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Fifth Grade Recognition
[Transcript by Ms. Joyce Rasmussen]
2010

The 5th grade this year is a very cohesive, fun-loving group. They truly seem to love each other, and they know how to have fun as well as work hard. Last fall they welcomed the German exchange students with a beautiful rendition of 99 Luftballons in the Dining Hall, in German, no less. They were troopers at The Center even though the weather was wet and rainy, and, beyond the many good experiences they shared, they even shared a brutally high fever that reduced our legion to low double digits for several days.

They were the first fifth grade class to embark upon the planning and development of the school's community garden. They did the math and measuring together as well as the compost turning. They then planted the seeds and plants in their new garden.

They love performing and sharing their talents, as we saw in numerous examples including International Day and the Black History Assembly. They are very creative, fun to work with, and made us laugh in the fifth grade show, Rats, the Pied Piper of Hamelin, especially with their Thriller Zombie Dance.

They loved all the field trips, especially the trip to Hyde Park and the time spent in the Japanese Garden in Jackson Park. They loved reading with their Kindergarten Buddies as well as showing them through the Science Fair, writing stories for their first grade buddies, and serving as table heads, recyclers and composters in the Dining Hall.

We have never seen a group so ready to pull a party together for whatever reason and so able to enlist their parents' help to get the challenge met. Due to the perseverance of many students, but especially Alexis and Imani, the class managed to organize a bake sale to help the fifth grade meet its annual fundraising goal and stage the first ever Lower School Talent Show in which we were able to enjoy the dance moves of the High Steppers and the debut of the fifth grade band, Camouflage.

So it is time to bid these young people a fond farewell and send them on to the Middle School. We hope we have given them a solid foundation and a belief in

their ability to meet the challenges ahead. Please join us in congratulating our Fifth Graders and wishing them success in the coming years.

So kind, cooperative and fun-loving, this young flute player is a gentle spirit who encourages others. She is a supportive friend who eternally looks at the bright side of a situation and sees the best in other people and their intentions. Hard-working, diligent, and self-motivated, she always gives her best. She enjoyed performing in the fifth grade musical, *Oz*, and *Oliver*. Her enthusiasm for the stage was obvious in her comment regarding the fifth grade play: "I love our play. It is so cool. Everyone has a good part!" Soon everyone felt that way as she spread goodness and happiness which is her nature. **Please congratulate, Divya Avula.**

Intelligent, observant, and able to interpret and extrapolate information, this incredible creative writer has a way with language and a keen mind for knowledge. She is able to make amazing connections between her prior and new knowledge and learn from the emotions and life lessons of characters in literature read. Precise and accurate, she sees mistakes and inconsistencies and works to resolve them. She is mature yet still able to have fun, be silly, and goof around when appropriate. **Please congratulate Aariel Batchelor.**

A longtime cover-girl for our summer brochures, this young flutist is an awesome human being. She has a great attitude at school, is unfailingly kind, and consistently works to see the best in others. She is a great dancer and an able tennis player. She also has a dramatic flair and has been in several productions beyond those at school including a BAC performance of *CATS* and a short film. Possessing a beautiful voice, she is the lead singer for the fifth grade band, *Camouflage*, which performed at the *First Annual Lower School Talent Show*. A determined learner, she is a person from whom we expect to see great things. **Please congratulate Kaitlyn Bowe.**

Charlie Chaplin's greatest fan, this young lady is full of interesting facts and ideas. Mature and very bright, she loves history and geography, entering our first annual Social Studies fair this year with a project on China, where she will be visiting this summer. She also enjoys the arts, playing the flute in the Cadet band and joining the cast of *Oliver*. Her wonderful stories show her imagination and creativity. The book she wrote and presented to her first grade reading buddy included a canine sidekick that could not only speak English but could communicate telepathically when necessary. **Please congratulate Hannah Branit.**

A wonderful dancer who shared her talents with us at the Black History Assembly, this clarinetist is full of life and energy. Imaginative and dramatic, she starts each day in high spirits which can be contagious. She is serious, however, about her academics and always works to produce her best. She is an

enthusiastic learner who loves interacting with people and brings light and excitement into the classroom. **Please congratulate Ayana Byrd.**

This young lady is both a leader and a fierce competitor. This year she brainstormed the idea for the Lower School Talent Show and made sure it happened. She loves ice skating and travels for competitions and shows. She also became a strong competitor for her class in the Geography Bee. A member of the fifth grade dancing troop, *The High Steppers*, she loves choreographing and performing. Her beautiful smile and lovely attitude make her a joy to have in the classroom. **Please congratulate Alexis Clark.**

