

Experience culture through food and performances

■ Feb. 22 International Dinner and Show brings the world to Eastern Oregon University

LA GRANDE — Eastern Oregon University's annual International Dinner and Show will share cultures from around the world through performances and food Feb. 22 on the EOU campus, La Grande.

Attendees will experience parts of the world, all without leaving the Gilbert Event Center, in Ackerman Hall. Doors open at 5 p.m., and dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m. The show starts at 6 p.m. General admission is \$12, or \$10 for students.

Tickets can be purchased at the event or by cash or check at the EOU Bookstore or Multicultural Center, both of which are located in Hoke Union Building.

The International Student Services Office and the International Student Association supports students from different countries as they navigate living in a new area and attending EOU. Together, 18 student members of ISA will share pieces of their homes at this year's gathering.

Performances will highlight cultural components from a variety of countries. The main feature of the show will be a professional Japanese taiko group.

Other performances include EOU's African Drumming Ensemble, dances from India, Cuba and the United States, and a performance that intertwines traditional Chinese dance with a calligraphy demonstration.

Events like these are another way EOU serves as a cultural engine for rural places. Mika Morton, assistant director of Student Diversity and Inclusion and International Student Services, said cultural events "provoke conversation and act as one step of someone's personal journey of experiencing new and different cultures."

For the culinary portion of the evening, international students will offer homemade dishes from



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International students will give performances during the Feb. 22 International Dinner and Show at EOU.

their countries. The menu includes rolls from Vietnam, chakalaka from South Africa, empanadas from Argentina, onigiri rice balls from Japan, crepes from France, jollof rice from Nigeria and Jamaica iced tea from Mexico.

"Food is a gateway to experiencing new cultures," Morton said. "It introduces traditions and connects families through the history and stories shared through cooking."

Joaquin Bermejillo, an EOU soccer player from Argentina, will

be preparing empanadas for the dinner. He grew up watching his father, a chef, prepare them and learned to make them from his grandma.

"Empanadas are a typical food in Argentina. They are easy to make and delicious to eat," Bermejillo said. "I am looking forward to eating everyone's food and experiencing someone else's culture."

— Contributed by EOU PR intern Briana Rosenkranz



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A variety of ethnic foods will be offered during the international dinner. This year's event is the 33rd annual gathering at EOU.

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