

DAREarts releases cards made by students

DAREarts has announced the roll-out of the latest greeting cards made by local area students.

These iceberg-themed cards are inspired by renowned painter Cory Trépanier of Caledon. Earlier this year, Trépanier made a special video to promote the DARE2Draw program, which explains the role of local kids to help others and why it's necessary to pay attention to Canada's north and the people who live there.

The greeting card making campaign raises funding and awareness for DAREarts' Aboriginal First Roots Program, which helps to close the opportunity gap between First Nations students and the rest of Canada through the arts. The program performs extended visits which explore all the arts, in consultation with community Elders, teachers, parents and arts community members in multi-disciplined arts projects.

“The child is the epicenter of DAREarts' community engagement,” Aboriginal artist Cathy Elliott, one of the artists involved both in the North and Southern Ontario card making workshops, explained. “The creative shockwaves radiate, affecting parents, siblings and the world beyond through their showcases, social media and the artworks themselves.”

The waves also affect the students in Southern Ontario, through local card creation workshops in participation with the local schools and school boards. Other artists include Susan Huntley and Aboriginal artists Gloria Hope and Zoe Maxwell.

The local kids were not only instructed in the painting and drawing of the iceberg-themed cards, they were exposed to the hard economics and infrastructural choices that occur in the communities of the children they are helping.

“Unfortunately, potable water, food and health take precedence over the arts and other confidence building activities,” Elliott stressed. “Your contribution helps Aboriginal children find their own passion and helps close the opportunity gap that exists in their lives.”

Students in Southern Ontario are learning about children their own age in the North, and create beautiful reflections through their cards. Teachers are welcoming the card program as a way of building communities within the classroom. They see their students responding to the program with questions and insights about geography, zoology, weather, climate change, economics, social studies and philanthropy. Some teachers are taking the program further, by tying in literacy through describing the work they are doing, as well as learning songs that the Aboriginal students wrote in the First Roots Program.

Schools involved so far in DARE2draw include Caledon East Public School, Belfountain Public School and Palgrave Public School. Original cards and card sets are available in Orangeville through Booklore, Dufferin County Museum, Theatre Orangeville upper level and in Alton Mills. Original Cards are \$5, five Original Cards for \$20 and printed box sets for \$20.

To order online, go to www.darearts.com/dare2draw.shtml