



# North Cross School

## **For Immediate Release**

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## **Ben & Jerry's Executive Shares Global Perspective** *North Cross Global Studies Students Use Technology for Distance Learning*

**ROANOKE, VA (February 21, 2013)**— From his office in South Burlington, Vermont, Global Director of Social Mission for Ben & Jerry's, Rob Michalak, clad in a North Cross School shirt and holding a foam hand showing "Raiders are #1", spoke via Skype to the Global Studies students of North Cross School as they sat in Fishburn Auditorium here in Roanoke.

Mark Thompson, Director of the Upper School, said, "What a great opportunity for our Global Studies students to speak with someone like Rob. The ice cream business may seem simple but it isn't. The interconnection of sustainability, fair trade, globalization, and stewardship and more are the kinds of ideas and concepts that resonate with our students - and all connected to the many tastes and flavors of Ben & Jerry's. As we are currently studying a unit on food, Rob's insights brought what we've been learning into the real world with his examples."

Connecting with Michalak gave Thompson the opportunity to continue pursuing distance learning initiatives. "Talking to Ben & Jerry's in Vermont while never leaving Roanoke is fantastic and stretches our ability to provide our students with unique opportunities to explore and learn," Thompson reflected. "We have the technology and we can transport our students to interesting places to interact with people who can feed their intellectual curiosity, all without the expense! That considerably broadens our educational horizons."

David Lake, Associate Director of Development at North Cross School, was a fraternity brother of Michalak's at Colgate University. Lake was excited to involve Michalak with the Global Studies program. "When we were together at a reunion, Rob referred to his job as 'Director of Global Elations' because he started each meeting by asking 'How can we help you be more successful?' I liked the fact that Ben & Jerry's was a globally responsible company that realized its success was directly linked with its suppliers' success. Rob's a great guy and I felt confident he would relate well to the students and share a valuable perspective as they learned about global issues."

Michalak was glad to participate. Michalak spoke to students about his job at Ben & Jerry's: "In short, my job at Ben & Jerry's is to drive a sustainable concept of linked prosperity through the entire business, advocating for business decisions that create social and economic justice and serve to provide the proper stewardship of the environment. Way easier to say than

do, but that keeps us busy. Many people think of high tech and mega-brands for a global point of view, but it's definitely in things that people might not consider, even simple things such as vanilla ice cream: vanilla from Madagascar and Uganda, sugar from Belize (all Fair-trade, of course!).”

Ben & Jerry's sells its products in 35 countries globally. Michalak spends most of his time dealing with direct stakeholders such as supply chains, kindred businesses, and NGO's. Ben & Jerry's has offices in the United Kingdom (covering Europe), Singapore (Asia and Pacific), and Vermont (North America/Global). In the past two years his travels have taken him to Japan, China, India, Uganda, Netherlands, Norway, Dominican Republic, Mexico and all around the United States. Much of it is related to sourcing ingredients and its commitment to Fair-trade certified products like vanilla, cocoa, coffee, sugar, bananas, other fruits, and nuts.

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### **About Ben & Jerry's**

*Ben & Jerry's produces a wide variety of super-premium ice cream and ice cream novelties, using high-quality ingredients including milk and cream from family farmers who do not treat their cows with the synthetic hormone rBGH. The company states its position on rBGH\* on its labels. Ben and Jerry's products are distributed nationwide and in selected foreign countries in supermarkets, grocery stores, convenience stores, franchise Ben & Jerry's Scoop Shops, restaurants and other venues. Ben & Jerry's, a Vermont corporation and wholly-owned subsidiary of Unilever, operates its business on a three-part Mission Statement emphasizing product quality, economic reward and a commitment to the community. Contributions made via the employee led Ben & Jerry's Foundation in 2009 totaled over \$1.7 million. Additionally, the company makes significant product donations to community groups and nonprofits both in Vermont and across the nation. The purpose of Ben & Jerry's philanthropy is to support the founding values of the company: economic and social justice, environmental restoration and peace through understanding, and to support our Vermont communities. For the full scoop on all Ben & Jerry's Scoop Shop locations and fabulous flavors, visit [www.benjerry.com](http://www.benjerry.com).*

*\* The FDA has said no significant difference has been shown and no test can now distinguish between milk from rBGH treated cows and untreated cows. Not all the suppliers of our other ingredients can promise that the milk they use comes from untreated cows.*

### **About North Cross School**

*North Cross School is a college-preparatory day school grounded in a strong liberal arts and science curriculum combined with exceptional co-curricular programs. The academic program, from junior kindergarten through twelfth grade, prepares students to become responsible, successful citizens by encouraging them to explore their interests and develop their talents. The School is located at 4254 Colonial Avenue, Roanoke, VA, 24018. For more information, visit [www.northcross.org](http://www.northcross.org).*