

October 14-16, 2011

PRESS RELEASE

TUCSON *meet*
YOURSELF

DOWNTOWN

a folklife festival

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38TH EDITION OF TUCSON MEET YOURSELF FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL RETURNS OCTOBER 14-16, 2011

Tucson, AZ - For 38 years, Tucson Meet Yourself has brought Tucsonans, Arizonans, and visitors a little closer. In 2011, Tucsonans will experience the largest and most ambitious Tucson Meet Yourself yet.

In addition to the back-by-popular demand demonstrations by folk artists, delicious food, Iron Chef competitions, Lowrider car show, interactive dance workshops, and music from all over the world in six stages, this year's highlights include: a larger cross-border vision in partnership with the neighboring Mexican state of Sonora; new special activities focused on celebrating traditions of health and wellness; and a variety of expanded educational programs, including active participation by TUSD students, teachers, and parents.

Altogether, there will be 110 distinct music, dance, food, and folk arts presentations, demonstrations, and educational experiences representing the work from more than 170 traditional artists and 65 ethnic and occupational groups. Standing apart from other multicultural celebrations in the Old Pueblo by its "folklife" mission, the TMY festival is always preceded by scholarly research and extensive relationship-building with the variety of living traditional artists, folk groups, and ethnic communities that reside here.

Affectionately called by locals, "Tucson *Eat Yourself*" for the abundance of delicious, inexpensive homemade ethnic foods, TMY also doubles as a fundraising platform for 65 participating non-profit clubs, cultural organizations, and small ethnic entrepreneurs and small business owners that last year raised over \$250,000 through sales at the festival.

"While food has always been the hook," said Dr. Maribel Alvarez, Chair of the TMY Board and UA folklore professor, "in the end our goal of serving 120,000 people over three days would be shallow were it not for the careful attention we pay to creating deliberate moments for artistic and human encounters."

NEW IN 2011: The **Sonoran Pavilion** will feature displays about our neighboring state's natural and recreational assets, vernacular foods such as the famed *carne asada*, chiltepin chile, *coyotas*, and flour tortillas, in addition to distinctive arts and crafts associated with the state's *vaquero* and agricultural lifestyle. This is the first time that Sonora is featured in such a large scale at a local festival and recognized for its intertwined culture and economy with Tucson. Sonoran cities will showcase their culture, tourism, arts and foods in partnership with Sonora & Hermosillo tourism departments, cities and municipalities.

A new **Traditions of Health and Wellness** area will highlight healthy foods and exercise, alternative healing techniques rooted in traditional knowledge, a TMY Trekking Path throughout the entire festival footprint, a large communal dance, Tucson MOVE Your Body, martial arts, yoga, massage, plus many distinct forms of exercise demos rooted in cultural traditions (capoeria, zumba, martial arts) as well as games, workshops, and lectures.

This year, a **Passport to the World** will allow festival goers, especially children and parents, to personalize their experience by collecting cultural "visas" throughout the festival by visiting and interacting with artists, tradition bearers, presenters, vendors, and folklorists in new dynamic ways; unlike official passports elsewhere, the TMY version grants immediate access to worldwide ethnic and folk groups who are also Tucsonans. This year, TUSD will host its annual schools fair at the festival; at 2pm on Saturday October 15, thousands of TUSD children and youth will lead festival participants in the Tucson MOVE Your Body Dance followed by the MOVING Parade through the Festival grounds.

Partner events:

- **La Cocina at Old Town Artisans** hosts the Folk Music Stage and serves refreshing libations and foods all weekend
- **Tucson Unified Festival of Schools** celebrates in the TCC North Meeting rooms October 15th from 10am – 4pm
- **El Presidio de San Agustin de Tucson** features historic re-enactments at 133 W. Washington Street Oct 15th from 9am – 4pm

Returning Special Events include; **Pima County Meet Yourself** showcasing Pima County's many vibrant departments and services; **TMY Lowrider Car Show** presented with UnidoS Car Club, and **Kitchen Stadium** featuring professional and amateur Iron Chef Contests and cooking demos.

"This year we are offering the public multiple entry points to an authentic experience," said TMY Executive Director Mia Hansen, "people will be able to add depth to what can otherwise seem simply festive by becoming involved; *something* happens when people eat, dance, move, make, and experience things together."

The 2011 Tucson Meet Yourself Folklife Festival will take place from October 14-16 at six adjacent site locations cover 60 acres in downtown Tucson: El Presidio Park, Pima County Main Library, Jacomé Plaza, La Placita Village, Pima County Administration Building and Courthouse, Leo Rich Theater, Tucson Convention Center Plaza, and Church Street. Festival hours are Friday 11am to 10pm, Saturday 10am to 10pm, and Sunday 11am to 5pm.

Major Support for Tucson Meet Yourself Folklife Festival is provided by:

Pascua Yaqui Tribe, Pima County Communities Putting Prevention to Work, La Frontera Arizona, Providence Service Corporation, Tucson Unified School District, Tucson Pima Arts Council, Kresge Foundation, Arizona Commission on the Arts, Southwest Center at the University of Arizona, the Southwestern Foundation for Education and Historic Preservation, Arizona Bilingual Magazine / Azteca America TV 14 Tucson Meet Yourself, The Fund for Civility, Tucson College, and Tucson Medical Center

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