

Global Learning at ALANHS

"Global Learning" and "Global teaching" are the buzz words around The Academy of Liberal Arts @ Newton High School (ALANHS) lately. Not only did ALANHS charter and implement a new cultural diversity program through the funding of a Community Action grant by General Mills this past summer, but its students also traveled to France and Spain for nine (9) days to study art history. Not only are 32 ALANHS students and teachers enrolled to study science and service learning in Costa Rica for this upcoming summer, but ALANHS also just announced that its students will be traveling to Egypt for 2012.

And if that is not enough, Kristina Collins, a NHS math teacher and the Program Development Coordinator for ALANHS spent six (6) days in China over the winter break along with 40 other educators from private, magnet, and liberal arts high school programs around the United States. Education First (EF Tours), one of the largest and most reputable companies in "global classroom education" for students and teachers, paid for her and the others to travel to Beijing for firsthand experience and international training on how to effectively implement global learning and study-abroad curriculum programs for high school and college credit.

During those six (6) days of fast-paced touring and studying, Collins was introduced to the Communist government of China, the "Dragon Lady" and her infamous Summer Palace, the history of the Forbidden City and "Heavens Temple", the art of Kung Fu fighting and the treasured joy of "community" eating. In addition, she participated in two interactive workshops of "Oyster to Pearls" and "Worms to Silk". Of course the highlight of her trip was spending the day with high school students at one of Beijing's themed/vocational school for Tourism and climbing the Great Wall of China. She met her new mentee, Li Jia Xing whose "English name" is Sara. And since it is customary for all Chinese students who study tourism to have an English name, she found it only befitting that she adopted a Chinese name. Sara named her Li Na. Collins' time in Beijing was complete with a final evening celebration with her new friends on the other side of the world and a Chinese folklore dinner that included the traditional serving of Peking duck before returning home to America with the goal of now watching with a different perspective "The Last Emperor"– but not before a short and pleasurable layover in Tokyo, Japan.



While study-abroad trips are not sponsored events of the academy, NHS, or the NCSS, ALANHS do encourage global experiences and service learning as part of their students' overall talent development. To that end, ALANHS teachers help coordinate these trips through EF tours as well as assist students in gaining the community support and financial resources in order to participate with other ALANHS students in this program and other summer enrichment opportunities.

As ALANHS enter its 3rd year of existence next fall, this school within a school magnet program is hoping to extend its cultural diversity program to include a foreign exchange component. For more information about EF tours or other ALANHS programs, please contact Dr. Sandra Owens at owens.sandra@newton.k12.ga.us.
