

Kids for Peace host rally for tolerance

by Alyx Sariol
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CARLSBAD — Hundreds of students rallied for tolerance at Carlsbad's Jefferson Elementary School on Jan. 7 during a monthly assembly that focused on an aspect of living as a well-rounded student and citizen.

Jefferson Elementary's Kids for Peace chapter, a local nonprofit that promotes global peace, hosted the rally for tolerance, which included a song performance; a mock awards ceremony; and a moment of silence to wish for peace and acceptance around the world.



"Kids for Peace is hosting this rally because tolerance is a big part of our mission," Jill McManigal, co-founder of Kids for Peace and Jefferson Elementary's drama teacher, said. "These monthly rallies are a chance to display good ways of living life."

More than 25 fourth-grade students kicked off the rally with their performance of War's "Why Can't We Be Friends?" Kids for Peace members also described something about themselves — from religion to interests — that made them different, but no less of a friend.

"This is a chance to learn about other cultures and encourage students to reach out to other kids despite their differences," McManigal said.

The Kids Choice Attitude Awards was the main attraction at the rally. The ceremony featured students dressed as prominent figures that promoted tolerance throughout history. Student Lydia Schmidt emceed the ceremony.

Celebrity presenters Carly from iCarly and Justin Bieber — played by students Kelly Frost and Sammy Hilliard, respectively — invited each

historical nominee to describe why they should win the award with their message of tolerance.



Nicole Less, who played Anne Frank, said, “We all deserve to live freely and happily,” while Griffin Rangel as Jesus added, “May we all live a tolerant life.”

Other nominees included Martin Luther King, Jr. played by Grant Moyer; Helen Keller, portrayed by Kailey Hengesbach; and Buddha, as represented by Grant Tong.

The Kids Choice Attitude Award winner was selected by audience applause and Griffin’s portrayal of Jesus received the most support, securing the award.

“This has been really fun,” Kailey said after the ceremony. “It was really nice because a lot of people don’t understand how good it is to be nice to people and we got to show them that.”

Kids for Peace also shared an update on an ongoing schoolwide fundraiser to assist an African orphanage. The group is halfway to its goal of raising enough money for 50 bunk beds, with 10 beds already constructed.

“I like being in Kids for Peace because we get to help these kids in Africa and try to make peace around the world,” student Mary Feldman, 9, said. “It’s exciting.”

For more information about the Carlsbad-based global nonprofit Kids for Peace, visit kidsforpeaceglobal.org.