



DWIGHT SCHOOL

Igniting the spark of genius in every child

PERSONALIZED LEARNING • COMMUNITY • GLOBAL VISION

DWIGHT SCHOOL STUDENTS — INCLUDING AKASH CHOPRA, STAR OF “THE JUNGLE BOOK” NOW ON TOUR — RECORD SONG WITH TWO-TIME GRAMMY-AWARD WINNER MIKKEL ERIKSEN

Dwight Students Showcase Musical “Spark of Genius” with Songwriter of Ten Billboard Hot 100 Number-One Hits

New York, NY, September 20, 2013: Dwight School, a 141-year-old, independent IB World School located on Manhattan’s Upper West Side, ushered in the new academic year with an original song showcasing the School’s dedication to igniting the “spark of genius” in every child. Known worldwide for customizing the educational experience for each student, from preschool through grade 12, Dwight is ranked the #1 private school in New York City for the lowest faculty-to-student ratio of 1:4 by *The New York Observer*.

Nine Dwight students with a musical “spark of genius,” ranging in age from 9 to 16 and representing four countries, wrote the lyrics to “This Is Our Time” with performer Keith “Wildchild” Middleton of STOMP fame. The music was composed by two-time Grammy-Award-winning record producer and two-time ASCAP songwriter of the year Mikkel Eriksen, who has worked with such superstars as Beyoncé, Rihanna, Ne-Yo, and Katy Perry. Mr. Eriksen, who has written ten Billboard Hot 100 number-one hits, welcomed the students to Jay-Z’s Roc the Mic Studios to record the song.

“We are proud to offer our students unique opportunities that match their passions with real-world experiences such as this marvelous collaboration with musical powerhouses Mr. Eriksen and Mr. Middleton,” said Stephen Spahn, Chancellor of Dwight School. “The result is a highly creative song that showcases our students’ musical talents and Dwight’s unique spark of genius educational philosophy.”

One student — the youngest participant in creating the song — is fifth-grader Akash Chopra. Now age ten, Akash has the lead role of Mowgli in the world premiere of “The Jungle Book,” the current coproduction by Chicago’s Goodman Theatre and Boston’s Huntington Theater. After sold-out performances, Akash has received rave reviews and an equal measure of support from Dwight to pursue his “spark of genius” on stage. When Akash was first cast at the end of the last school year, his teachers began working with him and his on-the-road tutor to ensure that Akash could remain up to date with his academics while performing.

“When I got this role, my teachers were really excited and proud of me,” said Akash. “Everyone supported me and did everything they could to help me, so I would not miss out on my school work. My teachers were great, sent my assignments, and even Skyped while I was in the theater. My last fourth-grade project was to write a newspaper article and my teachers said that I could do it on ‘The Jungle Book,’ which was great as I was able to combine my stage work with my school work. Dwight has truly helped me and my spark of genius.”

“Our goal at Dwight is to customize the learning experience to meet the individual needs of our students,” said Dianne Drew, Head of Dwight School. “We couldn’t be more delighted to equip Akash with the flexibility and resources he needs to meet Dwight’s vigorous academic requirements while he enjoys this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to star in ‘The Jungle Book.’ When he returns from touring next month, Akash will join his classmates without having missed a beat.”

More About Dwight School

Founded in 1872, Dwight (www.dwight.edu) was the first school in the US to offer the comprehensive International Baccalaureate curriculum from preschool-grade 12. It is the flagship campus of The Dwight Schools, with programs and campuses in London, Seoul, Beijing, and on Vancouver Island. All Dwight Schools rest on three pillars: personalized learning, community, and global vision. Dwight graduates attend the world’s leading colleges and universities, including Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Stanford, MIT, and Oxford.

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