



# ROLLING to REBUILD

BY CAROLE LEIGH ENGBLOM

PHOTOGRAPHED BY EVAN URIBE '11

**“OLE ROLLER” CHRIS LOMEN '10 IS SKATING HIS WAY ACROSS THE EASTERN UNITED STATES ON A RECORD-SETTING QUEST TO HELP HAITIAN SCHOOLS.**



"A dollar buys a brick, and brick-by-brick is how we're going to do this," Chris Lomen '10 told KSTP TV before he hit the road.

Chris Lomen hasn't forgotten about Haiti. "It's been six months since the earthquake, and millions of Haitians in Port-au-Prince are still homeless and thousands of children have nowhere to attend school," says Lomen, who is rollerblading 4,000 miles. His goal: to raise \$100,000 for the nonprofit organization Outreach International. The money will help rebuild, restock, and revitalize up to ten schools in and around Port-au-Prince.

Averaging forty miles a day, Lomen left Stillwater, Minnesota, on June 29 and headed south toward St. Louis. By early August he had skated north through Vermont and New Hampshire to Bar Harbor, Maine, and began rollerblading down the East Coast, passing through New York City, Washington, D.C., and Boston. His trek will end in Key West, Florida, on September 30. Lomen says it's a mental test as much as a physical one.

"The biggest challenges have been the heat, bad roads, hills, and pesky dogs," he says. "Otherwise things have gone very well. We've met a lot of amazing people along the way, and every day brings new surprises and challenges."

Having studied abroad on St. Olaf's Global Semester and seeing "some of the worst poverty this world has to offer" in Egypt and India, Lomen is acutely aware of the importance of schools and education. "I really feel called to make a difference in Haiti. Education — getting the schools reopened — is the number one priority for setting up the long-term success and vitality of Haiti," he says. "I'm absolutely passionate about this cause, and I think it's the most important thing I've ever done. The rollerblading is simply a means to making this happen."

You can follow Lomen's remarkable 100-day journey on his blog at [RollingToRebuild.com](http://RollingToRebuild.com) and on Facebook. 🐾