

Día del Niño ¡Celebración de Primavera!



Folkloric Ballet of SW Washington performed at the annual event.

Near the stage in Gaiser Student Center, a preschool girl wearing a polka dot dress and neon yellow rain boots jumped up and down and clapped her hands to the lively music that filled the air. Mesmerized as she watched the Folkloric Ballet of SW Washington dancers on stage twirling in their colorful skirts, she mimicked their twirling movements.

She was joined by many other young children who danced, stomped, and twirled during Clark College's ¡Celebración de Primavera! / Día del Niño (Celebration of Spring/Day of the Child) on the evening of April 26. Clark's annual community event offered an evening of free, family-friendly activities that celebrates Latiné culture, children, literacy, and Earth

Day.

Students in Clark's Spanish Club volunteered all around the center to assist dozens of children, from toddlers to young teens. Clark students painted faces, helped children make sock puppets, created tissue paper flowers, designed aluminum foil artwork, drew on reusable cloth bags with markers, and helped kids play the apple game. Without using their hands, kids tried to take a bite from an apple suspended in the air by a string.



Michael Scheidt and Jonathan of Clark's Spanish Club delighted children with puppets.

Spanish Club students Michael Scheidt and Jonathan Gauna became puppeteers for the evening. As they worked colorful marionette birds, they talked with children who edged closer to watch. A curious but cautious toddler watched the puppets as she kept a firm grip on her mother's leg.

At a nearby table Clark student Emily Subroto, who was helping

a girl create a sock puppet, asked, “How do you want to decorate your puppet?”

The girl chose a purple sock for the puppet body, a lime green felt tongue, a purple pom pom nose, and wooden buttons for the eyes. Then the girl chose the most colorful hair for her puppet: bright blue, curly yarn. With a hot glue gun, the Clark student attached the elements to the colorful sock puppet. Perfect!

Then the girl gently put her hand into her puppet and moved the mouth. Open and close. Open and close. She looked at her puppet, thanked Subroto, stood up, and headed to the next activity.

Activities included:



Tammy Boyer from Cannell Library brought Spanish-language children's picture books to be checked out.

- Songs by Harney Elementary students
- Reading by author Christopher Cousins
- Games and crafts
- Dancing by Vancouver Ballet Folklórico
- Tammy Boyer from Cannell Library brought Spanish-language children's picture books
- City of Vancouver Urban Forestry staffed a booth with Friends of Trees
- Dinner provided by Los Amigos in Milwaukie, Oregon

- Dance lessons and dance party
- Clark College Spanish Club did the first of three presale tabling events for its tamale fundraiser. Follow the Spanish Club's Instagram profile @clarkcollege.spanishclub

There was so much to do, listen to, and experience. But the event's focal point was the dancing by Vancouver Ballet Folklórico. Folklórico is a type of traditional dance, music, and colorful costume that highlights regional Mexican cultures.

The evening ended with salsa lessons and a dance party. To prepare for the dancing, members of the college's Spanish Club had taken two salsa lessons at O'Connell Sports Complex recently. Advisor Felipe Montoya said the students were ready to salsa!

Event organizer, Michelle Golder, offered many thanks to the event's planning committee: Betsy Ubierno and Erika Nava, Spanish faculty; Felipe Montoya, Spanish Club advisor; and Rosalba Pitkin, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion representative.

Clark College Spanish Club



Spanish Club tamale fundraiser. Left to right: advisor Felipe Montoya with students Stephanie Wagner, Javier Castro Sanchez, and Eduardo Ramirez.

Spanish Club promotes the Spanish-language culture around campus and its communities through events, fundraisers, and activities that provide an active learning experience for students and the community. To learn more, contact Advisor Felipe Montoya at fmontoya@clark.edu

Photos: Clark College/Susan Parrish