

Total Praise Performs at GC-NAD Meetings

On October 30, six members of Mamawi Atosketan Native School's sign language performance group, Total Praise, preformed for the top administrators and conference presidents of the Seventh-day Adventist Church at the church's year end meetings in Silver Spring, Maryland.

"I will never forget it in my entire life," affirms one of the Total Praise performers. "I felt like we were famous."

With only two weeks to prepare, it was an incredible feat on the part of the school and the larger community to make the trip possible. Not one of the students had valid passports or had been on a plane before, but in true Mamawi Atosketan form, teachers, parents and even members of the band worked together to make it happen.

"I'm so proud of my daughter and the school," said Lori Baldry, parent of Jersey Threefingers, Grade 7. "This is such an honour for the school and the students to get to go. And I wish I could go too! This program is absolutely amazing. It is both fun and mesmerizing to behold."

Another parent writes, "Thank you so much for taking care of our kids. They may never get a chance to do something like this again in their life. We love what you are doing here at this school and it means so much to us and our family that you are doing this for our kids. We will never forget it. It is just like a big family here at this school."

After the whirlwind trip, Total Praise director Cheri Notice remarked in a Facebook post that after spending time

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with "near Adventist royalty" like Ted Wilson and Dan Jackson, her students "commented that they loved all the care and encouraging words they received from these leaders. They don't know who these people are but they will always remember how they made them feel. In the end, the girls were the ones that felt like royalty."

Opportunities like this can inspire others. A student who didn't attend has already decided, "I'm going to join Total Praise next time so I can go too." They also have the potential to bring children closer to God. One student

remarked, "I want to learn more about Jesus so I can tell other people. I really hope we get to do this again sometime."

—Myken McDowell is the communications assistant for The Bridge Campaign for Mamawi Atosketan Native School.



MANS students in company of Principal Gail Wilton (far right) and Total Praise Director Cheri Notice (left) meet Larry Blackmer (far left), VP for Education at the NAD Education Department.