

Diversity Fair brings out flavors of Bryan Station High

Bryan Station High School was a virtual Baskins-Robbins of culture during its second annual Diversity Fair.

Exchange student Naser Allhassania, a junior, shared a little about his native Lebanon with the social studies and ESL students who packed the auditorium. “Most of the students here have never known about my country,” he said after his slide show.

Naser talked about Lebanon’s flag, population, government, religions (Muslim and Christian) and climate. “You can be skiing on the mountains, and in a couple of hours, you’ll be swimming in the sea,” he said.

Other highlights of the March 16 fair included a Costa Rican dance, a jazz ensemble, a Middle Eastern dance, an Indian fashion show and a PowerPoint presentation on Pakistan.

Everyone worked hard to prepare for the event, said teacher Shatha Shakir, who organized the fair. “We have different, unique, young, talented students,” she said. “Our teacher population is also very diverse and works very hard to make BSHS a better place to be.”

Amira Qureshi, an occasional substitute teacher in Fayette County schools, was glad to help out at the Diversity Fair since she had launched a similar event at Lexington Traditional Magnet School a few years ago.

“It opens up and educates children about different cultures, different religions, different types of food and different languages,” said Qureshi, who shared a few historical and cultural facts about Pakistan. “Then in social studies, when they go through different topics, they can relate.”

The fair wrapped up with a sampling of foods from around the world, including Turkey, India, Mexico and Israel. In addition, the cafeteria walls were lined with student posters describing various countries and cultures.

Cathy Yaun, who teaches students who use English as a Second Language, helped coordinate the fair. She said one main emphasis was encouraging kids to “recognize that ‘different’ is a good thing.”

“If we could tap into that, we’d realize how broad the world is,” she said.