

ROOTS

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MCC
MULTICULTURAL CENTER



CAL POLY
SAN LUIS OBISPO

Native American Heritage Month 2008

Native American Heritage Month

Though a small population at Cal Poly, the Native American students have deep pride in their heritage and culture. This year, the members of the American Indian Student Association (AISA) are taking an active role in facilitating the events for Native American Heritage Month.

Native American Heritage Month began with a special addition of Soup and Substance, a weekly program sponsored by Student Life and Leadership. Professor Michael Lucas, of the Architecture Department, spoke about Native American architecture and their concept of place as a combination of both naturally occurring and constructed elements.

Chumash storyteller Alan Salazar will be on campus on Wednesday November 12, sharing traditional oral stories. He will be in the San Luis Lounge (UU221) starting at 7:30pm.

On Tuesday November 18, Ines Talamantez, Professor of Anthropology, Linguistics and Comparative Literature from UC Santa Barbara will visit to talk about native American Spiritual tradition. She will be speaking in Building 08, room 123 at 7:30pm. Professor Talamantez is also the grandmother of current Cal Poly student, Joey Sanchez (AERO).

The month finishes off with the highly acclaimed featured length film, *Imprint*. Winner of Best Picture, Best Actress, and Best Supporting Actress at the 2007 American Indian Film Festival, the film tells the story of a Lakota Indian lawyer who returns to the reservation to visit her dying father and begins to experience super natural phenomenon related to the disappearance of her brother two years earlier. The film will be shown in Building 52, room E-27.

All events are free and open to the public. For more information, stop by the MultiCultural Center, UU 217 or visit www.multicultural.calpoly.edu.

Culturefest 2008



The 11th annual Culturefest was held on October 26, in Mitchell Park, San Luis Obispo, CA. Committee members and attendees alike were excited about the new Culturefest venue. Promoted by the Cal Poly Parent Program as the final event of Parent's Weekend, the turnout exceeded the committee's expectations, as many Cal Poly parents joined students and faculty, along with members of the San Luis Obispo community for a day of food, performances and sun.

This year's theme was "USS Culturefest: A Sea of Diversity" a nautical theme that worked well with the beautiful weather of the day. The children's area, "The Black Pearl," featured games, crafts, and even a treasure chest. Many of the participating organizations dressed up their booths to fit the theme. Ribbons were given to the best booth, food, and performance.

The day kicked off with a yoga demonstration for the early risers. Other performances by Cal Poly clubs and local organizations followed throughout the day. Performances showcased Middle Eastern, Irish, Japanese, Indian, Filipino, Polynesian, Brazilian, African, and Chinese cultures, as well as a break dancing performance and traditional performances by



three culturally based Greek organizations. While some groups performed on the gazebo, others performed on the grass, providing a continual flow of excitement throughout the day.

Many of Cal Poly's cultural clubs provided attendees with a wide range of cultural foods, including enchiladas, kabobs, seaweed wraps, churros, Thai tea, and fried rice. Some attendees spent upwards of \$50 just sampling the food! Other attendees left Culturefest as winners of the raffle, walking away with prizes like tickets to Magic Mountain, dinner for four at Popolo's restaurant, gas gift cards and Palm theatre tickets.

The entire day finished off with a final performance from local favorite, the Damon Castillo Band, marking the end of another successful Culturefest.

The MultiCultural Center would like to thank our sponsors and donors, as well as everyone who volunteered, participated and attended. See you next year!



Random Abiladeze at ATOG

The MultiCultural Center's Another Type of Groove continues to provide students with exceptional performances by amazing spoken word poets. For the month of November, poet Random Abiladeze came to Cal Poly to share his words. On stage he sent a strong message about politics and breaking stereotypical norms. Following hip-hop beats, Random Abiladeze showed how the hip-hop culture is not always about rappers drinking, smoking and selling drugs. Much of his poetry and commentary was politically based and coincided well with the presidential election. Random also incorporated social and spiritual messages through his words as well, trying to emphasize the fact that all these things are interconnected.