Very hardworking and committed to doing his very best, this young man continues to perform exceptionally well in all academic areas. Extremely focused in class, he is a wiz at languages. Having a true passion for athletics, he is a strong athlete and a great physical competitor especially in soccer. He is a talented musician, playing lead guitar for the fifth grade band, *Camouflage*. Considerate and thoughtful of others, he is known to go out of his way to give a kind word or offer a helping hand. **Please congratulate Johnny Cummings.**

This young man has been called, "The Voice of Reason," due to his mature thinking and ability to empathize with others. He is kind and courteous, a true gentleman who is consistently honest and trustworthy. An athlete and a reader, he exudes confidence and a love of learning. His ability on the drums makes him a true asset to the Cadet Band. This year he demonstrated his flair for the dramatic as a terrific rat in the fifth grade play and his interest in the environment with his enthusiastic support of the Academy's garden. **Please congratulate Zachary Everett.**

Funny, sweet, and kind, this young man enjoys life and is a good friend to all. He has a wonderful sense of humor and a great smile and laugh. He consistently shows great insight into literature and participates in class discussions with surprising maturity. He is a fast learner, especially in languages as he is self motivated and serious about his studies. **Please congratulate Tarun Gaddam.**

A true athlete, she is fast, flexible, talented, and always under control. These skills allowed her to compete in the State Gymnastic Championship in April. She also is serious about her studies and although quiet in class, is always on target and enthusiastic about learning. She has a warm heart and is a devoted friend. **Please congratulate Lauryn Gray.**

Very bright and hard-working, this young lady always does her best. Enjoying the stage, she took part in both *Oz* and *Oliver*, and MC'd for the *Lower School Talent Show*. She is very organized which has helped her to become a skilled mathematician. She is a strong student, and a good athlete with solid character and integrity. Her enthusiasm for the garden, or indeed any project has made her a delight to have in the classroom. **Please congratulate Berat Gulecyuz.**

Quiet, reserved, yet always pleasant, this young lady is unfailingly honest and treats others with consideration and understanding. Very artistic and creative, she has a great sense of humor. She is a top student who continues to show strong academic ability and a wonderful work ethic. She possesses an inquisitive mind and loves to find out how what we learn applies to her life. **Please congratulate Banu Gulecyuz.**

This student's brilliant smile can brighten anyone's day. Leading by example, this strong, gentle man makes it a habit to look out for others, insuring everyone feels welcome. He sets a tone and provides leadership to energize and encourage his classmates to cooperate, follow rules, and treat each other with fairness and compassion. His energy and enthusiastic dancing as a rat made the fifth grade play one we will not forget. **Please congratulate Brennan Hardin-Harris.**

Sweet and funny, this young man is a true friend. He sees the humor in situations and knows how to laugh at himself. He is a hard worker who is always responsible about getting his work accomplished, but he also loves sports and is a strong team player. He is an awesome drummer who plays in the fifth grade band, *Camouflage*. This year he has shown a real dramatic flair, appearing in *Oliver* and in the fifth grade play as a truly memorable rat. **Please congratulate Nathan LaBranche.**

A good friend and an enthusiastic learner, this young lady exhibits a positive attitude in all she does and this allows her to lead others in a positive direction. She loves creative writing and is willing to rework and revise until her story is just right. She is a talented artist, a capable pianist, and a skilled flutist. A wonderful dancer, as well, she has entertained us on several occasions as a member of the *High Steppers*. **Please congratulate Alana Lay-Phillips.**

This wonderful young lady joined us this year and quickly became an important part of the fifth grade. Caring and thoughtful of others, she is a friend to all. She is a determined learner, never giving up when presented with a challenge. She is a very talented singer as we all learned during her performance at the first *Annual Lower School Talent Show*. She is also an awesome athlete who always give 100%. **Please congratulate Lucy Manning.**

This talented drummer joined us last year in the fourth grade and has proven herself to be a great addition. She is funny and sweet, and loves being with her friends. She shows considerable academic ability in all her subjects and has been named "most improved student" in the area of World Languages. This year we have seen her develop a flair for theater as she performed a song and dance as part of a trio in the fifth grade play and performed an amazing "moon walk" during the *Black History Assembly*. **Please congratulate Anaya McDavid.**

A naturally gifted dancer, music and energy flow through her. She was delightful as the Pied Piper and inspiring as she danced for the Black History Assembly. She is a member of the *High Steppers*, not only dancing but also choreographing for the group. Her considerable talents landed her a part in the Joffrey Ballet's performance of the Nutcracker. A strong student in all areas, she is meticulous in her work and takes pride in her accomplishments. **Please congratulate Imani Moss.**

