USD to Celebrate International Education Week Nov. 13-17

The Center for Academic & Global Engagement works year-round to facilitate global learning opportunities. International Education Week, Nov. 13-17, is a chance to highlight the benefits and experiences that come from celebrating different cultures from around the world.

A multitude of activities are planned for the week, including popular Japanese snacks for Motivational Monday, a study abroad showcase and a panel discussing world religions.

Although most events don’t begin until Nov. 13, there is a chance to learn about Taala, a traditional form of classical Indian music, on Nov. 12 in the MUC ballroom at 6 p.m.

Virginija Wilcox, assistant director for study abroad and National Student Exchange and one of the International Education Week planners, said, “Attending the expositions, workshops and panels we offer during International Education Week will not only help students witness the richness of diversity we have on our campus, but will also provide helpful information on various study abroad opportunities.”

USD isn’t the only university gearing up for a week dedicated to new experiences and cultures. Many universities across the country take part in this week-long celebration. International Education Week is a joint initiative of the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Education. It is part of the efforts to promote programs that prepare Americans for a global economy and attract future leaders and entrepreneurs from abroad to study, learn and exchange experiences.
SSOM Receives National Honor

The University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine is the 2017 recipient of the Spencer Foreman Award for Outstanding Community Service.

This distinguished award - considered by many to be the top award that a medical school can receive - is presented by the Association of American Medical Colleges, the national organization for America’s 147 medical teaching institutions.

The award recognizes successes and efforts by the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine to serve the health care needs of rural citizens in South Dakota, including those living in or near small towns and on Native American reservations.

“We are grateful to the many communities and countless individuals across our state who partner with us and support our mission to serve South Dakotans,” said Dr. Mary Nettleman, dean of the medical school. “This gratifying award humbles us and inspires us to continue our work.”

In announcing the award, the Association of American Medical Colleges issued the following statement: “The University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine has dedicated itself to advancing the state’s highest health priority: ensuring South Dakotans have access to high-quality, culturally appropriate care.”

The Sanford School of Medicine received the award at the annual meeting of the Association of American Medical Colleges, held last weekend in Boston, Massachusetts.

USD Hosts Diwali Celebration

USD’s Asian American Student Association and the Center for Diversity & Community hosted its third annual Diwali celebration on Sunday, Oct. 22 and had 175 people in attendance. It was an event filled with appreciation for the students who took the time to share their heritage and traditions with others.

Xuyen Nguyen, a senior medical biology major and AASA’s president, said she wants others to learn more about Asian culture. “We just want to spread other Asian cultures throughout the campus since we are such a small population here.”

Diwali is a five-day festival that coincides with the Hindu New Year. Diwali, in its exact translation, means “series of lights” and references how shops and houses are illuminated with authentic food, dancing and a real feeling of togetherness.

The festival symbolically celebrates light over darkness and the idea that good will always triumph over evil. Some Diwali celebrations feature an elaborate fireworks display, which is meant to symbolize the celebrations that happened upon Lord Rama’s return. For some, it can also honor the Hindu goddess Lakshmi, whose domain is over wealth among other things. The hope is that Lakshmi will bless them with prosperity in the coming year.

The Diwali celebration at USD was held the Sunday immediately after the conclusion of the festival. The Asian American Student Association has had a great deal of success with this event in past years.

USD senior Olivia Mann, who attended Diwali, said, “I think the Diwali celebration contributes greatly to multiculturalism at USD, which is incredibly important in the current political climate. Multiculturalism, diversity and inclusiveness inform students that all people are welcome at USD.”

During the celebration, attendees watched cultural dances and displays and enjoyed food from Shahi Palace, an Indian restaurant with locations in Sioux Falls and Sioux City.
USD Law's Pommershem Appears on C-SPAN

University of South Dakota School of Law Professor Frank Pommersheim appeared on C-SPAN’s “Cities Tour” on Nov. 4, as part of its feature on the Sioux Falls area.

