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## **IDS-CC Middle Students Present A World of Multicultural Experiences**

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*Tampa, Fla.*

Multicultural Day at Independent Day School - Corbett Campus (IDS-CC) proved it certainly is "a small world after all."

Modeling teaching practices used by IDS-CC instructors every day, middle schoolers offered multicultural experiences for primary and intermediate students, which appealed to every one of the five senses, and many of the multiple intelligences. It was a celebration of diversity that gave sixth, seventh and eighth graders an opportunity to create meaningful connections for younger students, and students in Pre-K through fifth grade the chance to learn from upper level classmates.

For example, on the athletic field at Independent Day School-Corbett Campus (IDS-CC), sixth graders taught a group of Pre-K students an Australian version of freeze tag called, "What's the Time, Mr. Wolf."

Inside middle school classrooms, eighth graders shared insight they gained from literature regarding similarities and differences between their own culture and another. Meanwhile in the art room, several other eighth graders helped primary students design bead necklaces as they learned about the Native American art form.

At the same time, throughout the building, teams of seventh graders hosted stations representing a myriad of world cultures, sharing information about customs, food, music, dress, literature, history and geography.

"Multicultural Day at IDS is a celebration created by the students," said Betty George, middle school director of studies. "Assignments come from the teachers so that multiple subject areas such as social studies, English and technology are all integrated into the presentations, but the entire day is totally student-driven."

According to P.E. Coach Jeff Smith, sixth graders used the Internet to research games played in countries around the world. "A lot of the games we play here in the United States are similar to games played in other countries," said Michelle Vernick. "We've just tweaked them a bit."

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One of the many highlights of the day was the international booths created by seventh grade students, an activity that was also a lesson in teamwork, cooperation, and responsibility. By sharing the work, students were able to present a broad spectrum of material about a particular country. When it came to Mexico, Magen Wetmore dressed in colorful Mexican garb and presented Mexican poetry. Sam Lagos played mariachi guitar music. Lawrence Guilford provided samples of ethnic cuisine and a variety of artifacts, and Mariam Chowdhari an informative visual display.

After reading a piece of literature about another culture, eighth graders wrote compare and contrast essays and created posters showcasing their ideas. Michael Whitescarver read about African American rapper DMX, and saw commonalities between his culture as a white American and the African American experience. "When it comes right down to it, in difficult situations, we all really react the same," he said.

Morning festivities were capped off with a mock United Nations General Assembly conducted by the sixth grade for fifth through eighth grade students. Acting as delegates from foreign countries, students presented proposals concerning issues they had researched facing the nations they represented. Spontaneous debate and a lively question and answer session were included before member nations voted on each proposal.

"The model U.N. helps students become more familiar with international concerns because they look at situations through the eyes of another country," said Social Studies teacher Linda Boza. "They sharpen their problem-solving skills, as well as gain an understanding of financial constraints."

IDS-CC Multicultural Day concluded with an all-school assembly during which *The Salsa Caliente Dance Troupe* explained the history of salsa music, performed, and taught students basic dance steps.

For IDS-CC, a school that appreciates the uniqueness of every learner, it was a day during which every learner was able to develop an appreciation for the uniqueness of other cultures.

*Founded in 1968, Independent Day School - Corbett Campus is a fully accredited, independent school located in northwest Hillsborough County. It serves 500 plus students in grades Pre-K through 8. At IDS, all children experience learning in a nurturing and highly academic environment focused on excellence and developing a positive self-concept. IDS-CC has become recognized as an exemplary school with over 900 visitors observing and learning from and with IDS-CC teachers. For more information about IDS visit <http://www.idsy.com>.*

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