

Peninsula News

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EDUCATION

PHS honored for character, studies volcanoes

Peninsula Heritage School was honored at the National Forum on Character Education in San Francisco for the school's Character Qualities program. Accepting the Promising Practices Award as a National School of Character was Peninsula Heritage's character development coordinator, PJ Charnofsky.

"We were one of only three schools in the state of California receiving this honor," Charnofsky says. "And this is the sixth-consecutive year that Peninsula Heritage has had the privilege of being selected."

Under the leadership of Charnofsky and Head of School Patricia Cailler, Peninsula Heritage has developed its own program focusing on the six qualities of respect, caring, attitude, gratitude, self-control and perseverance. Each grade at the school, including kindergarten, leads an all-school assembly once each year focusing on one of these six character qualities and exemplifying it through song, dance and written reflections.

The Character Qualities program are an integral part of the school and are included in all aspects of the Peninsula Heritage's teaching and curriculum from in-class instruction to the physical edu-

cation program.

"If students can be caring and respectful, having a positive attitude and express gratitude, and couple this with self-control and perseverance, they can't help but be successful in all that they do," Charnofsky says of the school's program.

The science of volcanoes

"I am a vulcanologist," began Dr. Jennifer Garrison as she greeted the fourth-grade students at Peninsula Heritage in their science lab. "And I study volcanoes."

Garrison, assistant professor of geology at California State University, Los Angeles, is journeying to Ecuador as part of a joint expedition with scientists and students from Cal State L.A. and the University of Wyoming. The Peninsula Heritage students will follow the expedition online, as the scientists post photos and scientific findings on their expedition-specific website.

Hands flew into the air with almost every new slide that Garrison projected on the screen in the science lab during her presentation. Interested students posed questions such as, "Were you at that volcano?" (often she was), "Was it



Dr. Jennifer Garrison of California State University, Los Angeles, identifies for students at Peninsula Heritage School the volcanoes in Ecuador that she will be studying on her upcoming expedition.

hot standing there?" (Yes!) and "What will you be doing there?"

The purpose of this expedition is to gather information to assist in predicting volcanoes and saving lives in Ecuador, where citizens often live beneath the shadows of both dormant and active volcanoes.

Peninsula Heritage's science teacher, Kathy Mallon, arranged the visit as both she and Garrison are technical deep sea divers. Mallon had previewed with the children the science of volcanoes and

provided magnifying glasses for the students to examine the rock and ash specimens Garrison brought for the children from previous trips to Ecuador and the Hawaiian Islands.

"What is the largest volcanic eruption in recent U.S. history?" Garrison queried the class.

"Mount St. Helen's!" was the immediate student response. Then Garrison gave each student a small vial of volcanic ash from that 1980 eruption.



Students at Peninsula Heritage School proudly share their school's Character Qualities award conferred by the Character Education Partnership at the recent national conference in San Francisco.