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Program Guidebook

2020-2021

**September, 2020**

Dear Principal and Teachers:

Thank you for your interest in **They Made It…So Can I, The 5th Grade Speakers Series.**  Do you remember someone saying something inspiring to you that you never forgot? Many of these positive motivating comments have stayed with us all and helped us to accomplish our lifelong passions and goals.

**They Made It…So Can I, The 5th Grade Speakers Series** creates timeless memories of success stories through diverse speaker presentations so that 5th graders will carry the seeds of empowerment to middle school and beyond, always believing if 'They Made It…So Can I'.

Five to ten speakers will visit your entire 5th grade class from November, 2020 through May, 2021. Often times we will split the boys and girls giving them individual speakers. If there are specific classroom themes or areas of interest we will attempt to seek the appropriate speakers for your students.

A writing expression contest is held each May. Students answer the question who was your most memorable speaker and why. An optional learning excursion is available to visit an urban farm, business, and a college, a non-profit or other appropriate venue. *All transportation costs, chaperones and permission slips will be the responsibility of the school.* We look forward to inspiring your students with the real life stories of our speakers.

**Next Steps:**

1. Review the booklet
2. Initial Meeting with Principal and Teachers
3. Please provide the following documents.

-Principal/Teacher Contact Sheet with **Principal Authorization**  
-Student Fall Survey  
-Media Release Form

**Please mail to:** They Made It….So Can I, P.O. Box 260906, Mattapan, MA 02126

Please contact, Patricia E. Spence at 617-282-9055 or at [theymadeit@comcast.net](mailto:theymadeit@comcast.net) with additional questions. *The program commences upon completion of the above steps.*

Enthusiastically,

Patricia E. Spence  
Founder

## Program Overview

**Mission:**

They Made It…So Can I, The 5th Grade Speakers Series creates timeless memories of success stories through diverse speaker presentations so that 5th graders will carry the seeds of empowerment to middle school and beyond, always believing if ‘They Made It…So Can I’.

**Background:**

The program was born out of a need to motivate a particularly tough 5th grade class at the F.D. Roosevelt School in 2004. By the 2nd year the two 5th grade teachers requested the continuation of speakers visits. The F.D Roosevelt School hosted the pilot program with 6 speakers presenting between October through May followed by a learning excursion. A spring Writing Expression Contest was added as the program expanded.

The program inspires fifth graders in Boston area schools by bringing successful people into their classrooms to tell their personal stories. This simple exposure to the possibility of different career paths has a significant impact on a young person’s life.

**Program:**Over 70 inspiring speakers tell their personal stories to 5th grade classes in Boston area schools over the course of the academic year. In the spring our 5th graders experience learning excursions to local businesses and an end of year writing expression contest with a celebration of 3 winners per school.

Nothing becomes impossible after hearing the real life personal stories of the speakers. No matter what the aspiration of the student, they learn over the course of the year that their dreams can come true as they witness diverse speakers who have overcome great adversity in their lives and are now successful in their professions.

By an adult starting with their 5th grade story students find an automatic bond and connection with the speaker. The students also realize that their family situation may not be unique or perhaps the low grade they achieved also happened to the speaker. Many of our speakers have relayed stories of great success and diversity in middle and high school. How the speaker navigated the twists and turns of their life leaves an imprint on our students.

Students can appreciate why they learn math and writing and why positive attitudes, faith, honesty and determination are all essential parts of the road map to ultimate success. The speakers are the real life examples that if They Made It…So can every 5th grader.

**Past Schools:**

Over 13 schools have participated over the last 10 years; such as, the Grew School, Mason School, Epiphany School, Mother Caroline Academy & Education Center, Holmes School, Higginson School, Roosevelt School, Ellis School, Young Achievers Science and Math K-8 School, Winthrop School, Hennigan School, Haley School, Chittuck School and the Kenny School.

**League of Extraordinary Friends:**

The League is comprised of over 100 speakers; engineers, artists, lawyers, neurosurgeons, magicians, bankers, presidents, accountants and more. Our speakers are the super heroes of the program imparting their life lessons to our 5th grade students.

