



North Cross School

For Immediate Release

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Exchanging Cultural Gifts

North Cross Global Students See Fellow Student in Different Light

ROANOKE, VA (February 21, 2013)— Muscaro Gym was filled on one side with the entire student body of North Cross School, silent, as they watched the gracefully fluid dance of fellow student Lulu Liu, a seventh-grade exchange student from China. Dressed in blue silk traditional garments, Liu performed a solo Mongolian dance for her peers as part of an afternoon celebration of the Chinese New Year and the Year of the Snake.

“I don’t think I’ll ever look at Lulu the same way,” remarked a classmate. “That was really beautiful and I can’t believe she did that in front of the whole school!”

With the help of Pearl Fu, Executive Director of Roanoke’s *Local Colors*, Robert Robillard arranged an all-school event featuring over 20 students from Southwest Virginia’s Blacksburg Chinese School. Their students dressed colorfully, cheerfully acted out traditional stories, and performed several dances with dragons, tigers, Chinese stringed instruments, and Chinese yo yos for the North Cross students in an effort to build understanding and appreciation of the diversity that exists in Southwest Virginia, and within the halls of North Cross.

“What a great afternoon,” said Robillard. “I’m so thankful that our Global Studies program gives us the opportunity to expose our students to other cultures through events like this, and gives others a chance to get to know us.” He continued, “Pearl Fu pulled me into her world last summer when we were hosting 17 Chinese students. She possesses a unique ability to unite people, despite her open battle with Parkinson's disease. For Pearl, this means jumping into a big bowl of tossed salad with each ingredient being distinct and special, yet part of a bigger and better whole. This is why she has been named Roanoke's cultural ambassador. Now she has shared her spirit with our school, which is shown in all the performers from the Chinese School. Like me, I'm sure many in our community were transformed by the New Year celebration and by Pearl Fu.”

What was presented was authentic, energetic, and accomplished by other students. North Cross students not only learned the facts about the Chinese New Year - like the fact that it is a 15-day celebration - but also learned that General Tso’s chicken and fortune cookies are American, not Chinese. With a mix of teaching, performance, and quizzes, students left the gym with a taste of another world and with a deeper appreciation and respect for one of their own students.

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About Local Colors

Local Colors is Roanoke's premiere year-long multi-cultural program which recognizes and embraces people of diverse origins, races and ethnic backgrounds. Throughout the year Local Colors works with schools, colleges, neighborhoods, retirement communities, government, businesses, and civic organizations to promote diversity and multi-cultural understanding. Annually it culminates in the third weekend of May with the renowned Local Colors Festival.

Local Colors is always looking for more Countries to participate in the Local Colors Festival. Please contact Pearl Fu at (540) 904-2234 or 580-0341 or send mail to pearlFu3@gmail.com

About Blacksburg Chinese School

Blacksburg Chinese School (BCS) is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, composed of community volunteers and dedicated language and culture instructors. Our mission is to promote cultural awareness and harmony, and to be an active and contributing member of our diverse society. We offer Chinese language classes for children and adults. We strive to foster connections with the greater NRV community through regular cultural activities and events.

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.