

Kaleidoscope

Dance around the World 2006

Colorful costumes and energetic dances from around the world wowed attendees of the Multiracial Family Resource Center's first annual fundraiser on May 5, 2006. *Dance around the World* was created to educate the community about unique needs of multiethnic children.



PSU's Filipino American student group "Kaibigan" danced the "Tinikling" - a favorite traditional dance that imitates the graceful tinkling of birds running through tall grass and dodging bamboo traps. Audience members including OCMA's Thomas Wright got an opportunity to test their skills with this fancy footwork!

Performances from Roosevelt High School's SEIS Salseros group and the Indian Dance Group SAJNA dazzled spectators with Bollywood costumes and up-tempo music.

Traditional Afro-Brazilian Capoeira battle dance was illustrated by the skilled Sal Corpuz.

The Pacific Islander's Club hosted the evening and gave an enthusiastic performance that engaged the entire audience. Thomas Wright, President of the Oregon Council on Multiracial Affairs was master of ceremonies for the event.

A Reason to Dance

Dance around the World was planned as a celebration of MRFRC's dedication to helping develop positive identity amongst multiethnic youngsters and providing a supportive and educational environment for multiracial families.

The evening began with a brief synopsis of a University of Washington study which found multiracial adolescents were significantly more likely than white, black or Asian-American youth to smoke cigarettes, use marijuana, abuse alcohol or engage in violent behavior

In response to the study's results, UW faculty and co-author of the study Richard Catalano said, "Discrimination felt by these children no doubt contributed to involvement in problem behaviors. Formation of identity is more difficult for multiracial children who have to figure out where they fit in and belong."

Tracy Harachi, an additional co-author and UW associate pointed out that despite the unsettling findings the percentage of multiethnic adolescents engaging these behaviors is far outweighed by the number of those who have not. "But there are growing numbers of multiracial children, and we need to know more about them," said Harachi.

Read the entire article [here](#).

An Exciting Performance

Highlights of *Dance Around the World* included "Amor Espana", a Flamenco performance featuring dance by Diana LaVerso and song from MRFRC's own Dorothy Sermol (who never told us she was so talented!).

Passionate Argentine Tango mesmerized all as J Abling and Julia Watts twirled around the venue, weaving their way between spectators with closed eyes.

Plans for the future

The inaugural MFRFC fundraiser was a reassuring success. Reservations have already been made for Dance around the World 2007, to be held April 6 at the Portland State University Native American Student and Cultural Center. The Pacific Islander's Club has been contacted to host again this year.

Volunteers are still sought to coordinate Dance around the World 2007. If you don't have time to make a major commitment but would like to help out, contact [Sara](#) or [Karla](#). There are dozens of crucial tasks that take only 30 minutes to 3 hours to complete!!!

- proofreading legal documents
- hanging flyers around your neighborhood or downtown
- calling journalist/media outlets
- picking up event supplies (easy stuff! cookies, paper napkins or coffee!)
- attending a door/table at a special event
- calling local businesses to request donations



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FRC Spotlight: Meet the Board

Sara Sheets - President

Sara is a retired mental health therapist with a Masters of Social Work. She also has been certified by Portland State University as an adoptions therapist. She was inspired to create the Multiracial Family Resource Center by her own experiences raising an internationally adopted child-her now adult daughter Kari. Sara lives in Beaverton with her husband, a retired Beaverton Schools administrator.

Mike Terpestra – Vice President

Mike has a PH.D in Human and Organizational Systems and is retired from a career in Nursing Services & Clinical Management. He also worked as a Christian Education Director. Mike recently spent four months in Micronesia teaching at the school his parents began in 1950. He is a longtime board member of the Oregon Council on Multiracial Affairs. Mike currently resides in North Portland with his wife of 40 years. He has two adult children and three grandchildren

Karla Signs - Secretary

Karla earned her B.A. in Communication in 2005 and now works as an energy efficiency representative. She studied public relations at a top NYC firm before moving to Oregon to serve with AmeriCorps. The acute contrast between her primarily Russian, Hispanic and African-American college town and her non-diverse new home in SW Portland inspired Karla to get involved in local cultural organizations. She has also volunteered as coordinator of an American Cancer Society fundraiser that raised \$19,000 in 2006.

Barbara Timoner Camp

Barbara is a 30-yr veteran of psychology and hospital work. She studied for her PhD in Clinical Psychiatry at UCLA in 1963, but her real passion is music. She's been a board member of the Community Music Center of Portland for 23 years and lives to play the cello. Barbara has also worked with youth and volunteered on the State of Washington Parole Board and Prison Reform Coalition. She lives with her husband of 41 yrs and has four living children. She has two grandchildren and another on the way.

Dorothy Sermol

Dorothy has a Masters in Speech Communications with an emphasis on intercultural communication and has done some work toward her PhD. She has taught for 35 years and is a professor at Portland State University. She is the founder and owner of Intercultural Communication Solutions. In addition, she is a critically acclaimed soprano in the United States and England.

Brook Boden

Brook has a Masters in Education and has been a special education teacher for many years. She develops individual education programs for youth that help them meet necessary requirements to graduate from high school.

Kari Spier -Treasurer

Kari has a Bachelor of Arts in Finance and is the mother of an adorable 4-yr old boy, Christian. She is an active alum of the Portland State University Pacific Islander's Club. Kari loves to hula dance and spends her spare time volunteering on the annual spring Luau for the student group. Kari who was born in Korea, was adopted by Caucasian

parents and is now raising a Korean-Mexican son. The MFRC was created to provide a place where multiethnic families like Kari's can share common experiences and provide a supportive environment for children facing unique challenges.

Multiracial Family Resource Center Hosts Family Picnic

Families savored one of the last days of summer at Grant Park on September 23rd. Four families joined MFRC board members at a potluck lunch in North Portland. In all there were nine adults and six children aged infant to preschool. An additional three families expressed interest but were unable to attend.

In addition to playing ball and drums with the kids and enjoying sunshine and good food, grown-ups had an opportunity to chat about topics ranging from meat quality in Canada to discrimination and ethnic identity. Thanks again to everyone who attended - we hope to see you soon!

Multiracial Family Resource Center Update

- Our last board meeting was Wednesday 10/11. We discussed current events including the recently renamed "Reference and Referral Database (RRD - formerly known as the CD project)", a cooperative project with Portland's Intercultural Communications Organization. We also discussed the budget for our inaugural cultural education program for preschoolers
- Sara has a meeting later this month with Luciana Proaño, potential teacher of the Cultural Education through Drumming & Mask-making series for preschoolers
- Revisions to our application for federal tax-exempt status are being finished up by Sara with help from our pro bono attorneys. Anyone who wants to help proofread is welcome!
- Sara has meetings with potential event planning volunteers. Volunteers are always needed! Contact [Karla](#) or [Sara](#) if you would like to help out.
- Dance Around the World 2007 has a home! The Native American Student and Cultural Center will house the event which is scheduled for April 6th. The Pacific Islanders Club has been contacted to host.
- Our next board meeting is November 8, 2006