

## **LHS Spanish Honor Society Members Go Back to Elementary School**

Recently, dozens of members of the Livingston High School Spanish Honor Society went back to elementary school—to share their love of foreign language and culture with their community.

From February to April, students from the honor society volunteered at the multicultural celebrations of Burnet Hill, Collins, and Riker Hill elementary schools. At each event, the LHS students took on roles that included working arts and crafts tables, serving food, and issuing “passports” to visitors.

“It was amazing to have the [high school students] help out; it meant not only more hands but also hands-on volunteers eager to display incredible enthusiasm with the elementary schoolers,” said Sara Elsky, who co-organized the Burnet Hill Elementary multicultural night. Elsky also commented that, “Seeing everyone in the community—including busy high schoolers—at multicultural night underscored the importance of sharing and celebrating diversity.”

At Burnet Hill and Collins, the honor society members were integrated into existing “country rooms,” where they demonstrated dances, explained cultural traditions, and helped visitors create friendship bracelets. They also worked in the “international food halls,” serving food to and helping clean up after hungry grade-schoolers—an experience that LHS juniors Milagros Bonilla and Annie Song called “unforgettable.”

At Riker Hill, the honor society students created their own “Spanish” room. After setting a budget, the students headed to local stores and restaurants for decorations, supplies, and food—trekking as far as Montclair for empanadas from an authentic Cuban restaurant. Hours before the event, they began decorating the room, setting up activity stations, and streaming a playlist of Latin music. During the celebration, students worked in pairs at specific stations involving art, music, games, and language.

“Grown-ups were in charge of most of the countries, but the Spanish room [run by the high-school students] was the most fun!” proclaimed Aiden K., a student at Riker Hill. “We played ‘pin the tail on the bull’ and I made a rainbow-colored worry doll. But the best part was definitely the piñata at the end!”

“It’s been a while since I was in elementary school, but helping put on these multicultural nights brought back a lot of memories,” said Howie Shen, an honor society member. “You don’t get many chances to relive treasured childhood experiences from a different perspective.”

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