



March 24, 2016

Bass Clef Bliss: Terrence's Path: One Young Man's Journey Beyond Autism

This year, I had the good fortune to attend the 4th annual Profectum Conference on March 18th and 19th. The conference supports work done in the area of research, treatment and intervention for people with autism and other developmental special needs. This year the focus was on mind and body and the interconnections between the two.

On Saturday, they screened Bass Clef Bliss: Terrence's Path: One Young Man's Journey beyond Autism. This short film beautifully illustrates just what can happen when young people are allowed to grow into their passion. I had the pleasure of meeting Terrence and his mother who are remarkable people whose story will inspire anyone who has or knows a child or a youth with autism to feel hope and inspiration.

The story follows Terrence through photos and narration along his journey, one that culminates in autonomy, success and self-mastery. More than anything, the film shows just how much work, love, blood, sweat and tears it takes to ensure that these children have the same access and advantages to learn and to grow as any other. The words "I can't" or "I give up" are not spoken in this relationship.

With a smile that lights up every room, Terrence pursues his dream of becoming a professional jazz musician. The sheer will, determination and persistence that it takes to realize his dreams will bring tears to your eyes and a grin to your face. It takes great people to make great people. Those parents who spend hour after hour helping, teaching, waiting patiently for each step up and down are worthy of praise because the results of their dedication and devotion are evident in every note.

Whether it is music, art, writing, film, photography, graphic design, or any other skill, helping all young people find their bliss in life is the key for every phase of development. Each time I attend the Profectum conference, I am humbled by the changes, the potential and the achievements of these special people.

Wouldn't it be great if our mental health services stood simply for Developing Minds and Hearts? As we partner more and more with experts and parents and providers to help our people with unique needs, let's remember that at the end of the day, it really is all about the relationships we have and the ones we are able to make that lead to hope, wellness and recovery. I nominated the film for this year's Voice Awards.