**Speakers:**

Over 100 speakers tell their personal stories from when they were in 5th grade up to the present. Speakers receive a brief survey from each child regarding their aspirations and a thank you letter after their visit.

**Past Learning Excursions:** Spring

New England Patriots, Hilton Boston/Woburn, Boston Celtics, Red Sox and Woburn Foreign Motors, Freedom Trail

**Writing Expression Contest:** Spring 2021

Each spring our students answer the question who was your most memorable speaker and why. Top students are selected from each school to receive recognition and awards. Our awards (luncheon) ceremony will be held offsite from 10:30am to 1:30pm on Monday, June 8th.

**New Location for Event: Microsoft Headquarters in Cambridge**

**Partnerships:**

Brown Rudnick, AMA Doctors Back to School program, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Children’s Museum, Boston Police Department, Shady Hill School Teacher Training Course, Urban League of Eastern Mass., Woburn Foreign Motors, One United Bank, Pyramid Builders, Codman Square Health Center, The Boston Globe, Dunkin’ Donuts, Mass. State Troopers, Suffolk County Sherriff’s Department, Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office and more.

**‘When I heard we weren’t going bowling at assembly I was steaming mad…but when you came to do your speech you blew me away and trust me no one can ever blow me away like you did.’ -5th Grader**

Past Principal Teacher Evaluations & Student Comments

**Student Comments:**

“Your words made me think that I want to own my own scientist corporation, but before I used to have doubt but now I am 100% sure I can make my dream come true and it is all because of you.”

“What I want to be when I grow up is a detective, so I can find my mother…”

“Your words inspired my thoughts about becoming an engineer…I’m going…to try harder to accomplish my dream. You had a hard time as a kid and our times are easier. That is why I’ll try harder.”

“I learned how you were once poor but now you got through your hard times and got something better. Like you have to choose what you want to be and try it and always have a backup plan on what other kind of job you want if it does not work out with your first job.”

**Principal Comment:**

“As a person who came from difficult circumstances, growing up in a project and having a child at sixteen, I know from personal experience that often it is “outside folks” who tell us who we really are and what/who we can really become. They help us to dream and achieve. I thank the memories of those “outside folks” in my life and I thank you for finding and continuing to find folks like that for our fifth graders.”

-Dr. Mary Daniels Retired Principal, Roosevelt School

## Program Checklist

□ **Initial Teacher Packet** Due 9/30/20

-Principal/Teacher Contact Sheet   
-Student Fall Survey  
-Media Release Form

□ **Speakers** November 2020 through May 2021.

□ **Thank You Notes** are required within 2 weeks of a speaker’s

visit. Notes may be handwritten or typed. Mail the originals and **one copy for our records** to They Made It… So Can I.

We will mail the originals to the speakers.

**Mail To:**

They Made It…So Can I

P.O. Box 260906

Mattapan, MA 02126

□ **Writing Expression Contest** May 19, 2021

□ **Writing Expression Contest**Luncheon & Awards   
CeremonyJune 7, 2021

□ Optional **Learning Excursions** Spring, 2021

□ **Surveys**

-Principal Survey June 23, 2021  
 -Teacher Survey June 23, 2021  
 -Student Survey June 11, 2021

(Student Certificates will be disseminated upon completion of

all spring surveys).

□ **Closing awards**: Students   
receive a certificate and gift. June 16-18, 2021

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| SURVEYS & Evaluations 2019-2020 | | **Due Date** |
| **Student Fall Survey**  **Photo/Media Release Form** | Required prior to the start of the program  Parent signature required | **9/30/20**  **9/30/20** |
| **Teacher/Principal Contact Sheet** | Required prior to the start of the program | **9/30/20** |
| **Student Spring Evaluation** | Evaluation of speakers will be provided after the last booked speaker. | **6/11/21** |
| **Principal/Teacher Survey** | Required prior to the end of the program. | **6/23/21** |
| **Spring Essay Awards Contest** | Essays Due Thursday, May 20, 2021  Awards Ceremony Monday, June 7, 2021 | **Essays Due 5/19/21** |
| **Speakers Retreat** | Teachers and Principals are invited to our  Annual Speakers Retreat | **TBA** |
| **Interim Evaluations** | There may be interim evaluations throughout the year used for tracking purposes. | **TBD** |

