

March 26, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

Recently, Karen Kain School of the Arts had the privilege of working with Sunnie McFadden-Curtis to showcase her program. The program is "The Ripple Effect" a performance piece to help educate and facilitate dialogue between all the players involved in bullying.

Sunnie worked with a heterogeneous group of 18 students, during five lunch hours, to learn and rehearse this multimedia piece. Together they rehearsed 14 vignettes written by Sunnie. From the moment she began to work with these students the mood was electrifying. The students were completely engaged due to the subject content and their respect for Sunnie. Each one of them walked away from this project feeling very connected to each other and the issue.

On performance day the students entered the gymnasium full of energy and questions. As soon as the presentation began you could hear a pin drop. Their eyes and ears followed and took in every detail. The entire school body was captivated. Sighs of empathy echoed the room. Myself along with other adults in the room filled up with tears and were deeply touched by the message and the positive reaction of the students.

The 18 student actors were so proud that they were able to model the rest of the students in the school and what it is like to be swept up in the course of a day by the act of bullying and how it affects lives immediately and in the long term. Discussions that followed were insightful, productive and enlightening. This experience has motivated both the staff and students to develop a very real action plan that challenges us to be pro active rather than reactive. But, most of all it is a huge reminder that we need to work tirelessly on making our school a safe and nurturing environment.

The success of this program is the direct result of Sunnie's passion and commitment to this very real and dangerous issue. This was a wonderful partnership between the school and a community member that enriched not only the educational experience of students, but also the life our community.

Sincerely,



Beverly Bonk  
Chairperson,  
Karen Kain School of the Arts

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