Pommersheim discussed his book *Broken Landscape: Indians, Indian Tribes, and the Constitution*, which examines past legal cases and legislation that have interpreted and misinterpreted tribal sovereignty.

The BookTV program will be re-aired at various times and online. A full schedule can be found on C-SPAN’s website.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard has granted administrative leave to employees on Friday, Nov. 24 (the day after Thanksgiving) and on Tuesday, Dec. 26.

USD Hosts Waroxi Performance and Feast

The University of South Dakota Department of Fine Arts hosts guest artist Sydney Jane Brooke Campbell Maybrier Pursel for a performance and dinner at the Coyote Twin on Nov. 13 from 6-9 p.m.

Her participatory performance will explore the change in lifeways due to missionary efforts to convert Native Americans to Christianity. It specifically draws on language loss and addresses contemporary economic strategies of American Indian tribes.

The event will also include an educational feast in which guests are invited to learn about the diversity among the 567 federally recognized tribes existing within the United States today. Individual tribes and their histories will be represented on hand-stippled styrofoam plates with corresponding placemats.

Pursel will also host an artist talk with USD fine arts students on Nov. 14 at 2 p.m. in the Warren M. Lee Center for Fine Arts, room 172.

Pursel received her B.F.A. in painting from the University of Missouri and her M.F.A. in expanded media from the University of Kansas. She is an enrolled member of the Iowa tribe of Kansas and Nebraska. Through art, she educates others about contemporary Indigenous issues, food politics, language loss, appropriation, revitalization and history.
Physics Program Graduates First Ph.D. Student

The University of South Dakota Department of Physics has conferred the first Ph.D. in physics in the state of South Dakota to Wenzhao Wei. The USD graduate physics program is a joint program with the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology.

Wei worked with USD professor Dongming Mei on her thesis titled “Advanced Germanium Detectors for Rare Event Physics Searches.” Her work will provide critical knowledge in developing the next generation of ultra-sensitive germanium detectors for the planned experiments at the Sanford Underground Research Facility (SURF) in Lead, South Dakota.

Wei completed her Bachelor of Computer Science at Central China Normal University and obtained a master’s degree in physics from USD in 2014. According to Wei, “The Ph.D. in physics at USD is very rewarding and it provides not only a unique germanium crystal growth facility and broad connections with world-class research collaborators, but also educates and trains students with all critical skills including initiative, tenacity, flexibility, interpersonal skills, organization and communication.”

“Wei was able to publish five papers as the first author and a few papers with collaborators in pursuing her degree at USD. Her achievements have warranted her a couple job offers,” said Mei, director of USD’s Center for Ultra-low Background Experiments at Dakota (CUBED), and the principal investigator of a recent $4.35 million dollar grant from the National Science Foundation.

Wei’s Ph.D. represents the beginning of a new era of physics higher education in South Dakota, strengthening the South Dakota workforce in science and technology. USD’s physics department is a global leader in dark matter and germanium research, collaborating with scientists all over the world on experiments at the Sanford Underground Research Facility.

Students Volunteer in Community

Many philanthropic efforts at USD are geared toward raising money for trips or national causes. Some organizations on campus raise money for their funding needs, but there is an active effort to give back to the local community, as well.

Several USD student organizations have been on the schedule for the Vermillion Welcome Table, including all four sororities on campus, the USD National Student Speech Language Hearing Association, the American Medical Student Association and some experience-based classes.

The Vermillion Welcome Table is a local effort to facilitate community and service while providing a warm, nutritious meal in a safe environment. Volunteers serve a meal to members of the community and are actively encouraged to engage in conversation once the food is served. The United Way provides the food for each meal. The chance to give back to the local community reminds students to take care of Vermillion, too.

Panhellenic President Maggie O’Brien spoke about local volunteering efforts from Greek women on campus: “From volunteering at the Vermillion Fire Department and the Welcome Table, to hosting events for the community like a haunted house or Thursday on the Platz, the women in the Greek community are committed to service to others. Philanthropy is a core tenet of all four sororities on the USD campus, and it is incredible to see the impact being made not only locally, but also worldwide.”

