

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK: Mandela's grandson praises students for caring

By JAMES FURBUSH
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QUINCY - Local students involved in a world service program that builds schools in poor countries were rewarded with a visit and words of encouragement yesterday from Prince Cedza Dlamini, the grandson of Nelson Mandela and a member of the royal family of Swaziland.

Dressed in traditional Swahili attire, Dlamini was in Quincy to talk to students from Broad Meadows Middle School, North Quincy High School, Quincy High School and Archbishop Williams High School in Braintree who are involved in Operation Day's Work. The national student-run program includes 23 schools, four of them on the South Shore, that raise money each year to build a school in a developing country.

This year, students raised money for a new school in Vietnam. Broad Meadows Middle School was one of the eight schools that began the program in 1997.

Dlamini, a student at Tufts University in Medford, congratulated students and their teachers yesterday at Thomas Crane Public Library in Quincy.

“One does not have to be born into a certain family to be a leader,” he said. “What matters is what you do with what you have. Whether you're a prince or pauper, you can make a difference.”

Dlamini is promoting the Millennium Development Goals, established in 2000 by the United Nations. The goals are to eradicate poverty, disease and infant mortality by 2015, and to raise literacy rates, gender equality, maternal health and environmental sustainability in developing nations.

Dlamini said education is the key to achieving the goals, but that not enough young people are aware of worldwide problems. But that isn't the case among local students involved in Operation Day's Work.

“It takes a little bit of time and a big heart to make a difference,” Kristen Bloomer, a Broad Meadows eighth-grader, said.

“Rita Wang, a recent graduate of North Quincy High School, said, “If we all do a little, it will add up to a lot.”



Prince Cedza Dlamini, grandson of Nelson Mandela, meets with students in Quincy to exchange ideas for ending poverty, disease and infant mortality around the world. (GARY HIGGINS/The Patriot Ledger)

The students made Dlamini an honorable member of their service organization. Dlamini said he was grateful for the honor and very humbled.

Ron Adams, a seventh-grade language arts teacher at Broad Meadows and the faculty supervisor of the program, described the afternoon ceremony as “simply an A-plus.”

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