

GlobalFest 2010

By Michael Sandy





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he commitment to diversity and multi-cultural awareness at Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) can be seen through the variety of lectures, workshops, conferences, and celebrations offered throughout the year. Event coordinators work with community organizations for many of these activities and open them to the public. The annual GlobalFest is an excellent example of a campus/community collaboration. The festival celebrates the cultural diversity that thrives here in Central Pennsylvania. This year's event was held on Saturday, April 17, 2010, at HACC's Harrisburg location. On that day, the campus came alive with the sights, sounds, and foods from around the world, and audiences were treated to performances representing such countries as China, Korea, India, Egypt, Philippines, Germany, and Ireland.

HACC's own Islamic Ummah Club hosted a fashion show that featured traditional clothing from a variety of Muslim countries. Local groups such as Alleweil Jung German Folk Dancers, Lancaster Chinese Dance Group, Egyptian Moon Dance Company, Filipino Dancers, Rasika School of Dance, Rebel Hearts Irish Dancers, Alpenrose Schupplattler, and Verein German Dance Group performed upbeat, lively national dances that captivated the audiences throughout the day.

The group Experimental Group Hispanic Music, who premiered at the festival this year, strummed and sang ballads and love songs, while the Do-Re Korean Drumming group treated everyone to heart-pounding musical scores that reflected Korea's Pungmul, an important traditional art form. The exhibit hall was filled with organizations that provided information; exhibited arts, crafts, and clothing; and served

delicious foods from vendors representing Indian, Korean, and Latino cuisine, all of which complemented the day's performing groups.

GlobalFest 2010 was sponsored by Women-CONNECT Magazine, Dauphin County Diversity Forum, Ta-ri, Pennsylvania Immigrant & Refugee Women's Network (PAIRWN), Harrisburg Regional Chamber & CREDC (Capital Regional Economic Development Corporation), Friendship Force of Greater Harrisburg, and The Institute for Cultural Partnerships. These sponsors contribute to our communities by promoting cooperation, diversity, and education in our region. They facilitate opportunities for making connections and foster relationships among the many cultural populations of our region.

The concepts "acceptance" and "diversity" are a part of our daily conversation, therefore it is important for everyone in Central Pennsylvania to have opportunities to get together to celebrate and educate ourselves about the various cultures in our area. GlobalFest is just one way to bring people together for these common goals. As we begin to understand, appreciate, and embrace differences within our neighborhoods, we begin to actively promote inclusiveness and reduce discrimination. It is a win-win. ❖

Michael Sandy is director of the Center for Global Education at HACC, Central Pennsylvania's community college, and actively promotes education and diversity issues nationally and internationally.