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Excitement soars when Chinese kite-making workshop lands at Chicago school

by Jing Zhao Cesarone

CHICAGO, Nov. 19 (Xinhua) -- Young imaginations took flight when the Chinese princess of kite-making granted a hands-on demonstration of authentic Chinese kites in an eye-opening and fun-filled workshop for Chicago public school students and teachers.

"I really like it. It is really colorful and pretty, too," Alison Gruss, a second grade student at Walt Disney Magnet School, said after painting her kite.

Gruss has been learning Chinese for about four years and really loves it. Holding her beautiful kite, Gruss explained, "My kite represents nature. I have two flowers. The green on the wings represents grass and the blue represents sky. I painted the tail bright yellow to represent the sun."

Jaden Jones, another second grader, wrote Chinese characters meaning "China" and "people" on his kite. He said, "This is really fun. I have been learning Chinese since kindergarten. I wanted my kite to have bright colors so you can see it in the sky."

Their proud Chinese teacher, Rosita Chang, was excited to have the kite-making program in her class. She said, "My students love to learn Chinese, especially Chinese writing, because it is like picture painting for them. They love the kite-painting program and they love Chinese culture!"

The visiting Chinese folk artist, Hongwei Yang, is the third descendant of the famous Weifang kite making family from the Shandong province. Her grandfather, the late Tong-Ke Yang, is known as the "King of Kite-making" in China. Hongwei Yang inherited the tradition from her family and has visited many countries as an ambassador of Chinese kite making.

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