Report: International Student Scholarship Banquet  Date: March 9, 2012

GOALS:
The goals of the banquet are to:
• Expose Loyola students, faculty and staff to a country and its culture through a speaker, food, art, music and entertainment.
• Raise money for the International Student Scholarship Fund.

SUMMARY:
ISA was interested in focusing on Iran because of all the attention (often times negative) it has been getting in the news. ISA and CIE worked closely with Professor Behrooz Moazami, who is from Iran. As well, many members of the Iranian community of New Orleans were involved in planning and attending the banquet this year. The banquet was an educational event as well as a celebration of the Iranian New Year, Nowruz.

For the first time in 10 years, ISA did not receive funding from SGA because this year SGA changed how they enforce funding rules. They said that the banquet did not qualify for funds since it is a fundraising event. In order to get funding for the event, CIE worked to raise funds from Loyola departments and colleges as well as private donors.

The Banquet took place on Friday, March 9 in the St. Charles Room. Set up began around 12:30 PM and the Banquet was over by around 9:30 PM.

Sponsors (since we didn’t get SGA funding):
- Center for Intercultural Understanding
- Center for International Education
- LIEP
- College of Business
- College of Humanities & Natural Sciences
- Dr. Alton F. Doody, Jr. Memorial Fund
- Jesuit Social Research Institute
- Office of Admissions
- Office of Student Affairs
- Mission & Ministry
- Twomey Center for Peace Through Justice

Total Number of Tables: 20 tables
- Academic Resource Center
- Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies
- CIE
- College of Social Sciences
- Department of History
- Department of Languages & Cultures
- Department of Religious Studies
- Individual Tickets – 1 table
- Middle East Peace Studies
- Mr. and Mrs. Khaleghi (3)
- Mr. and Mrs. Foroozesh
- Mr. and Mrs. Joey Zamin
- Mr. and Mrs. Moghar
- Office of Admissions
- Office of the Provost
- Mission & Ministry
- SGA/UPB

Tickets Sold/Promised before Banquet: 160

Tickets Sold at the Banquet: 0

Number of People counted going through the door: 94 (some people came late)

Tickets Collected at the Door: 115 (some people did not remember to bring their tickets or came late)

Tickets for which money was not collected: 6 from individuals table ($125)

Tickets sold, but people did not attend: 9 (2 from Provost’s table, 1 at Behrooz’s table, 1 at Social Sciences table, 1 at Admissions table, 2 from Khaleghi, 2 from SGA)

Businesses who donated silent auction items:
- The Flaming Torch Restaurant
- Peperoni’s Café
- Raising Cane’s
- Dr. Kamran Khoobehi

Summary of Funds Raised
- Funds raised from Ticket Sales: $3,215 (doesn’t include tickets that weren’t paid for)
- Funds raised from Silent Auction: $1009 (painting = $450)
- Total Funds Raised: $4,224

EVALUATION METHODS:
CIE staff members met the week after the banquet to discuss changes/recommendations for next year. CIE also took into account informal feedback from the ISA E-Board/members and other banquet attendees.
The International Student Scholarship Banquet was successful in achieving its goal of exposing Loyola students, faculty and staff to a country and its culture. While we cannot quantify how much students learned from the banquet, it is clear that they were exposed to many different aspects of Iran and its culture. The banquet program included music, speakers, poetry, dance and an educational slideshow:

- Persian music was provided by a DJ from Baton Rouge who specializes in Iranian events.
- Loyola student Samaneh Khosini spoke about her memories of Iran and what it means to her to be Iranian.
- Professor Behrooz Moazami spoke about similarities and differences between Iran and the Middle East and how the “Green Revolution” of 2009 in Iran influenced the Arab Spring that came later in many countries in the Middle East. He also spoke about the meaning of Nowruz, the Iranian New Year, and its importance in Iranian culture over many centuries.
- Three poets recited poetry related to the Middle East and Iran (Andy Young, Khaled Hegazzi and Dr. Faramarz Soleimani).
- Loyola students Gabby Landry and Samaneh Khosini performed a traditional Persian dance and then encouraged all of the banquet attendees to join in the dancing, many of whom did.
- An educational slideshow depicting Iran’s art, architecture, culture and history was on display during the banquet.

