

Inter college festival 2017

Written by Simon weldemichael Adi Keih College of arts and social sciences
Friday, 31 March 2017 23:52



Eritrean students have started celebrating the 8th Annual Inter- College Festival. Students from Eritrea's various institutions of higher education have gathered from the 30th of March until the 2nd of April at the College of Business and Economics, located in Halhale. The structure and number of our IHE's fit the "one people, one heart" motto that represents the beauty and diversity of Eritrean people.

Eritrea's nine colleges work together to elevate and improve the country. The four-day program blends educational, cultural, literary, exhibition and sport events and showcases the creativity, intelligence, teamwork, and athleticism of students. For many years, the festival has been a lovely and honorable event and an integral part of education in Eritrea.

Notably, Adi Keih College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS) has been the champion of the Inter- College Festival for the last three successive years. However, rather than rest on its laurels, the CASS community is continuing to work in the hopes of attaining another overall victory. Simon Tesfagabir, a third-year student from the Department of Political Science and International Relations, and first-year student, Witness Abraham, are members of the Educational Team at CASS. Speaking prior to their departure for Halhale, they confidently stated that "we look forward to participating in this wonderful event and are only thinking of winning." Another participant, Abel, from the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, assured that "the history of championship will repeat by itself in Halhale." When asked about the possibility of another championship, Sara Tsehaye, a second-year History student and guitarist, replied "my guitar knows it better and will answer it in Halhale." The hunger for another championship was equally evident throughout the rest of campus. Mr. Ghirmay Teckle, Administrator of CASS, stated that "all [others] are hankering for the overall championship, but I don't think they can stifle the intellectual muscle of our students." The question as to who takes the overall championship will be answered on Sunday April 2nd.

Festivals are very important social activities. They offer celebration, encourage peace, can strengthen solidarity, provide a common ground for interaction, and break the monotony of daily life. A festival can be a program of cultural events, celebrations or entertainment conducted by a specific community or organization to attain a specific objective. Festivals have far-reaching goals beyond the colorful variety of visible aesthetic aspects; for example, they offer deep meanings or messages and share innovative or sentimental substance. Festivals also open a new door of opportunity for expression and celebration of highly-regarded values of the society.

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Etymologically, the term festival is derived from the Latin word “festum”, meaning “public joy, merriment, [and] revelry”.

The Inter-College Festival is a time of annual celebration and consists of a series of performances of fine art, as well as special observances by students from all colleges, as well as other members of the community (e.g. government officials, local members of the community, etc). All members of the IHE are united by creative and intellectual bonds to share ideas and opinions. The festival should and must aim to celebrate our own culture in order to minimize the negative economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts of globalization. Inclusion of the local people in the development of the festival has a paramount significance and must not be forgotten.

Currently, the festival aims to reach the level of the Sawa Youth Festival and the Annual National Festival (Expo) in encouraging innovation, artistic excellence, cultural diversity, and societal solidarity. The festival was designed to benefit students of higher education by providing creative outlets through a wide range of cultural and educational pursuits. It allows students to have multidisciplinary mastery through greater appreciation of science and art, widening interests, and broader understandings. During the festival, students are able to challenge themselves and develop in numerous ways.

The purpose of the festival is to provide students with opportunities to participate, cooperate, compete, and exhibit pride. Through festival participation, students exhibit a healthy lifestyle, learn, and grow. Mr. Semere Habteslasie and Mr. Ghirmawi Araya, instructors in the Department of History, explained that the festival allows for the practical application of theories and concepts learned in the classroom.

An important benefit of the festival is that it allows for the inclusion of both current and past college students. The friendship and camaraderie exhibited during the festival is truly heartwarming. Although the festival does have a competitive nature, “the end justifies the means” attitude is neither encouraged, nor tolerated. Rather things like good sportsmanship, fair play, and comradeship are rewarded and valued above all. The festival also enhances pride in one’s culture, education, and institution by allowing students of respective colleges to participate in various activities that in turn produce a sense of belongingness of the program and the college. It is meant to develop the community feeling within a college and instill a sense of pride that members feel from being part of the college.

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Recreation is also among the very core of the festival. The recreational nature of the competition is one of the festival's most memorable and pleasurable aspects. It is designed to provide an inclusive and enjoyable way to be active and healthy. The programs, although recreational, have the potential to generate intellectual, social, political and spiritual growth among students. Its goals also involve the improvement and betterment of students through creative, wholesome and imaginative pursuits. Here there is a need for a clear delineation of aims: a unification of efforts and a pride and dedication in giving students a chance for self-fulfillment, creation and liberation of their human spirit. The recreational nature of the festival must be consistent with the ideas of education and for the socialization of the young students through comradeship and group involvement. Positive recreation produces an array of positive emotions that can encourage creativity and growth.

Lastly, the festival is a show of the broad-minded, cultured and refined mind of college students who have decided to celebrate our own culture and exhibit their intellectual and creative faculty. This is an event where Eritrean college students showcase their development, scholarly discipline, and reveal their great potential to all. We wish all participants a peaceful, productive, and cheerful festival!