

# LE JOURNAL

West Virginia State College Office of International Affairs Newsletter

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## West Virginia State College Receives a Fulbright-Hays Grant

The WVSC Office of International Affairs (OIA) received a Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Program grant for \$60,000 to sponsor a 4-week seminar in Costa Rica. The grant provided funding for 8 WVSC faculty and 5 WV high school teachers to travel to Costa Rica during the summer of 2002. The program consisted of instruction, field study, research, and cultural activities in Costa Rica for the purpose of enabling the participants to 1) learn about Costa Rican culture and develop curriculum materials for use in the classroom; 2) acquire an understanding of sustainable economic development and environmental protection in Costa Rica. OIA coordinator, **James Natsis**, and Political Science professor, **Gerry Beller**, co-directed the project. Other participants included:

WVSC faculty: **Maude Brunstetter** (Political Science), **Martin Japtok** (English), **Abainesh Mitiku** (Business Management), **John Richards** (Sociology), **Carolyn Halstead** (Spanish), and **Ann-Marie Evans** (History).

Secondary educators included: **Vicky Carney** (Spanish) Sissonville Senior High, **Gail Tolbert** (Social Studies) South Charleston High, **Carmella Crawford** (Physical Education) Capitol High, **Bruce Ensinger** (Music) New Martinsville School and Magnolia High School, and **David Dowdy** (Art) Liberty High.



West Virginia educators hike along Costa Rican trails

The project directors worked in conjunction with Linda Holland, Executive Director of the Institute for Central American Studies (ICAS) in San Jose to design the itinerary for the 4-week field research and traveling seminar. The group resided with local families during the first week while studying Spanish and receiving lectures from local NGOs and scholars.

Thanks to the efforts of Mrs. Holland, the group was privileged to meet and discuss issues with the current Minister of the Environment and Energy, Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, and the former Minister of Education (1998-2002), Guillermo Vargas Salazar while in San Jose.

During the next few weeks the group visited the regions of Talamanca, the Osa Peninsula, and Guanacaste to meet with local citizens, NGOs and group cooperatives. Highlights of their stay at the Monteverde Cloud Forest (Guanacaste) was attending a lecture given at the Monteverde Institute by the former president of Costa Rica, Rodrigo Carazo.

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## The 11th Annual Multicultural/International Festival and Disability Day

The 11th Annual Multicultural/International Festival and Disability Day celebrated "Diversity Dance" May 1st from 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM at the College Union Student Plaza.

The offerings for the day were as diverse in music and dance as was the menu: Native American and Colonial recreation exhibits were featured as well as WV Folklore, African Rhythm, East Indian Drumming, and West Indian music and dance. In addition to the free picnic for the WVSC family, food tastings from countries such as France, Russia, Spain, Mexico, and Central America were featured along with community vendors.

The annual event is a favorite on campus. "This is my third year here at State and I have been to each festival," bragged one student. "It gives us an opportunity to explore different foods that we normally wouldn't eat," claimed a student while enjoying an Asian food selection.



Students perform Gypsy dance

*For information regarding presentations, performance, or booth display in the 2003 celebration contact Robin Gullory (304) 766-3084 or [guillory@mail.wvsc.edu](mailto:guillory@mail.wvsc.edu).*

## The 3rd Annual International Banquet



History Professor at West Virginia University and Director of FACDIS, Dr. Jack Hammersmith

The OIA and the Office of Special Events hosted the 3rd Annual International Banquet on May 8th in the Wilson College Union. The 2002 theme was "International Education in West Virginia." Guests arrived to the sounds of the WVSC Drum Ensemble led by WVSC music professor, Jim Florkevich.

The two keynote speakers for the event were Jay Cole, Deputy Secretary of the West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts, and Dr. Jack Hammersmith, History Professor at West Virginia University and Director of the WV Consortium for Faculty and Course Development in International Studies (FACDIS). Special recognition was given to WV Senator, Larry L. Rowe, and WV Delegate, Carrie Webster, for their support in WVSC's efforts to attain university status.

Entertainment was provided by Don Gresby's "Simply Elegant" fashions, the Samoan Student Dancers, and the WVSC student choir directed by WVSC music professor and director of choral activities, Dr. Truman Dalton. Proceeds from the annual event are used to assist student travel abroad and multicultural activities.

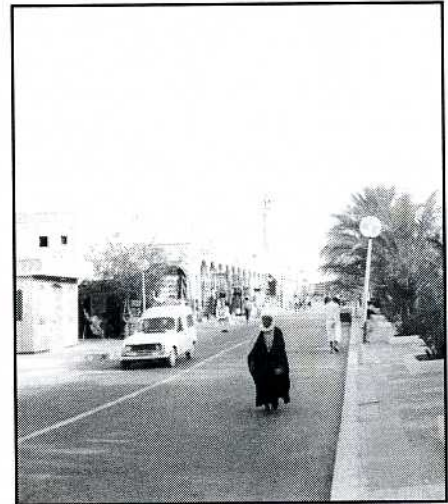
*For more information contact Pat Cline, Special Events Coordinator @ (304) 766-5701 or [clinepl@mail.wvsc.edu](mailto:clinepl@mail.wvsc.edu)*

## Middle East Dialogue

On April 10, 2002 concerned West Virginians packed the Davis Fine Arts Auditorium to address the controversial Israeli-Palestine conflict. The forum was organized by Political Science Professor, Gerald Beller, and co-sponsored by the WVSC National Center for Human Relations (NCHR). Stuart McGehee, History Department Chair, moderated the event.

Nine area residents, representing a variety of viewpoints, were accorded 5 minutes each to express their opinions, followed by a question and answer session involving the audience. Guest speakers included:

**Dirar Ahmed**, Engineer with the Department of Transportation, President of the Islamic Association of West Virginia. **Rachel Dash**, Member of the Muslim and Jewish Coalition for Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel. **Joe Golden**, Member of the Board of Directors of Temple Beth El in Beckley. **Jim Haught**, Editor, Charleston Gazette. **Abdul Qutub**, Member of the Islamic Association of West Virginia, and of the Muslim and Jewish Coalition for Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel. **Reverend Esber Tweel**, Pastor, Church of the Good Shepard. **Rabbi Victor Urecki**, B'Nai Jacob Synagogue. **Dr. John Warner**, Professor, West Virginia Wesleyan College. **Dr. Annette M. Zavareei**, local therapist.



According to Beller, the forum was "important to address such issues without engaging in the empty slogans and angry denunciations of nationalist or religious factions that make each other victims." The panelist presentations and the ensuing questions and answers were carried out in a fruitful, non-combative manner. Rabbi Urecki shared his concern for promoting peace in the region by stating, "I am pro-Israel, but peace is more important to me than ideologies." Dirar Ahmed, who was reared in Palestine, pleaded with the audience to try to understand the Palestinian position. "All they ask for is to live in dignity, live in peace."

The NCHR was officially established in 1996 to expand the reputation of West Virginia State College as a "living laboratory of human relations" by inaugurating an ongoing forum for active dialogues among students, faculty, staff, and the local/national community. The Center focuses on issues of human relations, with race, domestic violence, and interfaith relations as the centerpieces.

## Spring Break Study Abroad

**Sociology 399**

**Mexico: Tepoztlan, Morelos**

**Culture, Demography, & Food**

**March 22-29, 2003**

Taught by Dr. Robert Hall, Professor of Sociology  
 Contact Robert Hall @ 304 766-3047, 316 Hill Hall  
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