

BROOKE ELLISON TO PRESENT MESSAGE OF HOPE AT 2005 KIDS IN ACTION YOUTH CONFERENCE

Brook Ellison, internationally known author, student, motivational speaker and subject of a motion picture, will share her message of hope with participants of the fifth annual Kids in Action Youth Conference. The conference is set for Friday, Dec. 2, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., on the campus of Farmingdale State University. The Long Island native will inspire middle school students with the story of how a tragic accident has enabled her to understand life and its most important parts.



BROOKE ELLISON

When Brooke says "hope," she means hope in a broad sense – its centrality in all of our lives and the integral role it plays in overcoming the obstacles that we all will face.

"I have done a considerable amount of research on the idea of hope, and I

have come to the conclusion that, although it is an important part of our lives, sometimes it needs to be encouraged or even instilled in us by people who surround us," says Brooke. "Sometimes, though, it takes a bit of bravery to accept the necessary help to ensure the presence of hope in the face of adversity. Just as much, sometimes it requires courage to believe in ourselves and to take a chance when adversity seems to be at its greatest."

Brooke explains that we all have to meet the responsibility of embracing hope and, even more so,

encouraging it when we see that it has been lost in others. It has only been through the hope she has about her life – the hope that has been encouraged by those around her – that has enabled her to do what she has done over the years. "Hope is critical to our survival, and that is the message I plan to give," she adds.

In September 1990, when she was 11 years old, Brooke was struck by a car while walking home from school. The accident left her paralyzed from the neck down and dependent on a ventilator to breathe. But, with her determination, and the help of her family, Brooke used her energy to pursue a positive future.

Brooke attended Harvard University, earning both an undergraduate and master's degree and currently is working on her doctorate at Stony Brook University. Her struggle with paralysis was the subject of "The Brooke Ellison Story," a 2004 TV movie directed by Christopher Reeve, himself a quadriplegic, who starred in four "Superman" films from 1978-1987.

In the event of snow on Dec. 2, the Youth Conference will be held one week later, on Friday, Dec. 9, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., at Farmingdale State University.

On the Inside

Companion lesson plans available
Win a private meeting with Brooke
Purchase Brooke's book

A 2005 KIDS IN ACTION YOUTH CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM IS ON PAGE 4. COMPLETE AND SUBMIT TODAY!

CHARACTER-EDUCATION LESSON PLANS COMPLEMENT BROOKE ELLISON PRESENTATION

Responding to the nation's increased emphasis on character education, Kids in Action is offering lesson plans to complement Brooke Ellison's participation in the Dec. 2 Youth Conference. A curriculum has been custom-designed by Allison McLaughlin and Diane Yager, teachers at West Hollow Middle School in the Half Hollow Hills District, to teach respect for fundamental traits of character: honesty, compassion, empathy, justice, courage and perseverance.

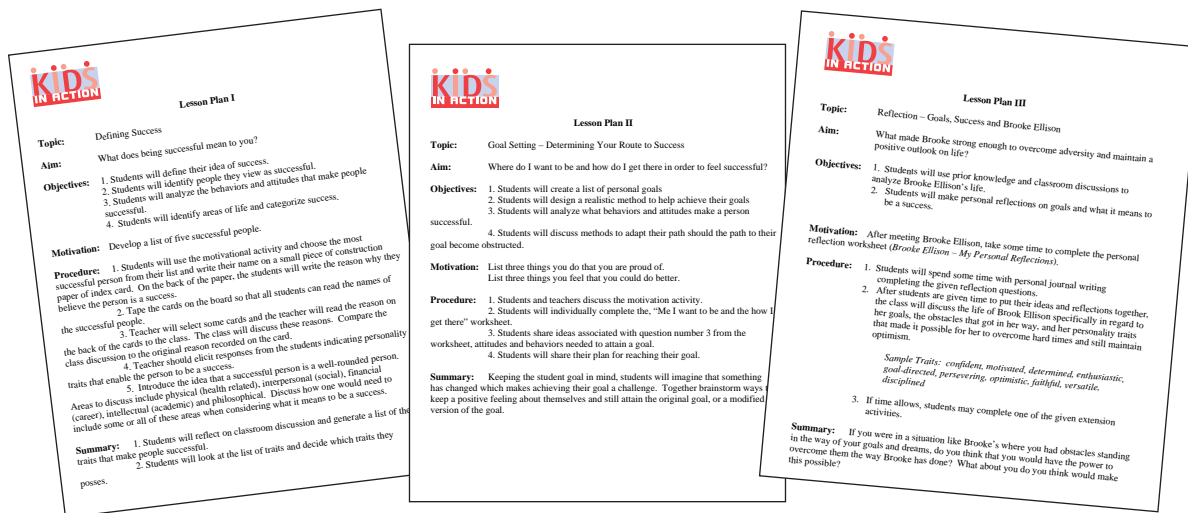


TEACHERS ALLISON McLAUGHLIN
AND DIANE YAGER

The plans address the challenge of providing youth with the self-esteem, stamina and support they need to survive, be successful and develop into strong, competent, caring and responsible citizens. They align with the New York state curriculum and encourage students to reflect on their own personalities and characteristics so that when meeting Brooke, students will have a greater respect for her, and will be better prepared for their own future challenges.

