High honor
Davie teacher one of 400 picked for tour of China

By Scott Fleshman
STAFF WRITER

Samantha Marten of University School’s Middle School in Davie, Martin said Chinese students at her school have been chosen to tour China for a week. “It’s better for the students and it’s better for the country’s culture and language.”

The trip, sponsored by the Chinese Language Program, in partnership with the College Board, is to build and expand Chinese culture and language programs in the U.S.

Marten was one of the school’s associate directors and co-officer in physics English and other classes with students and teachers in Chongqing in the Hubei Province.

“We learned about Chinese culture and education,” said Martin.

“After visiting their schools and learning about their educational system, I realized our schools are very similar. I was impressed by their progress. We believe in the importance of education because of you.”

She came home with books, maps and materials for the school’s growing Chinese language program, as well as a new level of interest in the culture.

“We have a sister school in Xi’an, so we hope we can strengthen and expand our relationship with the school. “Samantha said.

“All of our students would benefit from such a relationship. I hope that we might bring another native speaker to our school to teach as our program expands. A student exchange program would also be fantastic.”

After three years of intensive middle school Chinese program is making its mark.

As the only middle school students in a competition full of high school and university representatives, the students were able to impress the judges with their grammar, vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation and interaction.

In the first annual Florida International Chinese Speech Contest at Florida International University earlier this year.

“Chinese is one of the hardest languages to learn,” said parent Nami Rodriguez.

Rodriguez and her family are our field study as part of the United States Chinese language initiative in 2004, in which Chinese students at the Chinese University of Science and Technology.

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