

African-American fashions displayed

Last Friday's fashion show celebrated black heritage and style

By Erin Snelgrove
Oregon Daily Emerald

As the sound of beating drums thundered throughout the room, two African warriors emerged from the darkness. Dressed in robes of midnight purple and shimmering white, these stoic fighters stood patiently, ignoring the whirlwind of dancers invading their path. But with a touch on the arm from their colorful brides, these men turn, smile and walk down the stage in the EMU Ballroom past the clapping audience and the flashing photographers.

This scene is neither from a tribal festival nor a wedding celebration. Instead, the display was one of the many activities at the Black Heritage Fashion Show, last Friday.

Sponsored by the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority and Expressions of Ivy, a new multicultural organization on campus, the event was a means to celebrate black heritage.

By sharing fashion, musical entertainment and an award ceremony, members of Alpha Kappa Alpha hoped to have the Eugene community come together for an evening of cultural interaction. All proceeds from the event were do-

nated to New Roads Homeless Youth Program.

Taryn Tarver-Thompson, the coordinator for the show, said she felt proud of the program.

"I was glad to see everybody getting involved because it meant a lot to me," Tarver-Thompson said.

Beginning the evening with a bridal procession, students exhibited colorful gowns, sculpted hair and strappy shoes. As the evening progressed, other fashion elements, including an African dance, a children's skit and a career scene were presented. The clothes for the show were provided by various shops in Eugene and Portland.

Rashree Parsad, a model for the business wardrobe, said all people involved made the show special by adding their own individual touches.

"For the business scene, we had women on the go, guys flying after the girls and people on their cell phones," Parsad said. "It was really cute how everyone used their creativity to make each scene unique."

Most of the models for the program are students at the University.

Corey Chambers, a member for the University football team, had joined the fashion show after encouragement from his friends. He, along with approximately 15 other football players, decided to do-

nate their time to this cause.

"The [Alpha Kappa Alpha] is a new chapter on campus, and I wanted to show my support," Chambers said.

Besides the fashion element of the show, musical performances entertained the audience. Throughout the evening, guests heard the voices of Troy Franklin, assistant dean of student life at the University; the Brothaz Grimm, a rap group from Portland; and the Bethel Temple Youth Choir, an Oregon gospel group.

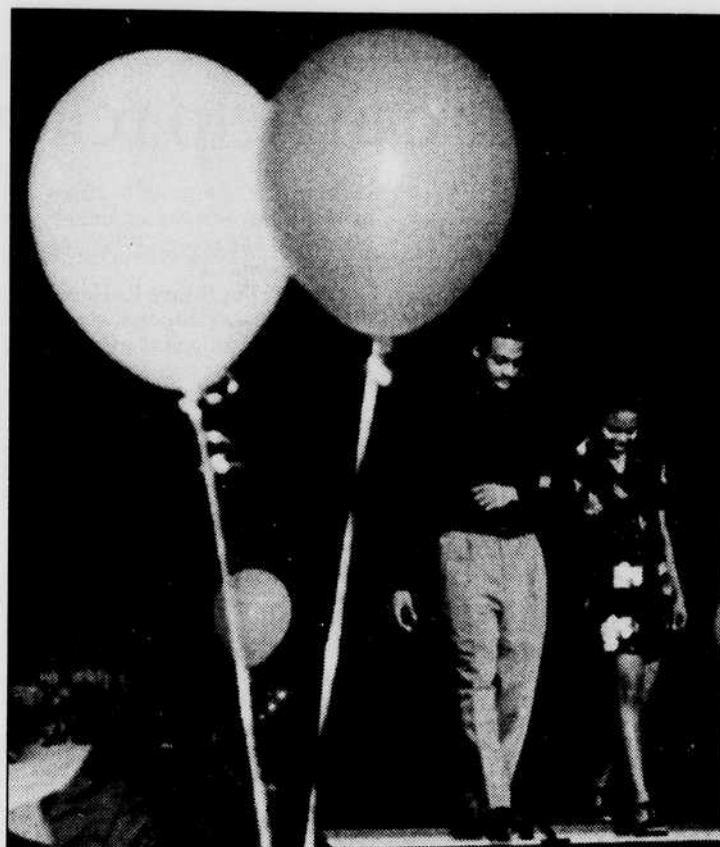
Before the program's intermission, awards were presented to every black faculty member at the University.

"These awards are meant as a thank you for all their hard work," Tarver-Thompson said. "We [Alpha Kappa Alpha] wanted to thank them for their presence in the community as well as in education."

Lyllie Parker, one award recipient and advisor at the University Office of Multicultural Affairs, thanked the University for affirming her work.

"In high school, I had often dreamed about getting a Grammy," Parker said. "This award is my Grammy."

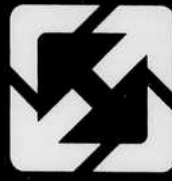
At the end of the festival, all the models went on stage for the Hip Hop scene. At this time, students



Models strolled down the walkway Friday night in the 6th annual Alpha Kappa Alpha Fashion Show. The clothing included evening, sports, business and children's wear.

presented their own personality by wearing brightly decorated clothes and creating personalized dance routines.

"We had a full house, and everyone — not just blacks — came together for this multicultural event," Tarver-Thompson said.



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