



Chippewa grad creating film to combat school gun violence

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CLINTON TOWNSHIP — The prevalence of school-related violence in recent months has prompted a former Chippewa Valley High School graduate to fight back — with art.

Kevin Dimmer, 22, of Clinton Township, graduated in 2014 and pursued an acting and directing career at The Studios at Michigan in Southfield. When he graduated, he was able, via an agent, to do some work with rapper and celebrity Flava Flav.

Following that experience, he found that he enjoyed being behind the camera rather than in front of it. He created a short film called “Hope” — a nearly four-minute video that follows a group of female friends through their entertainment excursions. The video, which allows for the viewer to interpret the story, concludes with the group mourning near a grave site.

“It’s about gun violence in schools,” Dimmer said. “Everyone is shooting people. It’s a movie to stop the violence in this country.”

Although the short film doesn’t exactly say how one of the girls died, Dimmer said a feature-length film is currently in the works. He said that film will convey how the girl died from a school shooting, explaining how it happened and what can be done to stop such tragedies in the future.

“The friends don’t give up on hope,” he said. “They try to tell the government to ban assault weapons. ... I think this film could be a good message to people about real life and show Congress the real truth, like giving teachers guns when you try to teach kids to keep guns out of schools.”

Catie Grace Taylor, a 15-year-old sophomore at Chippewa Valley High School, is one of the main characters featured in the film by Dimmer. She and the other actresses are mourning the loss of a close friend due to violence.

Taylor said she received a casting call from Dimmer for “Hope” after having done a few acting gigs with him in the past. She also knows two of the other actresses through another one of Dimmer’s films.

The process for the movie has been interesting, Taylor said, as they filmed the short YouTube video first to promote the project and are now waiting on Dimmer to finish editing the script. She said the goal is to begin filming in April.

With the film focusing on everything from gun violence to bullying, Taylor said it hits home with her being a current high school student. She said she hopes students and parents can use the film to realize what is happening in schools around the country.

“Being in high school is tough as it is, but kids are also getting bullied every day and violence is happening,” Taylor said. “It makes me worried sometimes when I am in school. I hope the message gets across to a lot of people, and people can learn to love one another.”

Taylor began acting in kindergarten, but it wasn't until two years ago that she really got interested in pursuing movie roles and signed with an agent. She has also attended Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in western Michigan during the summer to hone her skills.

Taylor's long-term goal is to act on Broadway, a way to combine her love of acting and singing. Taylor has acted in school plays, but being in movies is a different experience than being on stage.

“On stage, you are just live and you have so much rehearsal time before you perform live,” Taylor said. “But in film, I just feel more excited. You have the ability to reset and do retakes, so it makes it easier than being on stage.”

Dimmer said he has already gotten positive affirmation from the film, which he hopes to complete by December and then pitch to various studios.

“I want to try to affect the way the gun laws are, and to show people you shouldn't really give up on what you want to change,” he said. “Don't give up on yourself and work hard and you can be changed.”

The film can be found on YouTube by searching “Kevin Dimmer hope.”