The meaning of Success

Today was so rewarding, I had to share.

I was asked to give a speech at Emerson Junior High School with two other noteworthy amazing artists; (Tanya Kersey, producer, entertainer, and Founder of Hollywood Black Film Festival), and musical arranger and producer, Benjamin Wright who has worked with so many celebrities such as the Temptations, Gladys Knight, James Ingram, and Michael Jackson, just to name a few.)

This event was scheduled through the "History Makers", a National organization that acknowledges African American achievements through recorded video that is preserved in the Illinois State Library for archival public research. People can become educated by referencing African American achievers from all disciplines who have made significant contributions in their life.

Today's event celebrated the 10th Anniversary of the History Makers. So, they partnered with schools across the country to bring HistoryMakers into classrooms to give their own inspirational stories and express the importance of education. Truly humbled, I was invited to become a part of this event. 3 years ago, the History Makers recorded my life's testimony from a child that is documented within this organization. The History Makers placed me amongst major achievers!

Truthfully, I've never really thought of myself being placed in the same arena with household names like as Barack Obama and Maya Angelou who are also recorded in the History Makers. Especially as I continue to climb the ladder in my career always reaching for the next level of success; Looking up to so many talented designers and taste makers who have already achieved National acclaimed status of all Nationalities in the Interior Design Industry.

So, when I was asked to give a speech to 6th graders this morning, I had to really check myself on "the meaning of success". Alas, I may not be plastered in all the National magazines, yet (smile)! However, my work and background is noteworthy to many.

So, I dug deep within myself and wrote this speech. This is a segment I am sharing with you. Truly, I learned so much about myself talking to children on how to believe in themselves and how to really define success...

"Usually we define “success” as people that accomplish stellar lifetime achievements. Even though I have many accomplishments, I still consider myself an un-sung hero amongst "household name" achievers. However, I carry the passion and drive of the greatest, which is “key” to becoming successful. I continually pursue my goals not only because of my passion, but because I learned a very important thing: “Finish what you start”.

So many people lose their dreams because the hill is high, and the road is hard. They stop, turn around and go the shorter path. But, believe in your dreams and in yourself, and keep going. That's success, just staying the course!

In 6th grade, I dreamed. As an adult, I dream.
That’s what life is all about to me; always dreaming and reaching for our dreams, however big or small. Even though achieving them may not be as easy as we think, or even if we don’t achieve the dream, we can achieve the goal, and that is to do the best we can….and if we can have fun in the process, is that successful? Yes!

So, how do you create success in your life?

- It all starts with a dream
- Dream, and believe in your dreams and yourself
- Have fun in the process
- then, however big or however small…..finish what you start!

Will all of you be successful, in so many ways, yes!"

Sharing interior design with a classroom of eager students. If I can reach just one of them, that's true success!