This young man has a wonderful sense of humor and gets great joy out of life. He is confident, well-liked, and shows enthusiasm in the learning process. He loves science and has great insight into the connections among sophisticated ideas. A capable student, he consistently does his best no matter what the activity happens to be. This year he created a brilliant hero story for a first grader who was thrilled to receive it. **Please congratulate Amara Obasi.**

We feel very lucky that this sweet, helpful young man joined us this year. He has been called a "chivalrous gentleman" by his teachers and even though he loves competition, his warm, empathetic nature makes losing to him not so bad. This year he has grown in maturity and has opened up to students and teachers alike. He is a great story teller who starts every day with a positive attitude. **Please congratulate Kaleb Paraharm.**

Talk about story telling, this young man is extremely talented at expressing himself both verbally and in writing. He is also an exceptional science student and a talented artist. Although strong in all sports, his real love is tennis where he truly excels. Always cheerful, pleasant, and polite, he is someone we expect great things from. **Please congratulate Nikhil Piska.**

Creative and capable, this young lady exhibits a great sense of humor. She loves imaginative play and acting on the stage, leading her to join the cast of *Oliver*. She is a wonderfully able creative writer who isn't afraid to be herself. Determined and persistent, she will go far. **Please congratulate Hannah Putman.**

She has been called "a bright, shining presence in the classroom." A talented French speaker and overall excellent student, this young guitarist exemplifies the MPA way. She is a soft spoken leader who's positive attitude in every endeavor quickly spreads to those around her. She has a wonderful presence on the stage, taking part in *Oz*, *Oliver*, and MC-ing the *Lower School Talent Show*. **Please congratulate Leyla Razo.**

A wonderful addition to the class, this young man has made lots of improvement academically throughout the year, especially in writing. He has made many friends and greets everyone with a warm smile. Making his MPA stage debut this year with his memorable performance as a rat, he inspired the *Michael*

Jackson Thriller Tribute in the fifth grade play. I also hear he does a fine *I'm A Single Lady*. **Please congratulate Robert Russ.**

Another great addition to the class, this young lady has wonderful penmanship and is a strong speller. She is always kind and sweet, but has a very spirited demeanor and enjoys participating in each and every activity. This year she has grown tremendously as a writer and a reader, making strong connections with literature and strengthening her ability to communicate ideas. **Please congratulate Raqyila Russell.**

One of her teachers described this student as "... truly one of the kindest and most sincere people I have ever met." Exemplifying the MPA Way, she is empathetic, considerate, and loving. A fine student, she is an enthusiastic learner who has great questions and leads by example. She has demonstrated her skills on the clarinet in the Cadet band, her dramatic ability as part of the cast of *Oliver*, and her ability as a dancer as part of the fifth grade dance troop, the *High Steppers*. **Please congratulate Dilan Rutland.**

A very strong student in all areas, this young lady is particularly skilled in creative writing. Although she has developed close friendships and loves playing with stuffed animals, she also has a fiercely competitive side. She simply hates to lose and refuses to fail. Over the last few years she has also shown us a flair for the dramatic, taking the part of Theseus in the fourth grade play and performing in two upper school musicals, *Oliver* and *Oz*. She is quite the musician, playing the trumpet and piano. She also plays guitar in the fifth grade band, *Camouflage*. **Please congratulate Katie Treskow**

A talented artist, this young man is bursting with life and energy at all times. He loves to play and laugh, starting every project with wonderful enthusiasm. He loved working in the garden this year and was a wonderful rat in the fifth grade play. An excellent athlete, he enjoys all sports, especially football. He is also a talented musician and singer. **Please congratulate Evan Vallas.**

Another favorite for summer school pictures and brochure covers, this young lady has a brilliant smile and a warm heart. She loves to listen to music and let her imagination fly. This year we learned what a brilliant singer she is during the *Lower School Talent Show*. A creative writer and thinker, she pursues her studies diligently. She is a sensitive, caring friend who will go out on a limb to help another. **Please congratulate Libby Wallenstein.**

A deep thinker, this young lady is not afraid to question and is always ready with a new way to look at a situation. She is an avid reader who is skilled at interpreting literature and understanding the lessons authors wish to impart to us. She is thoughtful, kind, and creative. This Christmas she hand-made earrings for all the girls in the class. Enjoying the stage, she took part in several productions

including *Oz*, *Oliver* and the *Lower School Talent Show*. **Please congratulate Claire Waller.**

This young lady has been called “A priceless addition to our MPA family.” A friend to all, she is courteous, kind, and respectful. She has a wonderful attitude towards her studies and is a focused, hard worker who consistently does her best. She enjoys acting and joined the cast of *Oliver* this year. A talented piano player with an amazing voice, she performed beautifully at the *Black History Assembly* and the *Lower School Talent Show*. **Please congratulate Ashley Wilson.**