

CDD

Opportunities for Youths

Community Development hosts festival to introduce Watts youths to international cultures.

Story and photos by Tiffany Sy, Club Counselor

The Los Angeles Youth Opportunity (YO) Movement's International Festival took place Sept. 28 in Watts.

The event, coordinated by Community Development, creates multicultural awareness within Watts.

This fun-filled event provided free entertainment of local multicultural performers, multicultural food, popcorn, beverages, and snow cones for the community. There were also jumpers for kids.

"I come from a school of thought that feels art and culture are essential to having vibrant and peaceful communities," said Adrian Veliz, Sr. Project Assistant, Los Angeles Youth Opportunity (YO) Movement. "That said, when Scott Lee said that Hudson Jeans was interested in funding some projects and requested proposals from us, I quickly submitted the proposal for an 'International Festival.'

"Working in this community for the past

seven or eight years has taught me to appreciate growing up in a diverse environment. I went to school with Filipinos, Koreans, Ethiopians, Muslims, Vietnamese, Tongans, Samoans, whites, African Americans, etc. so I can appreciate the world through my experiences. Our community in Watts is the polar opposite of this; some of our youths have never been to a baseball game, a beach, a nice restaurant, and the list goes on. I felt that it was essential for families in Watts to experience Korean culture, and not just by shopping at the local store or watching TV. Most area youths have never even seen African or Aztec dancers, which are the ancestral backgrounds for most of our residents. Our philosophy here at YO! Watts has always been, 'One-State of Being,' and I feel that is why we're successful at what we do," Adrian said.

Special recognition goes to Peter Kim of Hudson Jeans, the community of Watts, the entire YO! Family, and Adrian Veliz and Scott Lee, Director, CDD.



Aztec dancers Victor Mendoza and Dina Ontiveras.



Dancers from the Jung Im Lee Korean Dance Academy.



From left: Scott Lee, Director, CDD, and Adrian Veliz, Event Coordinator.



Haley Sy, Club Counselor Tiffany Sy's daughter, with some of the local vendors.



Event Coordinator Adrian Veliz with his wife Rachel, and son, Manik.



Watts' very own drill team, the True Highsteppers.



In Lak Ech drummed and sang indigenous songs.



Dancers from the Jung Im Lee Korean Dance Academy.



Chinese dancers display graceful poses.



The free Jumper provided for all the jumping the youths desired.



Capoeira dancers showed off their agility in martial arts and dance.

It's Party Pix Time

Be a part of a Club Holiday tradition:

Have party pix from your City office's holiday party published in Alive!

Is your office having a holiday party? We want to print pictures from your holiday office party! Here are two ways to get your holiday office party pictures into the January Alive!:



1. Take the photos yourself, and send them in as soon as you can. Digital photos are always best. And make sure you give us a description of the party: when it was, where it was, and if something significant happened, let us know that, too.

If there are just a few photos, then send them to talkback@cityemployeesclub.com. But if there are a lot, then it's best to burn them onto a CD and deliver (or mail) the CD to the Club. The address is on the inside front cover. Make sure the photos are as high resolution as you can make them.

2. Let us know when your holiday party is, and we'll try to send a photographer. Please note: There are more City holiday parties than we can cover, but we will try. That's why it's best to send in your own photos. If you want us to cover your party, talk to your Counselor (Tiffany Sy or Arlene Herrero) or write to Robert Larios, Club Director of Marketing and Communications, at rlarios@cityemployeesclub.com. We'll do our best to get to as many parties as we can, but we can't guarantee it. But let us know.



See you at the party!

