



**2017 Peace & Diversity Day
~ Family Packet ~**

*“If we are to have peace on earth...
our loyalties must transcend our race,
our tribe, our class, and our nation;
and this means we must develop a
world perspective.”*

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

January, 2017

Dear MS 447 Families & Members of Our Extended Community,

Our Annual Peace & Diversity Conference is here!

Inspired by the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., we plan this day to coincide with the holiday that celebrates his life and pays homage to his teachings. On January 17th, our school will bring its students together to learn more about identity, appreciate the freedoms we are afforded, and recognize the continued effort that is needed for better understanding and equality.

During the conference students and staff will enjoy a performance by Ty Defoe (see information below). All classes will walk through our Cultural Gallery, where artifacts provided by our 8th graders and staff, can be viewed. All grades will have a guest speaker, each giving their own perspective by sharing their experience as it relates to identity and social justice. Classes will have activities and conversations around topics such as stereotyping (gr.6), biased language (gr. 7), and privilege (gr. 8). All topics will be further explored through our Advisory Program. The day will conclude with a talent showcase by students who signed up to perform in an all-school assembly.

We encourage all families to have discussions about identity - race, religion, gender, ethnicity, and other social identifiers, at home. As middle schoolers, our kids are ready to have meaningful dialog around current events and social justice. We are providing some resources that we hope will facilitate those conversations.

It is our sincere hope that by gaining knowledge from one another, practicing communal responsibility, we can move forward with sincerity to better ensure equality in our school.

Sincerely,

The Math & Science Exploratory School

We would like to thank our performers & speakers for the day, including many of our student
These are individuals bring our students fresh perspectives by sharing their personal journey.

School Wide Assembly Performer

Ty Defoe ~ Ty is a member of the Oneida and Ojibwe Nations. Ty is an interdisciplinary artist, a two-spirit cultural pioneer, musician, and writer. He has gained recognition around the world. You can learn more about Ty by visiting: www.tydefoe.com.

6th Grade Speaker

Colin Ozeki ~ Ozeki is an MS 447 alumni. He is currently senior at Millennium Brooklyn High School and part of their ASD Nest program. An integrative program for high functioning autistic students. Colin will discuss how he overcame major challenges in middle school and high school. Colin is a talented piano player and plays magic the gathering competitively.

7th Grade Speaker

Hebh Jamal ~ **Hebh** is a senior at Beacon High School. She is a member of Muslim American Society and was featured in the New York Times article, *Young Muslim Americans Feeling the Strain of Suspicion*. Hebh Jamal is currently working with [IntegrateNYC4Me](http://IntegrateNYC4Me.com) in an effort to diversify New York City schools. She also works with the organization, New York Appleseed. They advocate for equity of access and fair allocation of resources to schools and neighborhoods in New York City and its greater metropolitan area. As a Muslim American, Hebh aims to create a sense of community through dialogue and activism.

8th Grade Speakers

Peter Raucci ~ (LGBT advocate). Peter has worked in the field of international education since 2005, on a wide range of projects aimed at bringing international students to the US, and sending American students abroad. Peter is a board member of I'm From Driftwood, an online, first-person LGBT storytelling archive, and served as a hotline operator for the NYC Anti-Violence Project. Peter has a BA from NYU in Anthropology and Linguistics, an MPA from Baruch College, and studied abroad at the University of Iceland.

Tina Jones (TJ) ~ (LGBT advocate). Tina is the LGBT Outreach Coordinator for the HEAT program in Brooklyn. Ms. Jones graduated from Marymount Manhattan College where she received her BA in English and is currently working on her Masters in Human Service Counseling. Ms. Jones is a proud lesbian mother of a 10 year old girl

Thank you to all our participants in our Talent Showcase:

Soumia Bouchour (802) ~ Show MC & Reading

Killian Reilly (601) ~ Show MC & Performer

Jaylynn McCurdy (806) ~ Show MC & Performer

Isabelle Ortega (705) ~ The Star Spangled Banner

Thy-Lan Alcalay (803), Cora Szell (803), Maya Soudatt (803), Jake Salz (806), & Carlos Grunewald (801) ~ Clocks by Coldplay. Demonstrating how peace is essential.

