



A GROUNDBREAKING DREAM

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"Incoming (college) freshman Taylor Idema, who grew up in Mount Pleasant, wanted to give the community the opportunity to enjoy music and the arts, just like she does. That's why she raised \$200,000 to build an outdoor amphitheater for that very purpose."

- Incoming freshman raises \$200,000 to build amphitheater in Mount Pleasant by Sara Kellner.

How many teenagers can have a literal "groundbreaking" dream and make it a reality? Now that's what I call a hero. A hero can be defined as "a person admired for achievements and noble qualities" according to the Miriam-Webster dictionary. That definition perfectly illustrates my older sister, Taylor Idema.

August 5, 2019, was a big day for our family. It was the day of the grand opening of Island Park Arts Pavilion, a day to celebrate the hard work and realization of the dream Taylor had for her community. She did that so the community would have a place to perform their fine arts talents. Taylor wanted to do this for the community because she grew up loving all things music! She played several instruments and was in many diverse musical groups ranging from a church handbell choir to a school orchestra.

I remember the night she thought of the idea of the Island Park Arts Pavilion. I was freshly 10 years old, and my mom had promised to take me to the store to buy a new toy. But, for some reason, she was sitting with a laptop on her lap with Taylor. "Mom are you ready?" I said annoyed.

"Fifteen more minutes Allie! We are trying to come up with an idea for Taylor's Girl Scout Gold Award (the highest award that a Girl Scout can earn) to enter "Pitch-ER-This."

"In 2016, Idema entered the United Way's "Pitch-Er-This" contest, where area youth present community-focused projects to a panel of judges who vote for the winner. The United Way then helps provide funds to help bring the projects to life."

- Local teen taking community arts pavilion from concept to concrete by Epicenter Mt. Pleasant.

A garden? A pool? Oh, what about an amphitheater?"

"What's that?" I wondered.

"It's like an outdoor stage where the community can perform in the park," Taylor informed me. In my mind, I was wondering if Taylor could actually pull

it off! I mean she was only 14 years old! What on Earth could a 14-year-old do for their community? I was about to eat my words Big time!

Taylor Idema had a goal and she made it happen! Not only did she win "Pitch-ER-This," but she raised over \$200,000 dollars for this project! There was even one time when they were going to cancel the project because she was going to have to raise over \$100,000 dollars in two weeks and the people working with her told her it was impossible! She showed what perseverance means and raised the money in *two weeks*, \$75,000 of that was in *three days!* Taylor has also been featured in several different news sources and on two billboards.

Taylor is such an inspiration to me. She has shown me that if I have these noble qualities of a hero: a hard work ethic, passion, dedication, determination, perseverance, a good attitude, and if I believe in myself, I can make my dreams come true, and that my age can't hold me back!



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