

News

Paraprofessional inspired by NISO concert to pen children's book

Spaulding working on more books

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Books have served as a way for Stacia Spaulding to gain insight into the thoughts and feelings of other people.

The Sioux Center resident hopes to provide others with a glimpse into the lives of people who, although different, still have hopes and dreams through her children's book, titled "Ellie Can Do Anything!"

Twenty-one-year-old Spaulding has loved reading and writing since she was in elementary school.

As a paraprofessional at Kinsey Elementary School, she has a heart for those who need a helping hand and some extra attention and has been reading more young adult books and materials targeting youths.

She's impressed with the topics books with youth and young adults in mind can cover, such as disabilities, poverty or divorce. One of her favorite books in this vein is "The Reason I Jump." Written by a 13-year-old boy with autism, the author answers

questions people have about him and autism.

The inspiration for her own book came from a winter concert she attended in January 2018. Her father, Stan Spaulding, plays in the Northwest Iowa Symphony Orchestra. Spaulding took a notebook to the concert with her, as usual.

As she sat and listened to the music play, Spaulding came up with a character and began to think about how that character would visualize the music.

When the concert ended, she had the foundations for her first children's book.

In "Ellie Can Do Anything!" a little girl goes to an orchestra concert with her mother and falls in love with the music and begins to dream about becoming a violinist. As the book goes on, the reader finds out the girl is deaf.

"The message and theme of the book is that she can do anything," Spaulding said. "It doesn't matter if she's deaf or blind or had autism or cerebral palsy."

A friend and co-worker, Krista Van Bruggen, provided the illustrations for the book

following about three months of working together.

"Ellie Can Do Anything!" was published by WestBow Press on July 3, 2018.

Looking back on it all, Spaulding said writing the book was her favorite part of the whole process. It still doesn't seem real to her that she has a finished book that's available on multiple online stores such as Amazon, Walmart and Barnes & Noble.

But there is satisfaction in having finished such a project.

"It feels good because it feels like it's something God has wanted me to do," Spaulding said.

She has plans for more books, too.

One of the books she's working on is about the foster care system and immigration. The other deals with two characters, one with obsessive-compulsive disorder, or OCD, and the other, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD.

Spaulding has revised the latter book many times already and changed different parts, such as the main characters' ages.



Stacia Spaulding is proud to have completed a children's book, "Ellie Can Do Anything!" Sitting at a Northwest Iowa Symphony Orchestra concert inspired the book. The Sioux Center resident plans on writing more books. Photo by Eric Sandbulte

One thing Spaulding worries about is accuracy, so she has had the help of others with experience of ADHD, such as co-workers and a person with ADHD.

In addition to growing as a writer and completing more books, her goal with writing is to touch readers' lives and to share God's love for everyone through her books. She doesn't envision herself as writing in the Christian fic-

tion genre specifically, but she's not shying away from incorporating her faith into her writing.

With summer approaching, she's setting goals for herself to be more diligent about writing in her free time.

Family and friends have been supportive as she got her first book published and continues to work on new books. One of her cousins has even been a good resource for edit-

ing drafts.

Still early in the process for the book on foster care and immigration, she's doing research on those two systems and says she will be asking some friends for their perspectives on them.

"Some of the information is just baffling and hard to believe and heartbreaking," Spaulding said, "because it's not fiction — these are real statistics."