

Linda Hooper

- Inspired the Emmy-nominated *Paperclips Project*
- Whitwell Middle School Principal

Linda Hooper's speech "**The Power of One,**" tells the moving story of how the students behind the **Paper Clips Project** responded to what had been to them a completely unfamiliar chapter in human history- the Holocaust. In 1998, the children of Tennessee's Whitwell Middle School took on an extraordinary project inspired by their principal, Linda Hooper. **The Paper Clips Project** grew out of a sense that the students in the homogenous community weren't learning about the lives and experiences of other groups.



Struggling to grasp the concept of six-million Holocaust victims, the students decided to collect six-million paper clips to better understand the extent of this crime against humanity. This amazing project would change the students, their teachers, their families and the entire town forever...and eventually, open hearts and minds around the world as this remarkable story became an award-winning film entitled **PAPER CLIPS**.

In Linda Hooper's words: "***The Paper Clips Project** has been an affirmation of my beliefs that education is absolutely essential to change; that evil must be constantly battled by education; that everyone must study the past so that we do not forget nor repeat our mistakes; and that there is a higher power guiding our destiny.*"

Linda Hooper has been a public school educator for 30 years. Ms. Hooper believes that educating our children is the most important task we have as a proper education will give them the tools to make responsible, informed and compassionate decisions. This is what Ms. Hooper's family and teachers did for her, it is what Ms. Hooper did for her own children and it is what the educators at Whitwell Middle School continue to do on a daily basis.

Ms. Hooper is married to Edward Hooper, a retired pharmacist. They have two sons and four grandchildren. Ms. Hooper's hobbies include- reading, traveling, furniture refinishing, painting, and hiking.