



For Immediate Release

Karen Acres Elementary Commemorates Visit From Oprah's All-Time Favorite Guest

Principal, Lara Justmann, displays artwork about Dr. Tererai Trent's remarkable life journey, as a catalyst to inspire students to work hard, accomplish goals, and achieve their dreams

URBANDALE, Iowa – February 18, 2013 – Supporting the [Urbandale Community School District](#) vision of being a district that brings learning to life for everyone, [Karen Acres Elementary School](#) displays artwork commemorating the noteworthy visit from Oprah's All-Time Favorite Guest, Dr. Tererai Trent. The painting is titled, "Break the Sky," and was created by Hannah Gebhart. The painting reflects Dr. Trent's remarkable life journey from a remote village in Zimbabwe to earning her Ph.D. in the United States.



1. "Break the Sky" by Hannah Gebhart

This past fall, in partnership with the [Chrysalis Foundation](#), students at Karen Acres Elementary were given the opportunity to listen to and ask questions about [Dr. Trent's extraordinary journey](#). It is a story from the most humble of beginnings: no running water or electricity, education being prohibited for girls, and little to no hope for the future. That grew into a story about overcoming circumstances, exceeding expectations, and achieving dreams that many thought all but impossible. Dr. Trent's message of perseverance, working hard to accomplish goals, and believing one's dreams are achievable, was embraced by both students and staff at Karen Acres Elementary.

Dr. Trent shared how a woman from Heifer International came to her village and told her that her dreams of coming to the United States and earning her Ph.D. were achievable. Dr. Trent's mother encouraged her to write down her dreams and told her if she believed in them she had the power to achieve them. Dr. Trent wrote down her dreams, placed them inside a piece of tin, and buried them under a rock. Year after year, she came back to revisit her dreams tucked safely inside the tin in order to check them off as she achieved each and every one.



2. Dr. Tererai Trent speaking to students at Karen Acres Elementary, Fall 2012.

Teachers and staff at Karen Acres Elementary also had students write down their dreams and gave each student a piece of tin to place them inside and take home. The tin was provided courtesy of Chrysalis and Bankers Trust.

"It was an honor to have Dr. Trent as our guest for the afternoon," said Lara Justmann, Principal, Karen Acres Elementary. "To think that we were chosen to hear the remarkable story of a woman who had endured so much in her own life was truly a genuine experience for our students and staff. The Chrysalis Foundation has done so much for our students this year. Our partnership with them is treasured and one that I hope will be ongoing."



3. Lara Justmann, Dr. Tererai Trent, and Hannah Oakie

Fourth and fifth grade girls from Karen Acres Elementary have the opportunity to participate in the Chrysalis After-School program. Students and facilitators take part in weekly meetings that provide enrichment, life skills, and leadership development.

"Chrysalis is proud to partner with the most effective organizations in the community to deliver education in resilience, connectedness, economic empowerment, and leadership development. Karen Acres Elementary serves as a tremendous partner in our Chrysalis After-School program and we were proud to grow the partnership to provide all of their students with such a meaningful opportunity for growth through Dr. Trent's visit," said Brooke Findley, Director of Policy & Programs, Chrysalis.

Dr. Trent's visit and the Chrysalis After-School program are just a few of the ways that Karen Acres Elementary continues to deliver innovative, meaningful, and inspiring learning opportunities for both students and staff. For the Karen Acres team believes that while it is fascinating to *learn* about a remarkable person, it is even more powerful to *meet* a remarkable person.

About Chrysalis Foundation

Chrysalis is a public foundation established in 1989 to address the needs of girls and women in the Greater Des Moines area. The Chrysalis Foundation is a leader in improving the community by assuring the well-being of girls and women through education, grant making, and philanthropy. Chrysalis promotes increased investment in girls and women, raises awareness about their issues and potential, and develops them as leaders and philanthropists. Chrysalis inspires girls and women to aspire to economic security, personal leadership, and equality every day of their lives. To learn more, visit: www.chrysalisfdn.org

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About Urbandale Community School District

The Urbandale Community School District includes portions of Des Moines and Urbandale, Iowa. The district serves over 3,900 students in six elementary schools, one middle school and one comprehensive high school. The Urbandale district supports an increasingly diverse student population where 42 different languages are spoken. Building on the existing foundation of excellence in education, Urbandale is transforming education throughout the district. By implementing innovative Quality/Continual Improvement tools and tactics that create learning environments that more fully engage, challenge, and motivate students, Urbandale is taking transformation from theory into practice. Urbandale prepares students for becoming life-long learners and is a school district that brings learning to life for everyone. To learn more, visit: www.urbandaleschools.com

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