Regional AIDS Interfaith Network (RAIN), making him one of the walk's biggest donors. From collecting recyclables for their deposit returns to decorating his neighbors' yards with plastic pink flamingoes— catchily called "Flock-a-Friend"—for a $25 donation to the cause, he finds new and unique ways to raise money to help others with HIV.

What three adjectives best describe you?
Caring, fun, determined (and good at sports).

What is your greatest achievement?
Helping change people's ideas about HIV. A lot of people tell me I remind them they should do more. They see what I am doing, and they get involved. That's good, and I am proud of that. Sometimes people tell me they are proud of what I am doing and then tell me that they have someone in their family who has HIV or AIDS. Then, they usually hug me.

If you could change one thing about living with HIV, what would it be?
Not to have to take medicine every day because sometimes it makes me sick. I know if I don't take all this medicine I can get really sick and maybe even die.

If you could be any animal, what would you be?
I would be a white tiger because they are strong, powerful and very rare. They are born different than regular tigers, but that is what makes them beautiful and special.

What person in the HIV/AIDS community do you most admire?
Ryan White. He is my hero. He had it a lot harder than me. He could not even go to school like a regular kid, and people were afraid to be around him. Sometimes people are still scared of people with HIV, and that is why it is important for them to know we are just regular people who want to do regular things but who have to take medicine to keep us healthy. I got to meet Ryan White's

mother, and she said she was proud of me for all of the money I have raised.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/Jordan-M-HIV-20945-1566