7th grade Jazz dance Club ~ Audrey Garfinkel (701), Saniyah Leon (701), Emelia Grace (704), Ella Roundy (702), Dioni Payamps (702), Adia Felix (702), Samadhi Deloney (701), Gabriela Tejada (704), Isabelle Moynier (701), Sariya Sealey (705) ~ Will be performing a Jazz dance to Crazy in Love (remix). Jazz dance was created in the United States by African Americans and can be danced by anyone today. Through dress they demonstrate how we are all together yet different.

Ariana Gajowniczek (604) ~ Playing the Ukulele and singing “I don’t know my name” This song represents her personal self discovery journey.

Mark Vinokur (603), Samuel Bromberg (604), Isaac Bromberg (604), Soren-Ariel Shafir-Sannikov (603) ~ Will be singing “We Will Rock You” by Queen. A song they believe has unified people over time.

Lizzie Lazar (803), Amelia Ocampo (803), Thy-Lan Alcalay (803), Maya Soudatt (803), and Jaylynn McCurdy (806), Aurora Sadasy (801) ~ Will be merging ballet and hip hop in a dance performance of Tchaikovsky Running Dance of Cygnets. This act demonstrates how many different forms of performance can come together to form one whole ensemble.

Ethan Andrews (704) ~ Rondo Alla Turca from K.331 by W.A. Mozart, a classical piece that celebrates history and moments of peace.

Kendall Bauer (706) ~ Singing “I’m Here” from The color Purple
A song about being stronger than you think you are.

Yelena Cordova (704) ~ Performing who you are by Jessie J. A song about not giving up.

Amelia Reitzfeld (705), Jordan Albizu (704) ~ Playing the Ukulele and sing their original song “In the Clouds” This songs illustrates finding your true self and overcoming obstacles in your life.”

Elena Yamamoto Scherer (601) ~ Playing, “the Ashitaka to the san” on Piano. This song is from the Japanese movie “Princess Monoke.

Emelie Villanueva (706) ~ Singing Vivir mi Vida by Marc Anthony, a song about living life and focusing on what is important.

Lydia Abusharr (702) ~ Playing guitar and singing Riptide by Vance Joy, a song that brings calm to her.

Ugandan Dance Club ~ Emelia Grace - 704, Audrey Garfinkel (701), Gavin Keller (705), Owen Maloney (703), Elijah Pile - 705, Amelia Ocampo 803, Amelia Decoursy (806) ~ Performing a traditional Ugandan Dance. Ms. Farrell learned this during her trip to Uganda in 2010.

Links:

- **Imagine A World Without Hate Biographies & Definitions** -Anti-Defamation League (ADL)
<http://www.adl.org/imagine/?referrer=https://www.google.com/#.WHkORdIrKUK>
- **Love Has No Labels - Family & Caregiver Guide** (copied from: Love Has No Labels guide of the same title from The ADL)
<http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/love-has-no-labels.html#.WHkZqNIrKUK>
- **Table Talk: Family Conversations About Current Events** (visit:
<http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/anti-bias-education/c/table-talk-family-conversations.html#.VpPos9KANBc>)
- **MTV Decoded** - this is a series of short videos that address issues that are relevant and related to the theme of our conference. “Why Does Privilege Make People So Angry” is one of their creations and can be found, along with other related topics, on You-Tube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qeYpvV3eRhY>
- Other Suggested Websites:
 - www.lookdifferent.org (an interactive site that addresses race, gender, and LGBT issues)
 - <http://www.isdnetwork.org/what-is-diversity.html>

If you have resources you would like to share, please email mkatz@ms447.org