

OSU cultural night celebrates diversity on campus

Lauren Egleston Staff Reporter @ocolly Mar 31, 2019



The Napalese Student Association performing at Cultural Night Friday, March 29th at the Seretean Center.

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The International Student Organization at Oklahoma State University held their annual Cultural Night on Friday and Saturday. The event featured different international student associations' performances that represented countries from Japan to Bangladesh to Latin American.

"There needs to be a night when international students can come out and just kinda tell everybody 'Hey we exist, and this is who we are, and this is what we are about,'" Chuong Do, president of the ISO, said.

The ISO plans and puts on Cultural Night with a different theme each year. The theme of the event focused on “the roots of our people,” and every association put on a performance that highlighted the history of an aspect of their culture. Some associations, such as the Sri Lankan and Indian Student Associations, presented an overview of the whole history of their countries. Others showcased parts of their cultures through performance.

“Starting out early in the semester, we start approaching groups about performing,” Do said. “We send out applications to see how many are interested, and as soon as we know how many will show up, we start planning how much time we need and where we're gonna do it and what kind of props we need, we have to start approaching people about sponsoring.”

The students performed dances, skits and songs with many different costumes, music, videos and props unique to their culture.

“We did a combination of four different dances from Latin America, from Mexico, Dominican Republic, Argentina, and Colombia. So I did the tango performance from Argentina, and then I was one of the viejitos in 'la danza de los viejitos' from Mexico,” said Erik Knatvold from the Latin American Student Association.

The performances the students put on helped educate the people attending the event on countries that are not well known, such as Sri Lanka.

“I come from a really small country, which is an island, so it is really important for others to know that a small country like that it exists and we are over here and we have these identities,” said Tarosha Salbaboru, a member of the Sri Lankan Student Association.

Rachel Madden, a student at OSU, said she went to cultural night to experience the diversity on campus.

“(I went to cultural night) to be able to experience all the different cultures of people I'm in classes with and to understand and appreciate the beauty of people different than me,” Madden said.

Members of the audience were able to learn a lot about foreign cultures and experience the traditional clothing and dances of other countries.

"(It) gives a really good inside look to the different cultures you guys have here on campus and the amount of diversity that you can even find in Stillwater, Oklahoma, which is pretty fascinating," Rylee McDaniel, a student from University of Central Oklahoma, said.

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