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2-12-2019

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Recommended Citation

Perez, Natalia, "BCU Presents "Sounds of My Culture"" (2019). *Blog*. 10.
https://knowledge.e.southern.edu/interactivejour_blog/10

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INVESTIGATING DIVERSITY

Exploring Race, Gender, and Unity in the Adventist Church

FEBRUARY 12, 2019 BY NATALIA PEREZ

BCU Presents “Sounds of My Culture”



Photo by Barry Daly

On Feb. 2, I found myself standing in a long line for Caribbean food during Southern Adventist University’s Black Christian Union (BCU) night, all of us jumping at the chance for some homemade rice and beans and plantains.

The annual cultural celebration was titled “Sounds of My Culture,” and welcomed students with a live jazz band and various cultural food booths, featuring tastes of soul, Caribbean and African food.

The show started as Jedlee Germeil, sophomore business administration major, took the stage as the leading role. His character would navigate, along with the audience, a dream world displaying multiple aspects of black culture over the years.

He started out in a classroom with several other students, along with Alva Johnson, assistant professor in the School of Journalism and Communication, playing the role of their teacher.

Johnson required that her students write a one-page paper elaborating on an aspect of their culture, whether it was the music, food, clothing, etc.

Jedlee got right to work on his assignment, but became discouraged once he realized how disconnected he was from his culture. He went to sleep and dreams teleported him to several different locations.



Photo by Barry Daly

Paired with a cultural guide, he found himself celebrating Brazil's Carnival, experiencing barbershop culture, dancing in a zesty soul train and watching a stomp team. The play also included a live gospel choir in one of the scenes.

Jedlee finished the night awakening from the dream, feeling culturally inspired and connected, ready to write his paper for class.

Jedlee's character portrays many second-generation immigrants/third culture kids who've become slightly detached from their cultural roots. His story reminded us, through vivid colors and music, to celebrate our cultures and stay connected to them.

"It felt great to be able to show people my culture," Jedlee said. "It felt even better to give everyone a chance to experience the music, food, and dancing that I grew up with."

Mish Hughes, junior marketing major and BCU night coordinator, worked behind the scenes throughout the night and was a pivotal part of the night's success.

"Although I didn't get to see all of the show myself, from what I saw the cast and participants did an amazing job of displaying the beauty of our culture and engaging all of the attendees in the food, customs, music, traditions, and the true meaning of what it is to be us," Mish said. "Everyone worked so hard to give the audience a memorable night and showed that we all experience the most joy when we are united in celebration of one another."