Random Abiladeze got his start in Sacramento and has won several awards and titles throughout northern California. He was the 2008 Champion of Stanford University's The Bay Poetry Slam, the 2008 Champion of the Word of Conscious Action Poetry Slam held at Sacramento State, and the 2008 and 2007 Champion of the Got Spit! Poetry Slam, which was hosted by the Sacramento chapter of Hip Hop Congress.

Javon Johnson, Featured poet for December

December's poet will be Javon Johnson, a South Central Los Angeles native. Javon's career only began in 2001, but within the year he qualified to represent Los Angeles in the National Poetry Slam Tournament, where the Los Angeles Slam Team came in fifth place. Since then, he and his team have been back on the final stage as the National Champion in 2003 and 2004, and as the third place team in 2005. He has also appeared on HBO's Def Poetry Jam and BET's Lyric Cafe.

In addition to all of his performance experience, Javon received his B.A. in Communication Studies from CSU Los Angeles in 2003 and received his M.A. in Communication Studies with an emphasis in Critical Performance Studies in 2005. His thesis was entitled "Performing My Poetry/Performing My Black Maleness: A Critical Auto(poetic)ethnography" and explores the use of spoken word in performing topics of race, masculinity, and sexuality across a multitude of conflicting spaces.

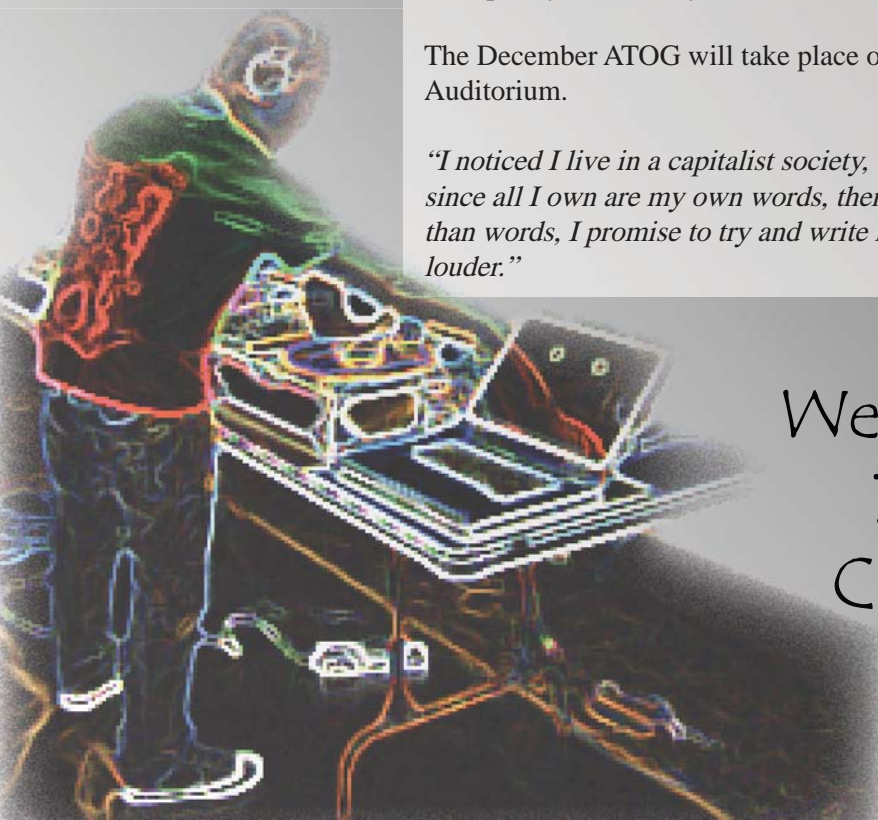
Javon is currently working on his Ph.D. in Performance Studies at Northwestern University, dealing with the politics of diversity, identity, and community negotiation in the often political slam poetry community.

The December ATOG will take place on Wednesday December 3, 2008 at 7:30pm in Chumash Auditorium.

"I noticed I live in a capitalist society, where my self-worth is based on how much I own, and since all I own are my own words, then my words are what I'm worth. Since actions speak louder than words, I promise to try and write my words into action, so my self-worth can be much, much louder."

