

## UrbanPromise celebrates '20/20' special

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By KRISTY DAVIES



A jawbreaker.

That was the option chosen by Diane Sawyer of ABC's "20/20" and "Good Morning America" during an interview with 7-year-old Karim Council of Camden.

The exclusive interview was shown at UrbanPromise Ministries' annual banquet Thursday night.

"What would you want to be, a flag or a jawbreaker?" Karim asked Sawyer.

"A jawbreaker," said Sawyer, "because I could be carried around in a pocket and be entertainment for later."

Curling his face up, Karim said, "If you're a flag, nobody going to eat you!"

The audience of banquet guests, about 700 people, laughed as they watched.

Karim also asked Sawyer what she thought of UrbanPromise.

The nonprofit organization helped Sawyer find local families to interview for her special "Waiting on the World to Change," a feature on children growing up impoverished. Most of the children she interviewed were from Camden.

"I really liked everybody we met there," Sawyer said. "I love that they have a good time."

Sawyer turned the tables on Karim as she asked what kind of animal he would want to be.

"A t-rex," he answered.

"Isn't that scary?" asked Sawyer.

"No," said Karim.

"Would you be a nice t-rex?" she asked.

"No," said Karim, as the audience laughed.

After the interview finished airing at the banquet, Karim admitted he was a little nervous during his interview with Sawyer.

"She was nervous, too," he noted.

Karim also said he considers himself to be lucky to be involved in UrbanPromise and for the opportunities it has given him.

"I've always taught him to remember where he came from," said Gabriella Council, 25, Karim's mother. "We are very grateful and feel this is an honor."

"I'm proud of him," said Council's father, Karim Council. "He's my best friend, too."

During the video, UrbanPromise also revealed some behind-the-scenes looks at "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" when the TV crew came to Camden and Pennsauken. The popular reality show built a new home for one of the families featured in Sawyer's 20/20 special.

"People need to go outside their comfort box and help others," Ed Sanders, an Extreme Makeover carpenter and designer, said on the video.

As part of Thursday's banquet, students, members and staff participated in prepared performances and talked about what a promise means and giving hope to the children and people of Camden.

"I grew up in Camden," said Elyse Smith, 19. "It's my city."

Smith, who was interviewed as part of the "20/20" special, received scholarship money that allowed her to begin college this fall at Bloomfield College.

"I'm outside of my environment, but I'm focused on becoming a better leader and my education," said Smith.

"UrbanPromise is a very inspired group and inspire other people," said Garo Hovnanian, spokesman for J.S. Hovnanian and Sons, the builder of the "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" home for the Marrero family. "They define the word 'hope.' "