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Ideas to Inspire™ Premieres “What You See” Music Video Created from a true adolescent voice with its early wisdom

Casper WY, May 1 2015

Inda Eaton has wrapped up production of "What You See," an Ideas to Inspire™ (i2i™) music video project featuring sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students at Woods Learning Center in Casper, Wyo.

"I couldn't stop crying when I heard 'What You See' for the first time," Inda said. "It hit me on so many levels -- the words, the music and the true raw adolescent voice with its early wisdom not wanting to be marginalized."

The video and two others -- University Park's "[Daydreaming](#)," and Oregon Trail's "[Bold Changes](#)" -- will be screened along with live performances on Thursday, May 7, at the 4th Annual i2i™ Story Fest & Exhibition at the National Historic Trails and Interpretive Center from 9am-2pm.

This is latest production by [Inda and i2i™](#) for the Natrona County School District's Discover Program, involving bandmates Jeffrey Smith (percussionist/drummer) and B. Rehm-Gerdes (sound engineer/guitar player), and project coordinator Amanda Sutton, who teaches at Woods. The theme for the 2014-15 school year is "[Innovation](#)." Earlier projects [are here](#).

"Innovation is a tough concept -- I had to look up definitions throughout each writing session," Inda said. "The Woods students zeroed in on the idea that it takes energy to innovate, and the concept of energy took us in all kinds of directions. Just when you thought we were headed for a wind-turbine-in-Evansville-will-change-the-world tune, the students went in a different direction when asked about their personal challenges and the kind of energy it takes to deal with their lives. The floodgates opened and we were able to find their authentic voice to tell the story. "

The Woods students and the fifth-graders at University Park and Oregon Trail schools were coached in writing, exploring, rehearsing, recording and producing a rock song during classroom sessions in September, November, January and February.

Seth Felbeck, a seventh-grader at Woods, said the experience filled him with compassion, pride and a strong sense of community:

"As we wrote the song I definitely became more connected to my fellow students. I started to understand their problems and their situation. I think that this project has helped us come over barriers that were once blocking our path," he said. "It's a great gift that Inda gave us and I hope that many other schools will be able to have the same experience that we did. And for those who are lost in life, what you see is not all there is."

Edited by Inda, with videography by Sutton and Smith, the videos document the students' connections with the accomplished musicians and their collaborations with one another on the songs.

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"It gives them an opportunity to really show us what they can do without us putting them in a box and telling them what to do," Sutton said. For example, the Woods' eighth-graders changed up the lyrics after earlier versions felt too trite.

"We got to actually create a song with professional help and professional technology," said eighth-grader Siri Ullery. "This experience was also enriching since we got to see the song transform."

Carl Jones of CJ Sound in Casper provided instruments for hands-on, rock-instrument introduction, but several of the students -- among them cellist Alexis DePaolo, a Woods eighth-grader whose solo is featured on "What You See" -- played their own.

Woods students said they wanted to find meaning in the music, but the video shows how Inda, Smith and Rehm-Gerdes challenged them in other ways.

Woods eighth-grader Kleo Vlastos described the experience as "life changing."

"It's taught me the importance of professionalism, versatility, and cooperation," she said. "I believe that every student was able to take something away from this project, whether or not they could see themselves working in the music industry. It is something I am proud to say I was a part of."

Students at University Park found innovations in percussion -- thumping chairs and drumming on notebooks, and creating and recording beats from other everyday objects.

At Oregon Trail, the fifth-grade class based its music project on "duct-tape stories," the idea that nothing is impossible and that there's a work-around for all issues.

Ideas to Inspire™ (i2i™) explores inspiration, songwriting and self expression through programs, workshops, individual instruction and public events. All programs promote curiosity and culminate with a creative project, each one an authentic adventure from start to finish. While we utilize social media and technology to develop, communicate and share our ideas – we are inspired by hands-on, brick-and-mortar, human interaction and community connections.

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