In addition to the official program events, an environment was created at the banquet that allowed for interaction between the Iranian community of New Orleans and the Loyola community. Iranians and Loyola students, faculty and staff interacted for the first 45 minutes while bidding on silent auction items, learning about the Haft Sin (Nowruz table), taking pictures and mingling. As well, at the end, many Iranians and Loyola community members danced together to close out the banquet.

After the banquet, many Loyola community members expressed to CIE staff members how much they had learned about Iran and its culture including a long tradition of poetry and other artistic expressions. Many of the Iranians who attended expressed how meaningful it had been for them to celebrate Iran with the Loyola community.

The International Student Scholarship Banquet was also successful in achieving its goal of raising money for the International Student Scholarship Fund. The total funds raised were $4,224. $3,215 was raised from ticket sales and $1009 was raised from the silent auction. This represents an increase of 34% from last year.

Depending on the country that is chosen next year, we may or may not be able to achieve both of these goals at the same level. Working with Professor Moazami allowed for the interaction with the Iranians in New Orleans. The money raised was higher because of the Iranian community who created more demand for tickets and paid more for the tickets they purchased. As well, Mrs. Khaleghi donated a painting for the silent auction that raised $450.

**SUMMARY OF RESULTS:**

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- **Banquet Delegation:** the banquet is too large of an event for one person to manage every aspect.
  - Debbie will manage the silent auction before and during the banquet.
  - Susan will manage ticket sales before and during the event.
- **Ticket Sales:** some people who wanted to come could not because the event was sold out, but not everyone who had a ticket showed up.
  - Oversell tickets by at least 10%.
  - Every table should have 9 seats rather than 8.
  - People getting free tickets must pick them up by a certain date or else forfeit them.
  - People purchasing tickets must pay for them by a certain date or else forfeit them.
  - Continue with pricing from this year: $200/table, $15/student, $20 per faculty/staff, $30/community member.
- **Silent Auction:** Around 130 items were available and only around 80 sold at the silent auction. We need more (and better) silent auction items and we need more people to bid.
  - Set prices at a minimum that is acceptable in the case that someone only pays the minimum bid price.
  - Push getting silent auction items more before students arrive at orientation and at ISA meetings.
  - Have CIE staff purchase items whenever possible when traveling abroad.
  - Identify particular international students who can purchase items from their home country and get reimbursed by CIE.
  - Work further in advance with local businesses to get better donations.
  - Email students before they leave for the summer and before Christmas to remind them about bringing back silent auction items.
- **Banquet Program:**
  - Keep the same order of events next year.
  - If possible, try to incorporate as many different representations of the culture and opportunities for interaction with members of the country as we did this year.
  - Have pre-cut dessert so it doesn’t delay the program.
- **Highlighting ISA:** keep head table as a way to highlight ISA.
  - Have E-Board members do more of the announcements and introductions and explain more about ISA, why...
picked the country, how to get involved, etc.

**Attire:**
- Be sure to include indication of the proper attire (semi-formal) on all of the publicity.

**Alcohol:** The cost and trouble of having alcohol at the banquet does not make it worth it because not enough people purchase drinks.
- Don’t have alcohol at future banquets.

**Funding:** For the first time in 10 years, ISA did not receive funding from SGA because this year SGA changed how they enforce funding rules. They said that the banquet did not qualify for funds since it is a fundraising event. In order to get funding for the event, CIE worked to raise funds from Loyola departments and colleges and private donors.
- Kristy will work with Chris Wiseman starting this March to figure out how to raise funds for next year’s event.

**Decorations:**
- Use helium from Dining Services (it’s cheaper than Co-Curricular).
- Buy “floating” candles.