Strathfield Cultural Diversity Night

Laura De Vet
International Student Adviser
North Sydney/Strathfield/Canberra

The Strathfield Cultural Diversity Night was the first I had ever been to and it definitely won’t be the last.

The concert that took place in the Murray Hall at Strathfield campus was a night of amazing performances that showcased songs from all over the world. The very talented and polished performances were by ACU music students and ACU international students. From Cuba to Japan, Peru to Tonga the audience was taken on a journey that had us all clapping along.

Not only was there singing and dancing but a wide array of different instruments featured including; drums, guitars, piano, strings, pan flutes, synthesisers and some very tricky body percussion.

There was a wonderful performance from the Polynesian islands, where girls danced in traditional costumes to beautiful Polynesian songs and it wasn’t long before I imagined myself lying on the beach of a sunny tropical island.

Unfortunately the weather wasn’t so tropical outside and we did have some light rain but that didn’t dampen the magic of the evening. The outside area of the Murray Hall had been lit up with fairy lights and candles and the smell of freshly made gourmet pizza made our mouths water.

During interval, while we all happily ate the delicious pizza that was being cooked on the spot, we were fortunate enough to be entertained by the stunning voices of Malia and Liz Chatelier.

Overall, it was a wonderful night that was enjoyed by everybody. Thank you to everyone who contributed to making it a great night and I look forward to being there again next year.
The Cultural Fiesta at North Sydney

The Cultural Fiesta at North Sydney campus… well… rocked!

The Auditorium had been decorated with vibrant pink and orange balloons and banners which matched the energy of the performances that made the night.

The well-known Ivan Proano Anazco, who became the star of last year’s Cultural Fiesta video, opened the show and quickly had everyone singing a song that was hard to get out of our heads after.

Rafael Magahacat had our heads bobbing to some great electric guitar and vocals and Richard Falkner, a member of staff, got us all melancholic with a beautiful rendition of ‘Imagine’. Dean Milic wowed the audience on piano with a composition of his own and Khushbu Patel hypnotised us with her amazing Bollywood moves. Her spell was broken not long after when a number of audience members came on stage and had a Bollywood dance off which had us all in stitches of laughter.

The North Sydney Cultural Fiesta wouldn’t have been complete without out the fashion parade which was won this year by Xiaorong Zhu, a student from China wearing a gorgeous ‘cheongsam’, a traditional Chinese gown.

Kevin Zolio set the pace for the second half of the show by rapping a very impressive ‘Green and Gold’.

Yesra El Safadi and Christian Abella had us wanting more with their rendition of ‘Bust Your Window’ and the Filipino band ‘The Eggplants’ gave us more with 4 encores that brought the house down and finished the concert with a bang.

Oh- and did I forget to mention the prizes? Lucky door prizes, dancing prizes, costume prizes…they just seemed to keep on coming.

The evening was topped off with a variety of different stir fries that were gobbled down inside the student canteen area as we discussed the highlights of the night.

It was a fantastic night that was enjoyed by all. Thanks to everyone that helped make it happen.

Laura De Vet, ISA, NSW & ACT

The North Sydney Cultural
WYD11 Madrid: another unforgettable

From August 8th to 28th, an ACU pilgrimage went to World Youth Day 2011 with the theme “In the Footsteps of John Paul II”. And so I, together with the students and staff from all campuses visited Poland, Italy, Spain and Portugal. For about three weeks we had incredible, joyful and challenging experiences.

Our journey began in Poland. During these four days we went to several historical cities: Warsaw, Częstochowa, Krakow, Auschwitz, Wadowice and Zakopane. Visiting the home country of Blessed John Paul II (the previous Pope), for me gave great excitement to know an outstanding Catholic faith involved behind the history. I could even feel how close I was with one of the greatest Popes that ever lived as I walked in Krakow and Wadowice (place where he became Bishop and place of birth). The trip to Poland finished with a relaxing end; viewing and exploring the beautiful scenery of Tartras mountain at Zakopane.

The next day, we flew with our own personal plane (since all the passengers were our group) to Rome where we spent the week-end. My eyes were opened wide looking at one of the greatest cities in the world, and even were even wider with the all the artworks in the Basilica of St. Peter. Not only were the places that I visited fascinating (Churches, Catacombs, Trevi Fountain, Colosseum, Pantheon, etc.), but also the delicious and original foods I ate (pizza, pasta and gelato) which made my days in this ancient city. Again I was impressed as Rome also tells a great faith story of the past. Then on Monday, we set off for Madrid, heading to our main destination - that is, to attend World Youth Day.

“...to share a flag in case any of us lost it, lol. “

“...upside down with my friend’s Polish flag (white-red), and so we decided to share a flag in case any of us lost it, lol.”

Ricky Naliman
Bachelor of Commerce
Brisbane

World Youth Day is an international youth celebration started by Pope John Paul II as a way to inspire and encourage young people.
to live in the teachings of Christ. For a week, all the pilgrims shared their faith and joy in the three days of catechesis: Stations of the Cross, vigil night and the final mass with the Pope. There were more than 140 different nations and around 2 million people (four times more than previous WYD 08 in Sydney) celebrating this big event. We sang and danced together with other young people on the streets, received free hugs, made new friends, and enjoyed other fun activities. Most of all, our ACU group was really honoured to be given the opportunity to host the catechesis.

With our excellent leadership, we managed to succeed in serving the other pilgrims. My happiness was also complete as I went to the soccer stadiums of the two top teams in Madrid: Atlético Madrid and Real Madrid.