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| Principal/Teacher Contact sheet & Survey | | | | | | | **FALL 2020** | | |
| School Name | | | Tel. # | | | Fax # | | | |
| Principal Name | Date | | | | | | |  | |
| Key Contact | | | Cell # | | | | | | |
| Email | | | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | | | |
| **5TH Grade Teachers** | | | | | | | | | |
| Name | | | Cell Tel. # | | | | | | |
| Name | | | Cell Tel. # | | | | | | |
| Name | | | Cell Tel. # | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | | | |
| **5TH Grade Class** | | | | | | | | | |
| Total # of 5th graders | | # of Girls | # of Boys | |  | | | | |
| How would you describe this year’s 5th grade class?  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | | | | | | | |
| What themes are you interested in exploring with your 5th graders?  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | | | | | | | |
| What types of speakers would you like this year?  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | | | | | | | |
| What is the **best day** and **time of day** for a speaker visit? (Feel free to give multiple times)  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  *\*We will attempt to consistently book speakers during the times that you give us.* | | | | | | | | | |
| How many speakers are you interested in having during the course of the year? | | | |  | | | | | |
| Will your students participate in the May **Writing Expression** contest? | | | | ☐ Yes | | | | | ☐ No |
| Would you be interested in a **possible** learning excursion? | | | | ☐ Yes | | | | | ☐ No |
|  | | | | | | | | | |
| **Thank you notes** will be required by all students within 2 weeks of the speaker’s visit. There will be an end of year survey for all students, teachers and principals. | | | | | | | | | |
| **Principal Signature** | | | | **Date** | | | | | |

PO Box 260906, Milton, MA 02186 617-282-9055

## Speakers: League of Extraordinary Friends

The Super Heroes of the They Made It…So Can I

Over 100 speakers have inspired 5th grade students over the course of 10 years and 12 Boston area schools.

Nothing becomes impossible after sharing the real life personal stories of our speakers as they tell their stories from when they were in 5th grade to the present.

No matter the aspiration of the student, they learn over the course of the year that their dreams can come true as they witness speakers who have overcome great diversity in their lives and are now successful in their professions.

**Types of industries represented:**

Engineer, Surgeon, Doctor, Attorney, CEO, Architect, Magician, Entrepreneur, Graphic Designer, Musician, Singer, Artist, Teacher, Psychologist, Coach, Accountant, Radio Personality, Police Officer, Firefighter, FBI Agent, Barber, College Professor, Sales Representative, Vice President

**Speaker Format:** 45 minutes to 1 Hour

Speakers will arrive a few minutes before each program. The talk will last for approximately **15 to 20 minutes**. Speakers may field questions during or wait until the end of their talk.

Questions and discussion will continue along with any special role plays or presentations that the speaker may have.

\*Please note a magician may do magic. A musician may sing song. An entrepreneur might have a role-playing exercise regarding starting a business.

**Please alert your office, the speaker may call for directions.**

**Cancellations:** Due to the professions and demands of some of our speakers there may be occasional last minute cancellations. We will try to reschedule any cancellations as time permits.