"Students should have a different idea of what it is to be successful – beyond athletes and entertainers," explain McLaughlin and Yager. "We seek to imbue them with respect for what non-celebrities can become."

Two plans are designed for in-school use prior to the Kids in Action Youth Conference: *Defining Success and Goal Setting – Determining Your Route to Success*. A third, *Reflection – Goals, Success and Brooke Ellison*, is intended for post-conference implementation.



Copies of the lesson plans are available from Kids in Action's
Michelle Dalpiaz: tel.: 631-425-2700; e-mail: kia@ourkidsinaction.org.

TEACHER INPUT SOUGHT

Kids in Action thanks West Hollow Middle School's Allison McLaughlin and Diane Yager for developing lesson plans to complement this year's Youth Conference, and invites other teachers to become active in helping make the conference experience more meaningful and more closely aligned with schools' needs. Contact Kids in Action's Michelle Dalpiaz: tel.: 631-425-2700; e-mail: kia@ourkidsinaction.org.

HAVE A PRIVATE MEETING WITH BROOKE ELLISON

Following this year's formal Kids in Action Youth Conference, the delegation from one attending school will have the chance to meet privately with Brooke Ellison. That group could be yours! This is an exclusive opportunity to speak with a young woman who has maintained a positive attitude towards life and has accomplished many of her goals including graduating from Harvard University and working towards her doctoral degree at Stony Brook University, despite unforeseeable challenges. In addition, Kids in Action will donate \$250 to the winning school's student government.

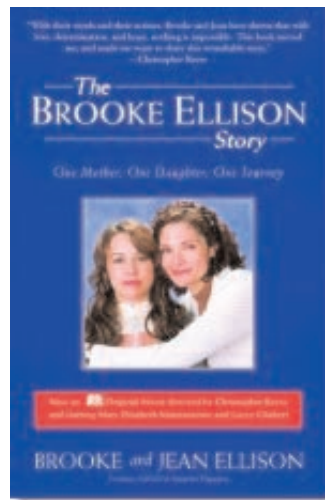
To become eligible, please complete the registration form that appears on page four, and return it to Kids in Action by Oct. 28. Students will also need to write an essay of 500 or fewer words addressing the following points:

- Identify a time in your life when you were faced with a new challenge.
- How were you able to be successful in attaining your goal?
- Explain what being successful means to you, and identify the traits within you that can help you achieve your goals.

The essay can be written as a group project or by an individual student. Essays will be judged on organization and mechanics, quality of information, clarity of thought and evidence of voice.

OWN AN AUTO-GRAPHED COPY OF BROOKE'S BOOK

"The Brooke Ellison Story" (Hyperion Books, 2004), written by Brooke and her mother Jean, tells of the miraculous journey that the pair undertook so that Brooke could achieve her goals, against all odds. The book is filled with optimism, confidence and inspiration. It is not just about one person, but about the heroics of a family. And it is not just about one extraordinary mother-daughter relationship, but about the special bond that exists between mothers and daughters everywhere.



This heartwarming story is being made available for direct purchase at the discounted price of \$11 per book. In addition, each copy ordered by the cut-off date will be personally inscribed by Brooke.

Teachers/Youth Conference advisors should e-mail Jean Ellison directly at jmellison@aol.com with an estimated order amount by Oct. 10. Schools should submit individual order forms with checks by Oct. 21.

Cartons of autographed books will be distributed to each school and placed on the appropriate buses before students leave the Youth Conference.

An order form is on page four.



WBLI radio personalities will be on hand to entertain the student "Ambassadors," joined by the station's cute, cuddly, cool mascot, the BLion.



MEET BROOKE ELLISON AT THE KIDS IN ACTION YOUTH CONFERENCE

Friday, Dec. 2, 2005 • 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Farmingdale State University

Yes, our school will send a delegation to the 2005 Kids in Action Youth Conference and our students would like be eligible to have a private meeting with Brooke Ellison. **Our 500-word essay is enclosed.**

Here's my contact information.

Name: _____ Title: _____

School: _____

Street: _____ City: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Number attending: _____ Handicapped: _____

Yes, we will participate in the essay competition.

No, please just register my school.

If any student has special requirements, please list below so we can plan accordingly:

Please complete and return this form with essay by Oct. 28, 2005 to:

Michelle Dalpiaz
Kids in Action
945 Walt Whitman Road
Melville, New York 11747
Tel.: (631) 425-2700
Fax: (631) 425-6335

PURCHASE 'THE BROOKE ELLISON STORY'

Autographed copies at the reduced price of \$11 each

Adult's or student's name

as you want it inscribed: _____

School: _____

Faculty member name and phone: _____

Complete one form for each book to be inscribed. Make checks for \$11 **payable to Jean Ellison.**

Submit each school's individual order forms and checks **together**, directly to:

Jean Ellison
P.O. Box 152
Setauket, NY 11733

PHOTOCOPY THESE REGISTRATION AND BOOK-PURCHASE FORMS AS NEEDED.

If you have questions, call Kids in Action (631) 425-2700