Leader without borders

**Name:** Sung Jun Ma  
**Major:** Applied Mathematics  
**Year:** Junior  
**Hometown:** Seoul, South Korea

**Inspired by those without voice:** “It was during a trip to Tanzania that I saw a rural school, and the children were studying in the poorest conditions I had ever seen. It was then that I thought, ‘How can I use my resources to make a difference?’”

**Two passions, one goal:** “It is exciting to use math in predicting behaviors in cancer research. I am bringing my two passions — mathematics and cancer research — together for my medical research career.”

**Pursuing a vision:** “While volunteering in Kenya to support HIV campaigns, I noticed HIV orphans hardly receive education. When I came back to Purdue, I shared my vision of founding an international public health organization. I wanted to help poor tribes in Africa with their medical and educational needs. I persevered until a faculty member supported the idea and helped me establish the International Public Health Initiative.”

**Music to the ears:** “I believe the world is not the same without music. This is the reason we launched Violin Over Wabash, a student organization where we teach young Latino students to play the violin at no charge. We want them to have an appreciation for classical music so they can play in their high school orchestras.”

**Overcoming challenge:** “When your dreams are not well-supported you could easily give up — or you could persevere, succeed and change a life.”

**Favorite quote:** “A ship in harbor is safe, but that is not what ships are built for.” – J. Shedd

**Future plans:** “I want to be a physician scientist and climb Mount Everest.”
Links:

Violin Over Wabash
International Public Health Initiative

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