**League of Extraordinary Friends** Thank you to all of our past, present and future speakers

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| --- | --- |
| **Arthur Bowman, M.D.**  **Asst. US Attorney Shelby Wright**  **Superintendent-In-Chief Gross** **Teri Williams**  **Deputy Superintendent Harris**  **Harold Sparrow**  **Marc H. Germain**  **Troy Garron**  **Thomas J. Hayes**  **Jose Umana**  **Charles Clemons**  **Darryl Owens**  **Alice A. Tolbert Coombs, M.D. John Bonaparte**  **Jimmy Myers**  **Jesse L. Scott, III**  **Milca Matos  Suzette Martinez Standring  Ayele Shakur, M. Ed.  Lisa Owens  Michelle Miller  Rashad McPherson  Damian Smith Festus Adelabu  Kim Budd-Thompson  Tessil Collins  Rob Connor  Hussein Dayib DA Daniel F. Conley  Karen Eutemey  Peter Barrant, M.D.  Naomi Thompson** **Superintendent-In Chief Gross Benjamin Welch Bruce Shaw Monica Cafaro Superintendent-In-Chief**  **William G. Gross District Attorney Dan Conley** | **George N. Martell Lura Smith Stephen H. Johnson, MD,FACS,PC Juan R. Ortega-Barnett, M.D.****Linda M. Davidson** **Anthony Price** **Darnell  L. Williams Dr. Jeannette Callahan Idalia Flores Omar G. Reid Psy.D. Timothy G. Benson, M.D. Reverend Atu White Yolanda Lenzy-White, M.D. MPH Janine Fondon Michele Courton Brown Kenneth H. Still Sherriff Steven Tompkins Neil Osborne Tiffany Chenault, Ph.D. Yolanda M. Hardy, Pharm.D Adam Payne Fern Cunningham Desiree Ivey Audrey C. Marshall, M.D. Andres McKenzie Pamela Pleasants George A. Russell Vanessa Rosado Jass Stewart Richard Taylor  Ken Grooms**  **Gloria Villegas-Cardoza**  **Pat Demling**  **Derek Fowler**  **Sandy Middlebrooks Olivia Moorehead–Slaughter, Ph.D.**  **Rosaline Lowe Shady Hill School TTC**  **Krystal P. Banfield Ed.D.** |

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## Thank You Notes – Due 2 weeks after EACH speaker presentation

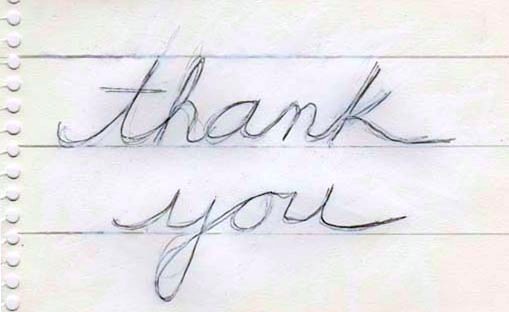
Every student is required to write a thank you note to each speaker.

The notes can be hand written or typed. The length of the note can vary depending on the ability of the student.

IMPORTANT: Mail original thank notes and one complete copy to They Made It..So Can I **2 weeks** after the speaker date. We will mail the originals to the speakers.

Please provide a legible copy of all thank you notes.

Thank you notes are a crucial part of the tracking and measurement process for the program.



School Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Class:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**They Made It…So Can I, The 5th Grade Speakers Series (2020-2021)**

## Student Photo/Media Release Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, give permission for **They Made It…So Can I**, to photograph, audiotape and/or videotape, interview, exhibit written work and to use his/her name in association with these media. I understand that these forms of media may be used in newsletters, press releases, website, media presentations, newsletters and marketing.

I release **They Made It…So Can I**, staff and speakers from any claims arising out of my son/daughter’s appearance or participation in this program.

Child’s Name:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## Writing Expression Contest-2021

**Requirements:**

* Essays should be no more than 250 words (minimum 100)

**Topic:**

* What speaker has inspired you the most and why?

**Contest Rules:**

* DEADLINE: All essays must be in by **May 19, 2021**
* Submissions are from any 5th grade student participating in They Made It…So Can I, The 5th Grade Speakers Series.
* Essays submitted for consideration must be original work and must be prepared by only one author. (Typed or handwritten essays will be accepted)

**Judges:**

* Three community judges.

**Prizes:**

* The top three students (winners) from each school will participate in the awards ceremony to be held offsite on   
  Monday June 7, 2021.

Please mail entries to:  
  
**They Made It…So Can I,   
The 5th Grade Speakers Series**

P.O. Box 260906

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