

Shining Mountain Waldorf School Ethnic/Cultural Events Sherefe Concert and Workshop

\$400 Grant from the Alex Wilson Legacy Fund - November 2023

Report by Cristina Geck

Shining Mountain Waldorf School was in for a special treat on Thursday, November 16, 2023. [Sherefe](#), a Boulder-based band that specializes in traditional music of Greece, Turkey and various Arabic and Balkan countries, came to our school, along with folk dance teacher Biz Hertzberg. They took our 4th-12th grade students on a musical journey to Eastern Europe and the Middle East. We had about 180 students and teachers in attendance.



The music was vibrant, energetic and heartfelt. Many of our students had never heard these kinds of fascinating rhythms and scales before. The event was set up in the school gym, with audience seating taking up only part of the room. During some tunes, the students sat, watched and listened. For others, they got up and folkdance Biz taught them the traditional dance steps that went with those pieces so they could take in the rhythms with their whole body.



The band members talked about their instruments and introduced some scales that the melodies were based on. The students thanked the band with enthusiastic applause, which was wonderful for the teachers to experience as the students mostly listen to Western pop music in their free time.

All students learn to play a string instrument during their time in grade school, which may have contributed to their ability to recognize the high level of artistry and musicality of the band. It is an important aspect of the Waldorf curriculum to introduce students to a multitude of diverse cultures, and it was a very rewarding confirmation to experience how they were able to connect to this music.

This was the first in a planned series of three or four concerts featuring music from cultures around the world, the *Shining Mountain Cultural World Journey of Song and Dance*. Funds from the school augmented the \$400 grant from the Alex Wilson Legacy Fund to make this performance possible. Upon successful completion of this first concert, the Fund released a second grant of \$400 to help support a second concert, to be held during the school day, that will feature a different ethnic tradition and that will be open to the students' families and friends.

We thank the Alex Wilson Legacy Fund, which made this concert possible.