



Bellflower Unified School District

Media Release

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Bellflower Elementary Students Bring History to Life with Annual Wax Museum

BELLFLOWER – Stephen Foster Elementary fifth-grader Sophia Manansala, clad in Revolutionary War attire, sprang to life as a coin dropped into the small can in front of her, launching into an impassioned retelling of how Mary Ludwig Hays earned the names Molly Pitcher and Sergeant Molly for her courageous efforts during the Battle on Monmouth.

Nearby, Quazar Bueno Hill dropped to the floor as he re-enacted Alexander Hamilton's death by duel with Aaron Burr while Shyanne King, dressed as Bessie Coleman, shared how her character broke down barriers as the first African American woman to earn a pilot's license.

Together, the students and their fifth-grade classmates on Feb. 21 formed the first of three wax museum presentations planned this month at the Bellflower Unified school, bringing history to life through speeches on pivotal figures from America's past while raising money for cancer research.

The museum features a different fifth-grade class on each of its three days, starting Feb. 21 and continuing **Friday, Feb. 24** and **Tuesday, Feb. 28**. The historical figures – ranging from Mark Twain to Frederick Douglas and Tecumseh to Annie Oakley – were activated by other Foster students, parents and community members who donated coins.

The school cafeteria buzzed all morning as the students told their stories to dozens of guests.

Sophia told how Hays came to be known as Molly Pitcher while bringing water to cool the artillery and how she took over firing her husband's cannon when he was injured.

MORE

Standard of Excellence - Nothing Less

Bellflower Unified School District provides a pathway for all students to attain the expertise and develop skills of academic excellence that will empower them to become lifelong active learners, demonstrate respect for themselves and others in a dynamic, diverse and global society, become responsible, informed, productive, independent and contributing citizens, and perform successfully in their chosen field and in society.



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"She is really interesting and caring," Sophia said between performances.

Quazar said he liked playing Hamilton because of his contribution to the country.

Shyanne described how Coleman's determination to succeed despite racism has inspired her.

"Because she did what she did, I feel that I can do my stuff -- I want to be a doctor," she said.

Students were kept hopping as they collected coins for Pennies for Patients, a charity that benefits the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. The money will also fund a school science assembly.

"Stephen Foster's wax museum shows our students that history is not a dry topic, but one that can engage us on multiple fronts," Superintendent Dr. Brian Jacobs said. "With just one event, the school has managed to inspire student research, drama and community service, as well as building connections with the community."

The wax museum continues at 9:15 to 10:15 a.m. Friday, Feb. 24 and Tuesday, Feb. 28.

PHOTOS

022317_BUSD_WAX_1: Stephen Foster Elementary School fifth-grader Sophia Manansala, dressed as Mary Ludwig Hays, tells of the woman who came to be known as Molly Pitcher and Sergeant Molly for her help in cooling artillery – and later firing cannon – during the Revolutionary War's Battle of Monmouth. Manansala's class on Feb. 21 presented the first of three wax museum events to be held this month at the school.

022317_BUSD_WAX_2: Stephen Foster Elementary School fifth-grader Quazar Bueno Hill, dressed as Alexander Hamilton, draws praise for his dramatic re-enactment of the founding father's death by duel with Aaron Burr. Quazar's class on Feb. 21 presented the first of three wax museum events to be held this month at the school.

022317_BUSD_WAX_3: Stephen Foster Elementary School fifth-grader Shyanne King portrays Bessie Coleman, the first African American woman to earn a pilot's license, on Feb. 21 during the first of three wax museums to be held at this month at the school. Shyanne said Coleman has inspired her to pursue her dream of becoming a doctor.

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