Roberson Will Race For Awareness

Tuesday, 03 June 2008

{audio}/images/stories/mp3/sean_roberson_30_may.mp3{/audio}

Mary Donaldson/KMXT

A Kodiak resident is gearing up for a race that will raise awareness for a genetic disorder that affects the nervous system, and only three Alaskans statewide. Mary Donaldson has more.

Twenty-year-old Sean Roberson grew up like any other normal kid in Kodiak. He attended Peterson Elementary School, Kodiak Middle School and Kodiak High School, and was really active with King Fishers swimming.

But, by the time he turned 17, he unexpectedly faced a major life challenge when he was diagnosed with Friedreich’s Ataxia, or “FA”. He says what FA is and that in his case, the symptoms are only mild.

(Sean 1 :21s “…in that way I am very lucky.”)

Everyday tasks most people take for granted, he struggles to perform. He now needs special equipment just to function. He says his day-to-day challenges are many.

(Sean 2 :25s “…all of that stuff.”)

However, being diagnosed with FA has not slowed down Roberson’s drive to succeed and be active. He has been training to ride in the 3rd annual Ride Ataxia, which is a race to raise awareness and research funds for the disorder. The race will begin in March in Sacramento, California and will end about 12 days later in Seattle. The race participants use a special bicycle called the Trice Q, which allows participants with FA to cycle independently. Roberson says the bike he will need to purchase has to be custom made for him overseas.

(Sean 5 :25s “…on and off the bike.”)

Roberson says that the race benefits an organization that does research on FA.

(Sean 4 :32s “…effects of ataxia.”)

He says his training is going to be a challenge between now and spring.

(Sean 6 :23s “…for the next ten months.”)

Those interested in helping Sean fund his dreams have several ways of donating. There is a fund set up at Wells Fargo Bank under the account called Friedreich’s Ataxia Fund or by donating airline miles to an account set up at US Travel. There will also be a 100 mile bike race in late August called the Kodiak Coastal Centurion race to benefit Roberson.

I’m Mary Donaldson

###

HOST TAG: People who are interested in participating in the Kodiak Coastal Centurion race can register in person at 58 degrees North between August 7-28 and online at Active.com after July 1st.