



For Immediate Release

Urbandale Middle School And Optimist Club Launch Annual Literary Publication

An ambitious and talented group of Urbandale Middle School students collaborate with The Optimist Club of Urbandale to launch an annual literary and artistic works publication

URBANDALE, Iowa – June 11, 2013 – In partnership with [The Optimist Club of Urbandale](#), [Urbandale Middle School](#) students launched an annual publication, [truly U](#), celebrating the literary and artistic works of talented classmates. Matthew Onstot with the Optimist Club of Urbandale, Ben Hoffman, Seventh Grade Language Arts Teacher at UMS, and UMS students Maya Sims and Karin Sickles managed the project from concept to completion. Optimist Club members helped format and print the final publication, and sponsored an honorary breakfast on May 24, 2013, where students received achievement awards. Copies of the truly U publication will be distributed throughout the district, local community organizations, and in waiting rooms of medical offices and local businesses.

“truly U means a lot to me because I believe students need opportunities to showcase their artistic and/or writing abilities—not just to fellow classmates—but to the community,” said Hoffman. “Publishing creative writing is something very few people have the opportunity to do. Students learn the publication process as well as have the opportunity to create a portfolio and resume of work.”



Front: Ben Hoffman (UMS Teacher), Calvin Baethke, Varun Vepa, Blake Arntzen, Sera Veeder
Back: Chris Becker, Lorelei Chodur, Bailey Lamm, Elma (Kato) Mujcinovic, Alexandra (Aleka) Hickman, Carrie Cox, Matthew Onstot (Optimist Club)

This past fall, Onstot brought the idea of [truly U](#) to UMS Principal Dan Meyer with the hope of encouraging and showcasing the artistic and literary talents of UMS students. Meyer was in full support and Onstot began working with Hoffman and a group of UMS students in order to bring this

idea to life. A multitude of submissions were received from UMS students with a total of 13 being selected for publication.

"We are very excited about releasing the first truly U publication," said Onstot. "At The Optimist Club of Urbandale, our motto is 'Bringing Out the Best in Kids' and this is a good example of our group accomplishing that. The real credit goes to the kids of the Urbandale Middle School. Their hard work makes this publication possible and we look forward to continuing publishing truly U for many years to come."

The development of the annual truly U publication closely aligns with the district's focus on transforming education through the use of [Quality learning](#) practices. Quality learning is about the continual improvement of all learners in the system and redesigning learning environments to become more purposeful, relevant, and inspiring. Urbandale staff, teachers, and administrators believe in the inherent potential of all students and work together in order to help students identify, develop, and embrace their full potential. One student embracing her or his potential has the unspoken power of helping others embrace and believe in their own. It is this type of contagious learning environment—an environment built on 'I can' and 'you can'—that is at the core of Urbandale's vision to teach all and to reach all.

About The Optimist Club of Urbandale

The Optimist Club of Urbandale is a group of people in the community who come together to conduct projects that will enhance the lives of children of all age groups. The parent organization, Optimist International, is an association of more than 2,900 Optimist Clubs around the world dedicated to "Bringing Out the Best in Kids." Adult volunteers join Optimist Clubs to conduct positive service projects in their communities aimed at providing a helping hand to youth. With their upbeat attitude, Optimist Club members help empower young people to be the best they can be. Each Optimist Club determines the needs of the young people in its community and conducts programs to meet those needs. Every year, Optimists conduct 65,000 service projects and serve well over six million young people. To learn more, visit: www.urbandaleoptimists.org

About Urbandale Community School District

The Urbandale Community School District includes portions of Des Moines and Urbandale, Iowa. The district serves over 4,000 students in six elementary schools, one middle school, and one comprehensive high school. The Urbandale district supports an increasingly diverse student population where 50 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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