

Fifth-graders earn Chinese government scholarships

Three students from Portland's International School will have the opportunity to take part in a four-week study program at Beijing Language University this summer. The China National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language has offered "Chinese Bridge" awards to the fifth-graders for successfully passing the HSK Chinese government language test, according to Yang Shen, Chief Education Shen, Chief Education Consul at the Chinese Consulate General in San Francisco.

Hannah Rudoff, Jack Edwards, and Jing Kappes were awarded scholarships. Also passing the test were International School students Yzmari Joanna Duran and Naomi Garland.

"This was the first time that we introduced HSK in Portland and the first time we had participants of such young age," said Yang Shen. "It is by no means an easy test."

Developed by the HSK Center of Beijing Language and Cultural University to assess the language proficiency of non-native speakers, the test is a requirement to enter a

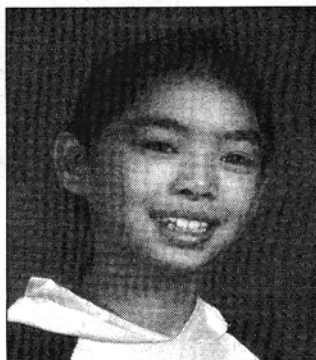
college or university in China as an undergraduate. It also can exempt students from taking certain language courses in China and in many American universities, and is used as a reference for hiring decisions for positions requiring basic competence in Chinese.

The students are native English speakers who have attended the International School's Chinese immersion program since preschool, said Bruce Bayliss, Head of School. Students in the program study an American curriculum taught in Chinese by native Chinese speakers.

"These results show that a full-immersion program started at a young age can really prepare children to participate in exchanges with other languages and cultures," remarked Bayliss.

"I'm nervous but very excited to go to China this summer. It will be fun to make new friends there," said Jack Edwards, one of the fifth-graders.

To learn more about the International School, call (503) 226-2496 or visit <www.intlschool.org>. The school is located at 025 S.W. Sherman Street in Portland.



BEIJING BOUND. Hannah Rudoff (top) and Jing Kappes will take part in a four-week study program at Beijing Language University this summer. (Photos courtesy of the International School)