

News Release

Dobbs Ferry Middle School 7th Graders Host 8th Annual Poetry Café

An Evening of Poetry, Technology, Hors d'oeuvres and Fun!

Dobbs Ferry, N.Y. June 9, 2015-- Dobbs Ferry Middle School 7th graders will be participating in a fabulous night of poetry. Billed as the **Poetry Café**, guests can enjoy an evening of lattes, finger foods and great prose. The 8th annual event will take place **Thursday, June 11th at 5:00 p.m. in The Commons**. Some of the students will serve as waiters, hostesses, greeters, and “bartenders” while other students read their original works in front of a packed audience of family and friends. The Poetry Café is sponsored by the Dobbs Ferry PTSA.

“Last year we had almost 100 students participating in the poetry celebration and twice as many guests,” said Rachael Lief, 7th grade English Language Arts (ELA) teacher. “Every year the Poetry Café grows larger and larger and I expect this year to be no exception.” Students will be reading their original poetry, as well as showcasing other types of performance art focusing around the spoken word. Hosting this year’s annual poetry-fest along with Ms. Lief is Middle School ELA teacher Jill Rosenblum. Once again there will be a technology component and the audience can expect some surprise guests.

Each student made a video using Animoto for one of their original poems and audience members will be able to view these videos from their seats using iPads provided by the school or on any mobile device. Guests can scan the QR Codes and watch the video while dining. Friends and family are encouraged to download the QR Reader app on their own mobile device ahead of time and bring headphones if they so desire. “It will be a unique 21st Century poetry jam,” said Ms. Lief.

A former student of Ms. Lief’s, Cynthia Keteku from MS 181 in the Bronx, has been working with the Dobbs Ferry 7th graders over a nine-day residency within their ELA classes. She has been focusing on writing and presenting various styles of poetry. You might hear a Romeo and Juliet soliloquy turned into rap? “These kids have such a light, such a fire within them and I encourage them to let that light shine,” said Ms. Keteku.

The students just completed a special poetry unit which is part of the English Language Arts curriculum. According to Ms. Lief, every student was asked to create a piece of “art” using only their words and imagination. They were required to write multiple poems incorporating an array of different styles and prompts. Every year she is astounded by the range and depth of the students’ poems.

“It’s a bit scary for me as I turn the entire night over to the students and they literally run the whole show, but the kids always come through and do an amazing job,” Ms. Lief said.

For more information, please contact:

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