Title: Connecting through Culture

A proposal for the James P. & Shirley J. O’Brien Diversity Endowment

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Submitted by:
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In cooperation with:
• Andrea Romero, Associate Professor, Mexican American Studies and Family Studies and Human Development
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• Scott Going, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Nutritional Sciences
• Cynthia Thomson, Ph.D., Professor, Health Promotion Sciences and Director of the Canyon Ranch Center for Prevention & Health Promotion, Mel & Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health
• Cheralyn Schmidt, Program Coordinator, Pima County Cooperative Extension, Garden Kitchen
• Jennifer Parlin and Stacy Peercy, the Garden Kitchen

Project Abstract:

Pima County Cooperative Extension has worked closely with Pima County government and the City of South Tucson to open a seed-to-table nutrition education venue in South Tucson called the Garden Kitchen. The purpose of this proposal is to provide financial support for cultural events to be held at the Garden Kitchen involving music, dance, and healthy food.

Funding from the O’Brien Diversity Endowment will be used to organize cultural events at the Garden Kitchen, which is located in the heart of South Tucson and is an excellent venue for community events (the location is equipped with a licensed kitchen and has a large walled-in paved lot ideal for health fairs). Four events will be held throughout the year, each emphasizing a different region of the globe—that region’s food, music, and dance. Student performance groups from the University of Arizona will be invited to perform while the nutrition education team from Pima County Cooperative Extension will deliver food demonstrations, taste sampling, and distribute healthy recipes.

The purpose of this project is to develop closer ties between the University of Arizona (including Cooperative Extension) and the residents of South Tucson and the surrounding area, through multimedia cultural events with a diversity theme.
**Project Description:** The Garden Kitchen is directly aligned with the University of Arizona’s vision of extending the University to the people and the mission of the O’Brien Diversity Endowment that “diversity brings richness to CALS Cooperative Extension.” As an entity within Cooperative Extension, the Garden Kitchen helps fulfill the goal of providing programs focused on contemporary issues and the needs of the residents of Arizona. The nutrition education program within Pima County Cooperative Extension focuses on families with limited resources. Locating the Garden Kitchen in the City of South Tucson has brought Extension and the nutrition program to the geographic area where many limited-resource families reside. Currently, 33% of residents in Pima County are considered low-income, with 180,000 receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Plan (SNAP) benefits. More than half (53%) of the residents of South Tucson are at or below the poverty line.

Funding from the O’Brien Diversity Endowment will enable us to creatively deliver nutrition programming by educating participants on important aspects of healthy eating, gardening, and physical activity with interactive lessons and hands-on activities. Four events will be held throughout the year, each emphasizing a different region of the globe—that region’s food, music, and dance. Student performance groups from the University of Arizona and community groups will be invited to perform while the nutrition education team from Pima County Cooperative Extension delivers food demonstrations, taste sampling, and distributes healthy recipes. These activities will be conducted in association with the South Tucson Healthy Habits Committee, which organizes an annual health fair in the community and has been developing other events to promote healthy lifestyles of its residents. The following are brief descriptions of possible cultural events:

**Latino Fiesta:** Experience Latin flair while dancing salsa and sampling house made salsas with our nutrition educators! Chefs will be onsite working the grill making garlic marinated lean skirt steak tacos and handing out samples of delectable recipes such as roasted tomatillo salsa and pineapple mango salsa. Work with our nutrition educators to grind your own wheat and make healthy handmade tortillas. Enjoy learning a variety of dance steps such as Cuban salsa, bachata, tango, and merengue with our exciting dance instructors from the University of Arizona and South Tucson. Also stay and enjoy performances from South Tucson and the University of Arizona’s dance and music groups such as Ballet Folklorico Tapatio, Ritmos Latinos and Dancing in the Streets.

**Native Foods Harvest:** The Garden Kitchen invites local tribes and groups to participate in gathering native foods found in the desert southwest. Chefs will prepare tepary bean hummus, cholla bud salad with queso fresco, mesquite flour chocolate chunk cookies, prickly pear sorbet and squash empanadas. Healthy O’Odham Promotion Program will demonstrate safe harvest of desert foods and the harvest calendar. Learn how to plant the “Three sisters” corn, squash, and beans in your home garden with gardening classes that will be incorporated into the event. Pascua Yaqui Tribe and University of Arizona Native American Dance Club will demonstrate traditional dances and conduct a blessing of the event.

