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# Documentary Hits Schools to Empower Next Generation of Girls

By **KAITLYN FOLMER**  
 April 6, 2015 10:36 AM  
[Good Morning America](#)



What would you do if you weren't afraid to fail?

That's one of the questions filmmakers Sarah Moshman and Dana Michelle Cook asked women as they traveled across the country making their documentary, ["The Empowerment Project."](#)

Moshman, 28, and Cook, 35, set out along with three other female filmmakers in September 2013 and drove cross-country to interview accomplished career women in the hopes of highlighting women doing extraordinary things and creating more positive role models for girls everywhere.

A major impetus for the film was a frustration about the portrayal of women in the media, Moshman explained.

"'The Empowerment Project' really came from feeling frustrated with the media and the way it portrays and doesn't portray women in the movies or watching [TV shows](#), magazines. So we've felt like why don't we do something about it instead of complaining, let's be part of the solution and stop being a part of the problem," she told ABC News' Amy Robach in an interview for her [#GIRLPOWER series](#) profiling inspiring and strong women.

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"To me, girl power is about finding your voice," Cook said. "It's being not afraid to raise your hand if you don't know the

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answer, and to just go into your life not being defined by anyone else.”



PHOTO: Amy Robach with The Empowerment Project filmmakers Sarah Moshman and Dana Michelle Cook.

On their journey, through 10 cities, they profiled and spent a day in the lives of 17 successful women from an executive chef, to a mathematician, a pilot, a cancer biologist and more.

“It was really just this beautiful puzzle because amazing women are everywhere,” Cook said.

Moshman agreed.

“I think when we hear stories with celebrities or CEOs, that’s all great, but we don’t relate,” she said. “So that was really important to us to showcase ordinary women doing extraordinary things. We wanted to make girls of this generation growing up feel like, ‘Oh, they’re just like me, I could be that too.’”

Now, the duo is taking the project into schools and seeing the effects on the next generation. The film has been screened 123 times, with 60 of those in schools.

“It’s such a joy, such a privilege,” Moshman said on watching what students take away from the film. “Having a girl come up and say, ‘I didn’t know women could be astronauts, now I want to be an astronaut.’ That’s what it’s all about.”

ABC News’ Robach attended a screening at the Young Women’s Leadership School in Harlem, N.Y., and sat down with a group of seventh-grade girls who quickly internalized the message onscreen.

“I want to be an immigration lawyer to help people,” one student said.

“I would be bold, really, really bold ... and like 100 years from now, people would know my name and I would be in textbooks and everything,” another said. “I feel like the movie gave me the final push that I needed so that I can be bold.”



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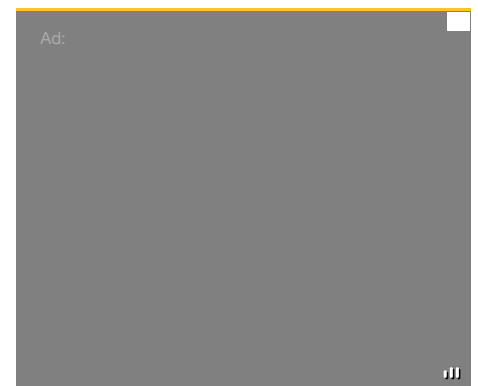
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Seeing what students take away from the documentary has been a dream come true for the two filmmakers.

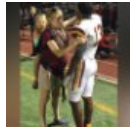
"We've made this film to empower the next generation of strong female leaders, and that's what we're seeing," Moshman said. "Our goal would be to continue to screen this film in schools, girls groups, organizations, corporations, anyone that will have us to start a conversation about empowerment."

[Click here to learn more](#) about the project and hosting or finding a screening near you or [watch the film now here](#) for one week starting Monday, Apr. 6.

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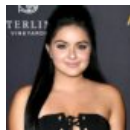
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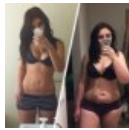
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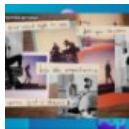
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