On the final day, everything become meaningful after the storm on vigil night, living out the words “Planted and built up in Jesus Christ, firm in the faith” (the theme of the WYD) and having a blessed mass celebration with the Pope.

Moving on to the third week, we got on the bus for Fatima in Portugal. On the way, we stopped at Avila and stayed a night at Salamanca. In my opinion, these small cities are very gorgeous both during the day and night, simply because the architecture of the buildings really reflect the ancient European style. Nonetheless, Fatima, where we spent three days to reflect our journey, is another interesting place since it was where the miracle of the appearance of Mother Mary in 1917 occurred. As Portugal was our last destination, we then arrived back in Australia after a 21 hours flight.

All in all, I was very grateful to be a part of the ACU pilgrimage. It is not only because of the fantastic and lovely places I visited, but also the faith experiences I walked through together with the amazing friends I met from the different ACU campuses. ¡Gracias ACU!

Now, I cannot wait to go to the next World Youth Day in 2013 at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil! ¡Hasta la vista amigos!
Maria Valastro
International Student Adviser
Brisbane

The McAuley Cultural Fiesta was held on 31 August, and what a great day it was! There was singing and dancing (and some very entertaining ‘Chinese rap’!), plus more food than any of us could possibly eat! Our Korean students made some yummy spicy rice sticks, a Japanese group made onigiri (rice parcels wrapped in seaweed), and our French exchange students made delicious crepes.

As always, events like these are not possible without the efforts of many people. A huge thank you to our Campus Life Coordinator, Eric Robinson, and all the students from the McAuley Student Association and the McAuley United Club who did an absolutely amazing job with the BBQ & food. Thanks also to Campus Ministry, and Campus Operations. Thanks to the Weemala Indigenous Unit for their tasty damper with native jams and kangaroo sausages and didgeridoo workshop. A special thanks to members of the local Hendra Police Station and the Cultural Advisory Unit who kindly visited us on the day.

Finally, thanks to Tina Effeney from Arts & Sciences who provided the flags and chalk which allowed students & staff to create some great art, and Rachael Parun for her dedicated Oxfam drive in support of the East Africa food crisis. You can donate at http://www.oxfam.org.au/explore/conflict-and-natural-disasters/current-emergencies/africa-food-crisis.
I am going to bring forth a concept that has been in my thoughts for a very long time. Ever since I set foot in Australia, the most common question asked by people whom you come across is, are you a Permanent resident or a temporary resident? This question never stops. Every time you apply for a job or for a licence, the very first question asked is the same - go there, do the necessary and come back. If you visit a relative or a friend or a new place for a short duration, the type of impression you would like to leave will be a positive one. You will do all the deeds which are good, because at the back of your mind, you know that you are going to stay for a short while. So, why spoil your impression?

Exactly, why spoil your impression, when you are staying for a short while? The best thing to do is to do good deeds and leave everyone happy. This is applicable to every one of us, when we know we are on earth for a short while only, say 70 to 80 years, why don’t we do good deeds only and leave a positive impression? After all, we are going to stay for a short while.

Why is there hatred and crime, why don’t we all do good deeds which will make everyone happy? No one has ever taken anything materialistic away from earth upon death and no one will. All the material belongings whether you bought them or stole them will stay here. People will remember you only for your deeds.

So remember, we all are temporary residents of earth, so behave like one and do good deeds. Stop stashing your bank accounts with money or your closets with cloths you will rarely wear. Donate and distribute them, feel the happiness of reducing the baggage, live free, free from the idea of collecting things, free from the fear of unknown.

As the only place where our souls can be permanent residents is heaven, and to reserve a place in heaven, good deeds are enough, spread happiness and joy and this trip to earth will open the hidden door to heaven.
The Brisbane Student Garden group meets every Saturday between 2pm and 3pm. If you’re interested in helping out, please contact Prasad Vajjhala (prasada.vajjhala@acu.edu.au) or Sue Woods (sue.woods@acu.edu.au).
October is mental health month

St Patrick’s Cultural Diversity celebrations

Wednesday September 14 was a flurry of colour, music and food during St. Patrick’s campus Cultural Diversity Celebrations. We had many students representing their home country, sharing information and food about their culture with fellow staff and students – which was thoroughly enjoyed. As well as the many snacks and sweets on offer from each table, a free multicultural lunch with food from Asia, Europe, Africa, and South America was on offer to all. The day’s entertainment was provided by ACU’s very own Hearts in Harmony choir, who not only performed but got the crowd singing and dancing too!

Thanks to everyone involved and bring on Cultural Diversity Celebrations 2012.

Zoe Banna
International Student Adviser
Melbourne/Ballarat
MUC at Brisbane Riverfire
Spend a day at Byron Bay

Sunday 9th October 2011

Jump aboard a Brian’s Bus Charters coach and explore the lovely sights of Byron Bay. You can reserve your seat by making payment to the shuttle bus driver in advance, or visiting Maria Valastro at the International Office or Ricky from the McAuley United Club. It should be a popular day so be sure to get your name on the list!

Hope to see you then!

Pick-ups: Toombul 8:00am
Northgate 8:10am
ACU 8:15am
Returning approximately 5:00pm

World Mental Health Day – October 10

Physical and mental health are intertwined. World Mental Health Day raises public awareness about mental health issues and encourages mental health awareness, education, and advocacy. The day promotes more open discussion of mental disorders, and investments in prevention and treatment services. (http://www.who.int/en/)

University Dates:
21 October End of Semester 2 classes
31 October Exams begin