

PRESS RELEASE

The World's 1st Day of the Girl Celebrated in Local Schools

Campbellton – October 11, 2012 – The United Nations created the World's 1st International Day of the Girl, and on October 11th, 2012 this important day was celebrated worldwide and in local schools.

Mayme Lefurgey, who is originally from Campbellton, spoke to female students at the Campbellton Middle School as well as the students at the Tide Head School. Lefurgey explained that the Day of the Girl was created because girls are important and need to have equal rights all around the world, and that by investing in girls everywhere we will live in a better world.

Lefurgey is currently studying at the UNESCO Chair Program in Innsbruck Austria in the MA in International Peace, Security, Development and International Conflict Transformation program. She is a recent graduate of the United Nations Mandated University for Peace (UPEACE), where she completed a Master's degree in Gender and Peace building. Upon graduation, she relocated to Malawi where she worked as a gender specialist for the Office of the President and Cabinet's Department of Public Service Management in the Gender Unit of the Malawi federal government. This position was a volunteer internship as part of a Canadian International Development Agency IYIP.

While in Malawi, Lefurgey took on numerous volunteer projects such as leading a community gender-based vulnerability assessment in Dzama, facilitating a cultural exchange initiative between Malawian and Canadian children and volunteering at a school for orphans.

Lefurgey shared with the students that girls are the most poor, hungry and illiterate, and that girls around the world are less likely than boys to play sports, go to school, get good jobs, and be in government.

Lefurgey explained that in other parts of the world school is not free like it is here, so sometimes when families do not have a lot of money they need to choose to send boys or girls to school. She asked the students "How many girls do you think are not in school right now that should be?" The students were surprised to hear that there are 75 million girls around the world without adequate access to education. Around the world, a raised hand is a symbol for education and the empowerment that comes with it. Lefurgey asked the students to raise their hands in proclamation that they believe every girl deserves an education, and she encouraged the students to tell their community, province, country, and the world to put girls' education at the top of the global agenda—because if we invest in girls, we will change the world for the better.

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Media contact:

Carole Gignac
Community Schools Coordinator, Anglophone North School District
Tel: 685-5283, Email: carole.gignac@nbed.nb.ca