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KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

KPBSD Graduate Inspiration

Artist Tatiana Tucker, Nikiski-Middle High, Class of 2006

Soldotna, Alaska, April 14, 2020—Beginning with her early education in Alaska at Nikiski North Star Elementary, then Nikiski Middle-High School (2006), Tatiana graduated from Amherst College in 2010, and now lives in Washington. An artist, she’s the author and illustrator of *Stay-at-Home Hero*, a new children’s book in response to the coronavirus. She offers a free download PDF (and it is a coloring book) on her website www.TatianaTucker.com.

Advice she would offer to her younger self and students today during the 2020 global pandemic:
“Try to focus your nervous energy, your worried energy, your frustration energy into positive actions if you can. If you redirect those feelings and try to brighten someone else’s day, or make art, or support doctors and nurses, you will probably feel a bit better. Although school is important, do not stress too much about perfection right now. Everyone, including your teachers, know what a challenging time this is, and we are all giving each other a little bit of grace.”

Tatiana Tucker
 Nikiski Middle High School, Class of 2006

#GraduateInspiration

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KPBSD: ONE DISTRICT, FORTY-TWO DIVERSE SCHOOLS

The mission of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District is to empower all learners to positively shape their futures.
 ANCHOR POINT COOPER LANDING HOMER HOPE KACHEMAK SELO KENAI MOOSE PASS NANWALEK NIKISKI NIKOLAEVSK NINILCHIK PORT GRAHAM
 RAZDOLNA SELDOVIA SEWARD SOLDOTNA STERLING TUSTUMENA TYONEK VOZNESENKA

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Favorite Phrase

"Everything you are doing is okay!" I think this is a message a lot of people need to hear especially if they suffer from anxiety or perfectionism. There is so much pressure in today's world to always be achieving, to be the best, or to have already accomplished a whole laundry list of successes. We can often feel that if something is not already remarkable, we have failed, and that is simply not the case. Some of the most remarkable people I know did not embark on their life's pursuit until their 40s. It can take time to figure out what you want to be doing in life. The important thing is to make time for your passions and follow them where you can. Everything you are doing is okay, and everything you are is wonderful.

Inspirations

My mom and dad, or students in the school district might know them as Mrs. Boyle and Mr. Boyle. They have worked so hard to give me, and all of their kids, a great start in life full of the love of art, and the bravery to pursue your passions. They have always encouraged me: from building an art studio in my childhood closet, to helping to edit and process the illustrations for my new book, "Stay At Home Hero."

Celebrating teachers

My drama and debate teachers, Carla Jenness and Joe Rizzo, and my dance and science teacher Phil Morin really made my entire high school career. The amount of dedication and care these three individuals bring to teaching and to fostering the passions of their students is truly remarkable. They help make space for everyone to belong and have a sense of home and purpose in the school. The skills they have taught me have carried me through job interviews, college courses, and a lifelong love and pursuit of dance.

Play and fun

I love to go hiking and camping in the mountains of Washington where I now live, and whenever I am home visiting family in Alaska, a hike up Skyline is a must. I love to paint and dance!

Live your life

You have never missed your chance to follow your passions or live the life you want to lead. There is no shame to work in an unrelated field during high school or college or in the workforce, while following your passion in the evenings or weekends. There are many ways to make a difference in the world, and none of us is just one thing. I have worked for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Safeway, environmental nonprofits, science nonprofits, and as a commercial real estate appraiser before I decided to pursue art full time. So never be afraid to try new things, or to take a big leap into a new career. Volunteer for non-profits, practice your music, try to be kind to others and make the effort to understand where they are coming from, and go play in the woods.

Tatiana Tucker is the author and illustrator of the 2020 book *Stay-at-Home Hero*

- [Stay-at-Home Hero](#) book free download (tip: this PDF download is designed to be a coloring book!) Or, you can order it through Amazon.
- YouTube: Listen to the author tell about how she created the illustrations, and why she wrote *Stay-at-Home Hero* in response to COVID-19: <https://youtu.be/hYI7g38AtPO>

About the book: *Danny does not understand why his world has suddenly changed due to a strange new sickness people call Coronavirus. This gentle and informative book delves into all of Danny's new complicated feelings that range from boredom, anger and fear to hope and pride. Stay-at-home Hero is designed to provide parents and caregivers with a tool to discuss the Covid-19 crisis on a level even very young children can relate to. The book follows Danny's journey of discovery on how he can still be connected with his family and friends even though the social rules have changed. The book empowers children on how they can help; whether that means making a friend smile with a phone call or even just staying at home. Danny learns the many ways that we can all be stay-at-home heroes during this uncertain time.*

Visit her author, illustrator website at tatianatucker.com

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