

Press release – 21st February 2011

Actress Emma Rigby endorses Interserve's Bike America challenge

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Emma Rigby with Andrew Lawrence

Former Hollyoaks actress Emma Rigby is endorsing a cycling challenge across America for charity. The ride, over three weeks in April, is being undertaken by 25 year old Barclays Bank worker Andrew Lawrence, from Newcastle.

Emma, whose latest film *Suicide Kids*, is due out in the same month as the ride takes place, is impressed with Andrew's efforts for the charity.

"This is a huge task that Andrew is undertaking," says Emma. "To cycle from California to New York in under three weeks is a daunting prospect and I am full of admiration for what he is doing. As one of Interserve's advocates, I know that the money he is hoping to raise will be well used by the charity for its amazing work in Asia and the Arab World."

Emma, who won the female soap actress of the year award in 2008 for her portrayal of anorexic Hannah Ashworth in the drama, headed up Interserve's Step into Justice campaign in 2009, which focused on its work with the homeless, the hungry and the thirsty.

Andrew got to hear of this work when his employers, Barclays Bank, hosted the conclusion of a Walk for Justice from Liverpool to London (which was part of the campaign) at its flagship Piccadilly Circus branch. He admits to be impressed with what he heard on that day in July 2009.

"I was bowled over when I heard charity personnel and MPs alike explaining about some of the work that the charity does in developing countries. Selfless and sacrificial, Interserve has some amazing workers in Asia and the Middle East and I just felt prompted to do my little bit in whatever way I could."

That little bit has turned out to be a major challenge for Andrew, but he is determined to fulfil it.

"I'm 100% confident I will finish but I don't have much leeway," says Andrew. "If I have more than one day of headwinds or if there are any tornados on the plains it will make it difficult."

Emma, along with many of the charity's supporters, will be cheering Andrew on from the sidelines but she encourages anyone who is inspired by this challenge to sponsor Andrew. All proceeds go towards the work of Interserve.

If anyone is interested in knowing more about Andrew's challenge or the charity, please visit Interserve's website at www.interserve.org.uk or go to Andrew's BmyCharity page at www.bmycharity.com/bikeamerica

From April 9th - May 2nd you can follow Andrew's progress online at www.interserve.org.uk/bikeamerica or on Twitter.

For further details on the bike ride or the projects that the money raised will go to support, please contact Linda Kirkland, Interserve Press and PR on 07779 305166 or e-mail her at linda@interserve.org.uk or Alastair McIver, Interserve's Head of Communications, through Linda.

Editor's note:

Interserve is a missions charity which has 19 offices around the world and works in over 35 countries in Asia and the Arab World. It's 850 workers are engaged in educational, development and medical work.