



North Cross School

For Immediate Release

For more information, contact:
Whitney Aldridge
Media Relations, North Cross School
540-989-6641 ext. 303
waldridge@northcross.org

Learning from the Best

North Cross School hosts 2-time Olympian Keli-Smith Puzo

ROANOKE, VA (August 13, 2014)— Keli Smith-Puzo, two-time Olympian and ambassador for the game of field hockey is in Roanoke Wednesday through Friday this week. Smith-Puzo is conducting a multi-day clinic for North Cross' girls' field hockey team, helping to take them to the next level.

During the London and Beijing Olympic games, both Keli's life on and off the field were covered. As an All-American at the University of Maryland and Olympian, Smith-Puzo reached the pinnacle for her sport. She is a committed athlete who played the game with raw passion and skill. She had a successful 10-year career and thought her playing days were over. Having watched Team USA pull off an upset to win the 2011 Pan American Games, her desire to play for the team energized her. With only three months having passed since the birth of her second child, and less than nine months before the start of the 2012 Olympic games, Smith-Puzo made the team.

North Cross girls travel regularly to play field hockey against opponents in other parts of the state. Field hockey, though very popular in many areas, does not have the presence here in Roanoke. At North Cross, however, the field hockey program has attracted both players and fans because it is a magnetic program. If you've never seen field hockey played, come to a North Cross School home game and watch the girls compete. Though the rules might take a few games to understand, it is fun to watch and the Raiders have worked hard to make their program very competitive.

Raiders' coach Katherine Kelly commented, "This was a tremendous opportunity to be coached by Keli. She has a passion for the game and is able to share her experience, not only on skills, but on what it takes to be a great team. We have some great players who are getting noticed by college programs, like Avery Sturm who plans to go on to college and play for Keli's husband, Inako Puzo, Head Field Hockey Coach at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. Our team is among the many successful teams at North Cross. We're gaining momentum as a team because we're practicing hard during the season and the girls are attracting others to the program. They are a positive group of girls who do the right things, and others want to be part of that. "

When other teams play North Cross, they expect a great game and a tough opponent whose winning record earns them respect. Brenda Wilson, an All-American field hockey player from Colgate University, assists Katherine Kelly with coaching responsibilities. Wilson sees the program building solid skills and confident young women. She says, “To play well, at any level, requires dedication, hard work, teamwork, and commitment. We practice hard and our coaches know what it takes to be a winning team.”

###

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.

Video of Keli Smith-Puzo before the 2012 Olympic games:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/25/olympic-moms-keli-smith-puzo_n_1703322.html