The Vermillion Welcome Table is held every Monday at the United Methodist Church in Vermillion from 5:30-7 p.m. The organization also helps collect school supplies prior to September. To get in contact with the Vermillion Welcome Table, email feedingverm@gmail.com.
USD Libraries Committee Seeks to Entice Readers

For the last 10 years, one library committee has been working to get more students and faculty at the University of South Dakota interested in reading for fun.

The “Hot off the Press” committee comprises seven committed librarians and USD staff who meet once a month to decide what new books to bring to the library’s shelves.

Steve Johnson, a public policy and business librarian, has served on the committee since its inception in 2008. Johnson said the committee was originally formed as a way to promote the library on campus and get people interested in reading for fun — something that proves difficult on a college campus when students and faculty alike tend to be busy reading for classes.

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At each meeting, members propose nine books that have been released within the last two months that might be of interest to a wider audience. Members then vote on which books should be selected and about 30 are chosen every month.

“It’s a leased collection. We’re allowed to keep everything for a year. So, we evaluate them based on how often they’ve been used, if they’d be a good addition to the library’s collection, and we meet every month to discuss that.”

The majority of the books chosen are thrillers and mystery books since those are the ones that tend to do the best when it comes to circulation. According to estimates by the committee, the average circulation of a book in the program is about two checkouts over the course of the time it’s at USD. Some books are checked out less, and some are checked out dozens of times.

“Every program is unique to the audience and the demands of that specific library,” Anderberg said.

“We have a lot of tech books, and a lot of detective books and thrillers. That’s what circulates the most for our library. Other libraries might do more with cook books or memoirs, so it’s a very flexible program.”

Traditionally, Johnson said the program isn’t always well-known to the students and staff the committee seeks to serve. This is partially due to the fact that the Hot Off the Presses books are shelved in an area on the first floor of the library by the newspapers and magazines — an area that some people don’t even know exists. This year, though, the committee is looking to remedy that issue.

In January, a new circular, rotating shelf will be installed at the front of the library by the entryway to allow people entering the building to see the new releases the committee has picked.

“I think the browsing will really take place then,” Johnson said. “As it stands now, unless you know about the shelves down there, you might not even head in that direction.”

Timmi Johnson, a health sciences librarian and member of the committee for the past five years, said people interested in the program can see what books the committee has picked by looking on the library’s website or following the “Hot Off The Press” board on Pinterest. All of the books are free to check out for USD students, faculty and staff, and can also be checked out by Vermillion community members with a valid borrower’s card.

“We have all of these awesome books and we just really want to everyone to know about them and know that they’re there,” Johnson said.
Consider making a contribution to the United Way of Vermillion. A contribution of any amount truly makes a difference.

One hundred percent of your tax-deductible donation stays local, supporting 25 different programs that touch every segment of the community.

To make an annual payroll deduction pledge, fill out the simple form in the myU portal.

If you would like to make a one-time donation or find out more about United Way of Vermillion, visit www.unitedwayofvermillion.org.

USD Digital Library Adds Unique Music Catalogs from Mahoney Music Collection

University of South Dakota Archives and Special Collections has announced the addition of two unique assortments of material from the Mahoney Music Collection to the Digital Library of South Dakota.

These collections include 30 illustrated catalogs of the famed Lyon & Healy brokers and harp makers and 13 treatises from violin masters before 1850. The catalogs, ranging in date from 1890-1940, include rich descriptions and illustrations of both rare and modern violins, violas and violoncellos, as well as the harps for which the company would become most well-known. The treatises include Leopold Mozart’s 1756 treatise, as well as treatises by Francesco Geminiani, Carl Flesch and Ivan Galamian.

View both collections on the Digital Library of South Dakota. The Mahoney Music Collection contains more than 4,800 books, magazines, pamphlets and ephemera documenting the history, craftsmanship and playing of stringed instruments. The collection contains a particularly comprehensive assortment of books about violins and the violin family instruments. The collection was gifted to the University of South Dakota in June 2006 by John P. and Barbara Mahoney, who continue to add new materials.