



Do Re Mi Show choir teacher, Shana Acray leads her students in a vocal exercise to start the day. Acray encouraged students to show off their talents by demonstrating her talents as an example. *Photo by Meh'Quira Malone*

CREATING CONFIDENCE

Teacher lets students showcase other talents

Bria Howard-Reporter

Whether it was doing a cartwheel, drawing or even a hyperextended thumb, talent shows were a staple in elementary school. Now, choir teacher Shana Acray has brought the talent back.

Calling it Feature Friday, Acray's students Perform their special talents in front of the class. It does not matter if the talent is something they learned the day before or something they've been working at since they were a kid, Acray encourages all types of talent.

Acray has included Feature Friday in her curriculum since she worked as a music teacher in elementary school.

"I started it because I want kids to get to know each other to be comfortable getting in front of each other to gain confidence," Acray said. "And I also want to get to know their skills and what they like to do outside of choir."

When Acray introduced Feature

Friday, her students were excited but took a bit to warm up to it. Senior Nadia Moujdi was nervous at first but once Acray told her students more about it she loosened up to the idea.

"Performing in front of the whole class by myself was a little scary, but then she said you can do it with other people. That made me feel comfortable," Moujdi said.

In Acray's class, her students have shown a variety of skills and talents thus far. Some of the talents have been songs students wrote or something as interesting as a choreographed fight scene. Acray allows students to express their creativity and

individuality within this event.

"I've seen kids that will dance and play instruments. Someone brought in something that they had welded and I've seen people draw," Acray said

"It's really important to be able to become comfortable enough to get in front of other people. You're going to be doing that after you leave high school. I want kids to just be confident."
Shana Acray

"People have told jokes. People have read stories they've written or poems, things like that."

In Moujdi's case, singing was her choice as it was something she has been doing for a long time.

"I chose it because it's just something I really enjoy doing. So I was like, why not try in front of a class to get experience in front of an audience," Moujdi said.

Acray constantly works with her students to raise their confidence to perform. She pushes comfort ability and confidence in her students while also teaching them how to be a good audience and respect the performers on the stage or as she calls it, "Human Decency".

"I think it's really important to be able to become comfortable enough to get in front of other people. You're

going to be doing that after you leave high school," Acray said "I also want kids to just be confident. I also find the most important reason is to learn how to become a respectful audience member so that you are encouraging to people who are up there no matter if you like it or not."

According to Moujdi, Feature Friday has made her and her classmates become closer, and Acray feels that this activity has made her class become more confident and comfortable in the classroom and that is her goal. Acray is proud of all the talented students that take time to share with the class.

"I truly love anyone getting up and having the guts to do that and seeing someone flourish and become less self conscious or less shy because of it," Acray said. "I love it all."

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Nadia Moujdi



Up Next Signing up, senior Nadia Moujdi adds her name to the queue. Moujdi prepares to sing solo for the class.



Lights, Camera, Action Moving and grooving, junior Rose Jackman (Bottom Left) dances to Michael Jackson. Acting out, Kat Henderson and Hannah Mae Burnette (Below) display their acting skills by performing a scene for the class. *Photos by Meh'Quira Malone*