




*A monthly update on the
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice
work happening at NGFS*

October 2023

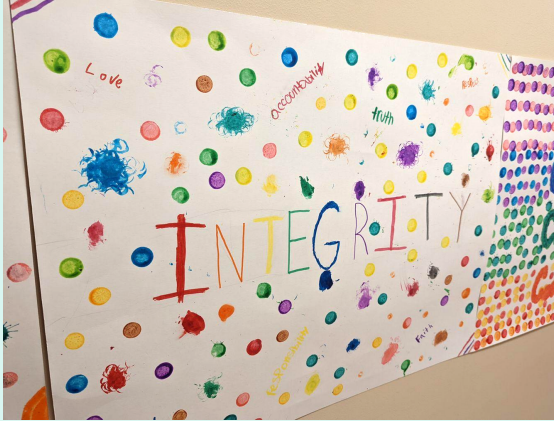
GUILFORD CAMPUS

Lower School

- A Child's Garden Crocus (preschool) students read "Owl Bat Bat Owl" by Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick. It is a story about a bat family and an owl family who come to understand that although they are different, they can still love each other, get along, and share space.
 - To honor Indigenous Peoples' Day and Hispanic Heritage Month, A Child's Garden Iris (pre-K) students listened to two books about diversity: "To Be a Kid" by Maya Ajmera and John D. Ivanko and "It's Okay to Be Different" by Todd Parr. Students worked together to complete floor puzzles representing children of the world.
 - A Child's Garden Sunflower (pre-K and TK) class read books in honor of Hispanic Heritage month. During play time, they used building toys to create houses and considered how to build the houses based on the specific people's needs (one was in a wheelchair, others were elderly, babies, etc.).
 - The Sunrise (K) class hosted family guests who shared about kintsugi, the Japanese art of mending broken pottery and turning the damage into a work of beauty. Students completed an art project inspired by this practice. This art form is a perfect demonstration of our theme this year. It is so valuable to see our mistakes as opportunities for learning and growth.
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- Sunrisers also celebrated Hispanic History Month and welcomed a classmate's parent who shared traditional food, drink, clothing, and the flag of Mexico. They read a story about Dia de Muertos, received masks, and watched some Mexican dances with traditional costumes. In Unit Study, the class is learning about families and began with prompts from [this website](#) to start noticing what is different and special about each of their families.
 - Rainbow (1st and 2nd grades) learned about Hispanic Heritage Month during September and October. They listened to salsa music, learned a dance, and learned about different instruments. They also learned about famous people of Hispanic origin. During a classroom meeting for worship, they read "The Boy with Big Big Feelings" by Britney Winn Lee. This story explores emotions, friendship, and the universal desire to feel understood while helping kids identify healthy ways to process their feelings.
 - Horizon (3rd and 4th grades) viewed a Hispanic Heritage Month presentation that included information about the difference between Hispanics and Latinos. They learned about varieties of music and their origin, Hispanic and Latino artists, and other prominent figures.
 - Galaxy (5th and 6th grade) celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month by discussing current issues like controversy around the National Museum of the American Latino, as well as learning about important figures such as Sonia Sotomayor and Lin-Manuel Miranda.
 - In Music class, Rainbow, Horizon, and Galaxy watched and discussed a performance of Danzón No. 2 by Arturo Márquez with the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela led by Gustavo Dudamel.

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Middle and Upper School



Middle School (7th and 8th grades) students have begun exploring the Quaker Testimony of *Integrity*. Students were introduced to the life of John Woolman, a Quaker who lived with integrity and was integral in the fight to end slavery. In small groups, they reflected on quotes with integrity as the theme and explored related queries. They then shared 2-3 ideas from each group and gained valuable insight from one another. Next, they will work to act with integrity in their interactions with one another.

- Middle School students visited Guilford College for a screening of the film [Rooted Wisdom](#). Starring Tony Cohen, an activist, historian, and explorer, the film shared the role of trees and plants in the Underground Railroad. The 25-minute film was broken up with opportunities for discussion and reflection. After the film, the students enjoyed a Q&A session with the filmmakers and Tony Cohen.
- Speak Up at School: Middle School students were introduced to four strategies useful in speaking up against bigotry. The lessons, adapted for our students from the materials at [LEARNINGFORJUSTICE.ORG](https://learningforjustice.org), encourage students to respond to everyday prejudice, bigotry, and stereotypes. Please ask your student about their experience and what they learned about how to stand up for themselves and others when these types of situations arise.
- Prompted by the "Win At Social" lesson on Cultural Appropriation and Halloween, Upper School (grades 9-12) students focused on social awareness, self-awareness, and responsible decision-making. After completing the lesson, students continued the conversation and thoughtfully analyzed the lesson by discussing areas they felt were not adequately covered or were misrepresented in the lesson.
- For an Upper School History project, students chose an individual from a list created by Dr. LaGarrett J. King. They researched the person's accomplishments and legacy and discussed why they should have the title of "Black Founder" (coined from Dr. King's research). Students' projects varied from presentations, research papers, children's books, and poetry.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- NGFS staff had a meaningful and productive day of professional development on Oct. 13. Working in affinity groups; they continued their work towards being an anti-racist and inclusive school. Group objectives included building community, building a shared understanding of structural racism, evolving awareness about the intersection of gender, class, and race, and recognizing tools for centering racial justice.
- Head of Middle and Upper School Tanisha Jones attended the North Carolina Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) Administrators of Color Conference at Ravenscroft School in Raleigh, NC. From yoga, panel discussions, breakout sessions, and affinity groups to the dance floor, it was a fun-filled learning time, networking with other administrators of color and deepening a sense of community. Speakers from near and far included:
 - Kyle Farmbry, President, Guilford College
 - Caroline Blackwell, Vice President Equity and Justice, NAIS
 - Mark Reed, Managing Director, The John M. Belk Endowment
 - Heather Flewelling, Chief Talent Officer, Carney, Sandoe, & Associates
 - Imana Sherrill, Head of School, Trinity Episcopal School
 - Crissy Caceres, Head of School, Brooklyn Friends School

Stay Tuned for What's to Come

- In November, Upper School student Prady will be a guest speaker for Sunrise (K) to teach them about Diwali. He will share about the holiday and its special meaning to give students a sense of how Diwali is celebrated in the home.

A Sunrise (K) parent will visit the class on November 2 to celebrate Dia de Muertos with the students. She will read a story and lead an activity.

At the end of November, Horizon teacher Christian Ritter and Middle and Upper School Counselor Jenn Milton will attend the 2023 National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) People of Color Conference. PoCC is the flagship of NAIS's commitment to equity and justice in teaching, learning, and sustainability for independent schools. The conference theme is Gateways to Freedom: A Confluence of Truth, Knowledge, Joy, and Power.