

Africa Night celebrates diverse cultures of Africa

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Africa Night

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by [Kendra Martin](#)

There are 54 individual countries in Africa, each one different from the other. Every year, the African Student Association, or ASA, puts on an event to display the unique cultural aspects of all the different countries in Africa and to simply celebrate the beauty of them.

Oduaran Uzezi, vice president of ASA and graduate geography major, of Nigeria, said Africa Night is organized to show the multitude of different cultures that come from Africa.

“We celebrate and depict the the rich culture and diversity of Africa,”

Uzezi said. “It is the most diverse continent with 54 countries. There are blacks, Arabs and even Caucasians in Africa.

Africa Night showcased various events for the participants including a flag show of the countries in Africa, dance, music, spoken word, as well as a fashion show of African attire. People in attendance were even able to taste authentic African cuisine.

Uzezi said this event is important to campus because he wants people to view the perspective that is not portrayed on television, but the actual beauty and reality of Africa.

"I hope people learn a lot and get a different perspective of Africa and see things differently," Uzezi said. "Africa is not what you think it is on television. I hope [students] see new unique, beautiful things and see the pure beauty of it. Also, I hope they learn a lot and see that Africa is not what Western media says it is."

Graduate business administration major and ASA member Nicholas Agadi, of Nigeria, said the event unexpectedly gathered a large crowd.

"It went very well," Agadi said. "We didn't expect much, but we had a large turnout. It was more people than we expected it, so I was very happy about that."

Among all the events that Africa Night sponsored, Agadi said the event that stood out to him the most was the showcasing of the various flags in Africa.

"My favorite part was definitely being able to portray the different cultures that Africa has to offer," Agadi said. "I loved being able to celebrate all the different cultural aspects of all of Africa — not just certain parts."

Agadi said he hopes that the participants who are not really familiar with the different cultures in Africa were able to take away a lot from this event.

"I hope that people were able to take away from the fact that Africa is not just one big country that everyone believes it is," Agadi said. "I hope they were able to take away a different perspective of the different countries because Africa is a developing [continent], but there are good places in Africa, so I hope they were able to understand that."

Agnes Hayibor, graduate computer management and information systems major and ASA member, of Ghana, said being able to celebrate the different cultures in Africa is a very important to bring to campus.

"Hosting this event is very important because we are able to portray the parts of Africa we know personally," Hayibor said. "I like that we are able to show the great things of Africa that are not often shown in the media."

Hayibor said the drama piece spoken during the event was very cultivating for her.

"There was definitely a moment where there was a drama piece of an African-American trying to trace his roots that was interesting," Hayibor said. "The piece just showed that regardless of where you were born and raised, Africa has a lot of cultures and values that can be passed on to the next generation."

Hayibor said she was very happy to see so many people come together for this event whether they were participating or just checking it out.

"I generally just enjoyed the people that I was around," Hayibor said. "It wasn't just Africans coming together to put on this event, but African-Americans as well coming together to just work together and learn from each other."

Second year graduate student and English major Ololade Mustafa, of Nigeria, said it was great to be able to tackle some of the myths that Africa faces.

"I think it helps them know Africa the continent and not just what popular culture shows," Mustafa said. "It is very interesting how so many people have this general misconception of Africa. So many think it is a country and don't know how diverse it actually is. Many came up to me after the event and told me they had the wrong knowledge of Africa."

Mustafa said she had a great time and she appreciated all the events Africa Night entertained, from the music to the food.

"I enjoyed everything we had to offer," Mustafa said. "The food we had was really good; it was real African food, and I really enjoyed all of the performances. There were a lot of teachings in them, so I hope people were able to take away some of the lessons the performances displayed."

Mustafa said she was happy they were able to bring together a variety of cultures, and she said she felt that a lot of people left with new knowledge about Africa.

"I loved being able to integrate all the different cultures," Mustafa said. "Africa is so diverse, so there is always something to learn about Nigeria, Algeria, Ghana and so forth. Africa is not just a continent of black people, so I want people to understand that. I hope that people were able to be informed because the more informed they are, the more enlightened they are."