News Release: PGCPS Student Participates in Global Internship

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For Immediate Release
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UPPER MARLBORO, MD – While most high school seniors were anxiously awaiting the start of school last week, Khalil Parker, a senior at Central High School, was basking over his summer internship in China.

Parker, who is enrolled in Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) International Baccalaureate and French Immersion Programs, spent three and a half weeks in Zhenjiang, Jiangsu, China teaching French and English to elementary school students on summer break. Parker created lesson plans for six classes and routinely began the instructional day with warm-up exercises that allowed students to practice their speaking and writing skills. Throughout the day, he used a wide variety of activities to help him assess his students' ability to read and comprehend the language.

Dr. Caleb C.C. Annan, owner of Caleb's International Language Club, asked Parker to intern at his center in 2014. Parker was visiting his mother, Kimberly Parker, in China, where she taught English. Dr. Annan was impressed with his language skills and offered him an internship.

"Interning in China was an amazing opportunity," said Parker. "As an immersion student, I know how challenging, yet rewarding learning a language can be. I am always excited about being a part of a student's academic experience and witnessing their progress as they learn a new language."

Parker has been enrolled in PGCPS' French Immersion program since kindergarten. He established his own French tutoring company when he was in the sixth grade. Most of his clients are elementary school students at John Hanson French Immersion School. During tutoring sessions, he uses games and other engaging activities to make learning fun. Parker also assists his brother, Kalonji, 13, with his school work. Kalonji, who was also in the French Immersion program at John Hanson French Immersion School, is Khalil's business partner and assists with tutoring students.

"Learning a second language is extremely beneficial," said Carmen Henninger, Instructional Specialist, Immersion Programs at PGCPS. "Students who are, bilingual, bi-literate and bi-cultural have the self-confidence needed to reach out for national and international opportunities that other students would not consider."

There are several benefits associated with language immersion programs, including academic and educational achievement, language and literacy comprehension, cognitive skill development, and economic and sociocultural awareness.

“Speaking a second language fluently, traveling to different countries, and all of my experiences have opened many doors for me,” said Parker. “Now that I’ve added two internships in China to my resume, I have established myself as a true global citizen. I know it will look quite impressive on my resume when applying to colleges and for scholarships.”

Parker is preparing for his final year by taking the SATs and applying to colleges, such as Saint John’s University, University of Maryland, Florida State University, North Carolina Central University, Penn State and Delaware State University.

This year, PGCPS French Immersion Program will celebrate its 30th anniversary. There are currently 1,253 students enrolled in French immersion programs at Dora Kennedy French Immersion, Maya Angelou French Immersion, and Central High School French Immersion. PGCPS also maintains Spanish and Chinese Immersion Programs at Capitol Heights Spanish Dual Language/Stem, César Chávez Dual Spanish Immersion, Overlook Spanish Full Immersion, Phyllis E. Williams Spanish Full Immersion, and Paint Branch Partial Chinese Immersion.

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Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS), one of the nation's 20th largest school districts, has 201 schools and centers, more than 133,000 students and nearly 20,000 employees. The school system serves a diverse student population from urban, suburban and rural communities located in the Washington, DC suburbs. PGCPS is nationally recognized for college and career-readiness programs that provide students with unique learning opportunities, including dual enrollment and language immersion.

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