

For Immediate Release

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Brazos Valley Worldfest Brought the World to Bryan-College Station

The Brazos Valley Worldfest Presented by Citibank truly brought the world to Bryan-College Station on Saturday, November 17 in downtown Bryan.

It was the culmination of the 2007 International Education Week and a year of planning by a community-wide group of volunteers under the leadership of the International Programs Office at Texas A&M University.

Kim Fox, Brazos Valley Worldfest Festival Coordinator said Citibank stepped forward as soon as they heard about the proposed plans to support the event as the 2007 presenting sponsors saying the event fit very well with their "Global Community Day" which also took place on Saturday, November 17. Citi rallied more than 58,000 volunteers who participated in over 1,000 projects around the world in 100 countries on that day.

"Citibank not only became our first sponsor of the event, but their employees become part of our volunteer corps," said Fox. "We had tremendous support all across the Brazos Valley in terms of sponsorship, vendors, entertainers, cultural displays and educational activities".

"Our participation in Brazos Valley Worldfest clearly demonstrates Citi's commitment to Bryan/College Station and to leveraging all of our resources and people on behalf of this great community," said Clay Riebe, Citi Market President. "At Citi, we are committed to making communities better because we are there. Citi is more than a collection of businesses – we are one company, working together to give back to the community and serve the needs of our clients in this great city."

More than 3000 attendees visited cultural displays from more than thirty countries and enjoyed entertainment from around the world.

"It was so fun seeing participants strolling down Main Street in traditional clothing from their home countries," Linda Edwards, director of the Office of International Outreach at Texas A&M said.

The Confucius Institute Booth and the Blinn College International Students Association Booth focused on language and had fun with a number of activities including a couple of the giant inflatable 2008 Beijing Olympic mascots hosted by the Chinese Students and Scholars Association.

“The booths from India, Ecuador and Indonesia won the best cultural booth displays, but truthfully all the booths were great,” said Shrikanth Sastry the cultural booth display chair.

The festival had every thing from the flute music of the American Indian to Bag pipes from Scotland. You could hear the strains of music from India, Turkey, China and Mexico and enjoy Czech dances, Lion Dancers, Scottish jigs, Flamenco, Classical dance from India and the smells of Chinese and Indian Food on one end of Main street to the wonderful aroma of cooking sausages and empanadas from Latin America on the other end.

“My grandchildren enjoyed the children’s activities where they learned to make craft from around the world, visiting the children’s museum and the poster and digital story telling display in the Bryan Library.” Edwards said. “They also loved the story telling and the inflatables.”

The day started with the drums of Lee’s Golden Dragon Lion Dancers and ended with the Kaminari Taiko Japanese Drum Group.

“You could say we went out with a bang – or a sonic boom, depending on how close you were to the Taiko drummers,” Fox said. “Every seat of the Palace Theater was full with people standing all around the entrance and sides of the theater to see the last event of the day. We feel the event was a great success.”

Fox said the planners had learned a lot from this first time event and are already making plans for next year. She is telling everyone now to save November 22 for Brazos Valley Worldfest 2008.