



Students, from left to right, Siyang Ju (China), Jongmi Kim (Korea) and Yini Yin (China) model traditional clothing at Harmony of Cultures.



International students share traditional dishes with students and faculty during the Harmony of Cultures.

Harmony of Cultures celebrates cultural diversity

By Grant Merritt
Web Video Editor

The Harmony of Cultures celebrated the many cultures that make up the student body at UNCP, attracting hundreds of students on Sept. 15 and stretching from the water feature to the UC Annex.

The Harmony of Cultures was a collaborative effort by International Programs led by Director Sarah Brackin, the Office of Multicultural and Minority Affairs led by Director Robert Canida and the College of Arts and Sciences led by Dr. Martin Slann, dean.

“The idea was to combine our efforts and offer the campus something different and at the same time share UNCP’s and our community’s diverse culture,” Brackin said. “I think we accomplished our goal.”

According to Canida, about 100 students participated in the walk and an additional 400 students attended the festival.

“I was elated with the overall event, and the success of the event just goes to show what teamwork can accomplish,” Canida said. “More importantly, the event showed evidence that UNCP and our communities of interest really do appreciate and embrace diversity.”

The first half of the event, A Walk to Remember, started at 9:30 a.m. in front of the water feature. Different student organizations on campus participated in the walk around the water feature and down



The Native American Student Organization participates in A Walk to Remember as part of the Harmony of Cultures Sept. 15.

Photo by Gabrielle Lovar

Faculty Row to the UC Annex.

Once the walk was over, the Harmony of Cultures portion of the event started in the UC Annex at 10 a.m. with a welcome from Chancellor Kyle Carter’s spouse, UNCP First Lady Sarah Carter.

All around the UC Annex, tables and booths were set up to showcase information and food from countries such as China, Mexico, France, Israel, India, Japan, South Korea and El Salvador.

Student organizations

represented were the Native American Student Organization, International Student Organization, African Student Organization, Sexuality and Gender Alliance (SAGA) and Greek organizations.

UNCP students visited the different tables and booths to learn about each culture as well as sample food from each respective culture.

“I enjoyed the experience a lot,” SAGA President Felix Rucker said. “It opened my eyes to the different cultures on campus

that I didn’t know existed, and I liked learning about the history of each culture.”

On stage, there were Korean art songs, a Global Rhythm Ensemble, Chinese Gong Fu, singing, storytelling, Japanese storytelling, African dance, flute, Chinese bamboo dance and Chinese umbrella performances.

“I really enjoyed the food from the different countries and the African dancing,” senior Jessica Knapton said.

Canida said that his favorite part of the Harmony

of Cultures was the intersecting of cultures.

“Serving as the MC, I was able to see how so many individuals from so many walks of life came together and enjoyed each other,” Canida said. “This is what multiculturalism and harmony is all about.”

The organizations that participated in A Walk to Remember created banners that represented their organization, and these banners were entered in a contest.

SAGA won first place and \$150 for their banner.

Myrtle Court Apartments caters to students

By Will Wade
Asst. Around the Town Editor

The owner of Myrtle Court Apartments, Brent Brooks, has made major changes to the complex to make it more student friendly.

Brooks, a 2002 NC State alum, has owned apartments for seven years at NC State and UNCP. Brooks teamed up with his wife Kimberly, a 2003 NC State alum, and grandfather Joseph Brooks in 2007.

Brooks said when he first got Myrtle Court in 2007 he knew that he wanted students to live there but that was not the case.

“UNCP was the only

school in the UNC system that was not land locked. It seemed to be a unique opportunity there so we bought it with the mind set that we were going to cater to students. But when we did buy it, it was mostly locals who rented out and we had to deal with them,” he said.

Myrtle Court used to be a hot spot for crime. Just last year a student was stabbed at a party there. Many robberies and thefts have occurred at Myrtle Court.

“November 2009 my business partner, my grandfather, died and that’s when Myrtle Court went to what I call haywire, as far as not being a community for stu-

dent living,” Brooks said. “You deal with that problem because of the location. It’s convenient to the school but is also close to a low income housing unit.”

Brooks said he had to address the issue in 2010 when it all started with a fence. Brooks put up the fence in hopes of stopping easy entry and exit from the apartments but that did not work as planned.

He then decided the issues were an in-house matter, and he started evicting trouble makers he suspected of breaking into apartments.

It still was not enough to make him sleep at night. He said he wanted to bring in some security so Brooks moved in Deputy Sheriff

Todd Harris.

Orrin Tew, a junior at UNCP, has lived at Myrtle Court for a year. Since Tew has lived there, he has seen the good and the bad.

“Once they moved out the riff-raff and moved the sheriff and students in, everything has changed,” Tew said.

Tew said he believes Myrtle Court has become a safer environment.

Myrtle Court has had a complete make over with new roofs, hardwood, laminate and appliances but, most importantly, new tenants.

Business major Jarred Boyce stays at Myrtle Court with UNCP senior Kajarra Caldwell.

Boyce said, “I chose to stay at Myrtle Court because it is way cheaper than Pembroke Place.”

Boyce said that Myrtle Court is like a close knit student community consisting of Greek life members and UNCP athletes.

Myrtle Court’s rent is \$500 a month plus utilities for a two bedroom one bath, where at other housing you pay \$1,050 a month plus utilities for a two bedroom two bath.

Brooks said he would be open to an organization moving into the 32 rooms.

For more information about Myrtle Court contact Kim Brooks at 910-734-0548.