~Javon Johnson

Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2008
7:30 to 10:00 p.m.
Chumash Auditorium



Latino Heritage Month Recap



Cyn da Poet, performs during ATOG



Hayley Maynard, performs during RAZA Speaks



Bery Gonzalez and Yuli Gonzalez enjoy playing Loteria

The end of October marked the end of Latino Heritage Month. Throughout the month of October, the MultiCultural Center hosted a variety of events highlighting Latino culture. The month kicked off with the first Another Type of Groove of the year, featuring Cyn da' Poet. Originally from El Salvador, and currently living in Los Angeles, Cyn writes and performs poetry that is universally appealing and informed by her cultural experiences. She performs her poetry primarily in Spanish, speaking for those that cannot.

A week later, the film *Di Perejil* was shown, discussing the discrimination on the Dominican-Haitian border based on how a person pronounces the word "perejil", which means "parsley." During the discussion that followed, many students realized how little they knew of the political and social environment in other countries, and how something like pronunciation (which is trivial in our culture), can in fact create a huge divide amongst neighbors.

Another documentary, "Chicano" was also screened, and chronicles the Chicano political movement in the United States during the 1960s and 70s. The film, which is part six of the miniseries "ROOTS," provided students the opportunity to see the Chicano movement from the eyes of those organizing it. During the film, fresh tamales and tamarindo (a Mexican candy) were served, giving guests a taste of Mexican culture.

Students took a break in from weightier topics as they participated in Lotería, often referred to as "Mexican Bingo." A brief history of the game was given, explaining how it started in Spain and moved to the Americas, originally as a pastime of the social elite. But it soon became popular among all classes. As the Spanish names of the images were read off, players marked their tablas (literally "tables" but referring to the playing boards) with beans, yelling out "Lotería!" when the whole board was covered. Prizes were also awarded for the first three winners.

During the third week of events, the culture of El Salvador was presented at "Night in El Salvador." Sponsored in part by Lambda Theta Alpha Sorority, the night highlighted the little-known Salvadorian culture by showing a video about the country and allowing Salvadorian students to speak of their experiences both in El Salvador and in the United States. Traditional dances were taught by Salvadorian students, and a discussion of the history, politics and culture followed. During this discussion, the topic of not knowing of the culture or politics of other countries was brought up again, but students were thankful that they got to know at least a little about one of the

many other Latin American cultures.

RAZA Speaks was this year's only off-campus event. Usually performed in Guadalupe, Doctora Velazquez, Professor of Spanish at Cal Poly and former Poet Laureate of San Luis Obispo, initiated the move of RAZA Speaks to San Luis Obispo for the first time ever. Hosted at the Steynberg Gallery on Monterey Street, the event featured local slam poets performing in Spanish, English, and Nahuatl (the native language of the Aztecs). Performances by Danza Azteca, a local Aztec dance group, were also a part of the event. The event was so popular that every seat was full and people were standing in every available space.

Each week of October also had a Question of the Week. Each Monday, a new question would be posted in the window of the MultiCultural Center, and then would be discussed at the following Thursday during UU hour. The questions ranged from "What do you consider a border?" to "What is considered Latin America?"



The final event of the month was Pin the Name on the Country. Similar to Jeopardy, students were asked questions about the culture, politics and history of Latin American countries, and had to match them to the country on the map. Some students were surprised at how much they knew of other countries, while some were surprised that they didn't know their geography. But everyone that participated said they had fun.

On Halloween, an altar was set up inside the MCC in honor of Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead. Skulls, marigold flowers and pictures of family members are displayed in traditional Mexican style.

Thanks to everyone that attended this year's events, and thank you for making this another successful Latino Heritage Month!

Native American Heritage Month

Wednesday, November 12

Alan Salazar, Chumash Story Teller

UU 221 (San Luis Lounge)

7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Tuesday, November 18

Inés Talamantez Ph.D.

*Professor in Anthropology, Linguistics,
and Comparative Literature*

Building 08, rm 123

7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Thursday, November 20

*Imprint, a feature length thriller,
received Best Picture, Best Actress, and
Best Supporting Actress awards at the
2007 American Indian Film Festival.*

Building 52, rm E27

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