**Across Africa:** Expand your palate with new and exciting regional foods of Africa. Chefs will demonstrate how to prepare Umngqusho-corn and bean curried risotto, Jollof Rice-cumin scented rice with vegetables, Injera-buckwheat and teff pancakes, Chakalaka-curry vegetable relish. This event will feature the pan-African music group *Key Ingredients of African Soul*, which has as one of its members Dr. Zenenga from Africana Studies, performing with an all women African dance group that specializes in health and wellness.
Island Party: Take a trip across the ocean and experience the cuisine and performances of a variety of island nations. Watch cooking demonstrations to learn about foods commonly cooked in tropical regions like the Philippines, Hawai‘i, Tahiti, Samoa, the Caribbean and Jamaica. Menu includes Jamaican Chicken Curry, Hawaiian Coconut Pudding, HuliHuli Chicken, Tahitian Banana wrapped and Roasted Pork with Coconut Chutney. Watch and learn hula dancing by Leiola Halau and learn how to shake those hips with Tahitian dancing from Polynesian Express. Kids will enjoy learning how to make their own leis and how to crack coconuts.

Justification of the Project: The distance between the University of Arizona campus and the City of South Tucson is approximately three miles, but in many ways they are worlds apart. University of Arizona students may never experience the culturally rich environment of South Tucson, and young people and their families from the South Tucson area may not feel connected to the University. Although the Hispanic/Latino population of the Tucson area is over 35%, the University of Arizona Hispanic/Latino student population is just above 15%. Professor Romero commenting in the September 2, 2011, Daily Wildcat stated, “I think because we’re a land-grant institution, we need to reflect the population.” What better way to bring the two together than through music, dance, and food?

Justification of the Project Relative to the Mission of the Endowment: Specifically, this project celebrates the diversity of the University of Arizona and seeks to connect that tradition with the rich heritage of the City of South Tucson and the surrounding neighborhoods. By strengthening these connections it is hoped that more Hispanic and Latino students will see themselves as members of the University of Arizona community and aspire to attend the University. Furthermore, it is hoped that university students who are unaware of the rich culture present in neighborhoods throughout Tucson will develop a greater appreciation for the value of diversity.

Objectives:

General:
- Develop closer ties between the University of Arizona (including Cooperative Extension) and the residents of South Tucson and the surrounding area, through multi-media cultural events with a diversity theme.
- Encourage more Hispanic/Latino students to aspire to attend the University of Arizona.
- Increase awareness of University of Arizona students of the rich culture present in neighborhoods throughout Tucson and develop a greater appreciation for the value of diversity.

Specific:
- Hold four cultural eventsthroughout the year, each emphasizing a different region of the globe—that region’s food, music, and dance and inviting student performance groups from the University of Arizona and local organizations to perform and participate in these events.

Personnel for Completion: To organize these events, Dr. McDonald will consult with faculty members from throughout the university listed on the cover sheet of this proposal. The staff of the Garden Kitchen and members of the Pima County Cooperative Extension will assist with logistics for the events.

End product or service and integration into the University Community: We hope that this funding will help to cultivate the seed, the Garden Kitchen, that has been planted in the City of South Tucson, to firmly establish it as a gathering place for healthy lifestyles and a connection between the University and the families and children who live in the South Tucson area.
## Budget:

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<th>Item</th>
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<td>Food demonstrations</td>
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$5,250

### Budget Justification:

Performance groups from the University of Arizona and local organizations in South Tucson, such as the Steel Drum Band and Dancing in the Streets, will be invited to perform at each of the four events. These groups often operate through donations to cover their expenses. $250 per group is being requested as an average for this purpose.

Food demonstrations will be conducted at each of the four events representing a different culture from around the globe. Attendees at the events will receive a small portion of the food demonstrated. This line item will also cover paper products such as plates, cups, etc.

Flyers will be used to advertise the event in South Tucson and on the University of Arizona campus. Copies of recipes will be distributed to those attending the cultural events.