‘Freedom Writer’ Erin Gruwell to visit SCUSD high school TODAY

Her story inspired blockbuster movie starring Hillary Swank

WHAT: Erin Gruwell, the Southern California teacher whose work with at-risk teens inspired the movie “Freedom Writers” will speak to students at Health Professions High School TODAY (Thursday, December 6).

In 1994, Gruwell began teaching at Woodrow Wilson High School in Long Beach. She was assigned to work with 150 at-risk students and strongly believed that through education they could overcome even the worst kinds of adversity. Four years later all 150 students, dubbed the Freedom Writers, graduated from high school. The students’ book, “The Freedom Writers Diary,” became a best-seller and the subject of a movie.

Today, Gruwell teaches teachers around the country how to implement her lesson plans in their classrooms through the Freedom Writers Foundation, which she founded. Health Professions High School teachers have employed the lessons to great success.

Following her presentation to students, Gruwell will answer questions and sign books.

WHEN: TODAY (Thursday, December 6), from 1:30 p.m. to about 2:45 p.m.
WHERE: Health Professions High School
451 McClatchy Way, Sacramento CA 95818

WHY: Health Professions High School is one of five small SCUSD high schools dedicated to putting students on the pathway to success by linking them to fast-growing job sectors. Opened in 2005, Health Professions has the second highest college enrollment rate for graduates in all of SCUSD (only West Campus is higher) and the fourth highest rate of students who graduate meeting all University of California requirements. Health care themes are integrated throughout the curriculum and students present projects to community panels twice a year. Students begin college coursework while in high school. Health Professions also provides extensive workplace learning with its many partners, including UC Davis, Sacramento State, Sutter Health, Shriner’s Hospital and Sacramento City College.

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