

**Application for  
DEI Initiative**

**Multicultural Week,  
City of Duluth, GA**

**Judges' score: 9.22**

## Detailed description of the event:

Multicultural Week | August 6–9 From Wednesday, August 6 through Saturday, August 9, the City of Duluth hosted a four-day Multicultural Week celebration that activated areas throughout Downtown with global cuisine, music, dance, storytelling, and hands-on cultural experiences. Programming was distributed across Main Street, Town Green, Parsons Alley, and the Duluth Festival Center, encouraging residents and visitors to move through Downtown while engaging with traditions, art forms, and cultural expressions from communities around the world.

Wednesday, August 6 | Wednesday Flavors on Main Multicultural Week launched with a food-forward kickoff during Wednesday Flavors on Main, a weekly summer series highlighting food trucks, local restaurants, and family-friendly entertainment. This special Multicultural Week edition brought cultural flavors and live performance to Main Street, serving as an accessible and welcoming introduction to the week’s programming. Guests explored a wide range of cuisines representing different cultural traditions, including tacos and Cuban specialties, baked Filipino goods, and Southern comfort foods such as chicken and waffles. As guests circulated along Main Street, the lively sounds of Mariachi Mexico filled the street. Their performance blended traditional Mexican music with familiar contemporary favorites, creating an atmosphere that felt celebratory and inviting, drawing passersby into the experience. Free henna art offered a hands-on cultural experience, as guests selected designs and observed artists carefully applying each pattern—often sparking conversation and curiosity among those waiting nearby. Star Pix Photo Booth provided free AI-generated photos set against cultural landscapes from around the world, inviting guests to step into visual representations of global destinations and extend the evening’s sense of discovery. In partnership with the City of Duluth’s arts initiatives, attendees were offered free tickets to the Jazz Legacy Project’s Tribute to Cannonball Adderley, extending the evening’s cultural experience beyond the street festival and into a City performance venue. Adderley’s music—rooted in African American musical traditions and incorporating global and soul-influenced elements—reflected the spirit of multiculturalism by celebrating both cultural heritage and cross-cultural exchange. Together, food, music, and art emphasized how shared cultural experiences can serve as universal connectors and set a welcoming tone for the week ahead.

Thursday, August 7 | Parsons Thursday Nights Out – Multicultural Edition Thursday’s programming shifted into Parsons Alley, where Multicultural Week intersected with Parsons Thursday Nights Out for an evening centered on cultural exploration through artistic projects, visual storytelling, and performance. Guests explored a series of hands-on multicultural craft stations designed for all ages. Children and adults alike created mini Koinobori windsocks inspired by Japanese traditions, selecting colors and assembling their pieces. Nearby, guests tried their hand at African Kente paper weaving, experimenting with bold patterns. At another station, participants explored Polynesian tapa cloth stamping, using repeating motifs to create their own designs while learning how pattern and repetition communicate history and identity. At 6:30 PM, the evening continued with a collective outdoor viewing of *Samsara*, a visually striking documentary spanning 25 countries and cultures. As the film played, crafts continued, allowing guests to engage with imagery and perspectives from around the world through both reflection and hands-on creativity. The night then transitioned into live performance, beginning with Manga African Dance showcasing powerful rhythms and expressive movement, followed by a traditional Hawaiian dance performance emphasizing storytelling, grace, and connection to place. Together, these elements created an evening that balanced education, observation, and hands-on engagement, encouraging cultural appreciation without requiring prior knowledge.

Friday, August 8 | Rock the Block – Multicultural Night Friday marked the most expansive and energetic chapter of Multicultural Week, as Rock the Block: Live and Loud Fridays – Multicultural Night brought large-scale performances, audience participation, and global traditions together in a single evening. Hosted by DJ Jessica It’s All Good, the Main Stage featured a fast-paced, immersive lineup representing cultures from across the world. Between acts, DJ Jessica curated cultural music selections and led crowd line dances, including crowd-favorite line dances like The Flex and The Cha Cha Slide, bridging performances through music and inviting guests to participate together. This continuous thread of shared movement and sound sustained momentum throughout the evening and reinforced a sense of collective celebration. The night opened with the Southern Pearls Step Team, whose synchronized claps, stomps, and chants showcased the African American tradition of stepping. Their performance emphasized unity, rhythm, and collective expression, as the rhythm carried beyond the stage and into the audience. Parama Roy Bardhan followed with Indian Classical Bharatanatyam performances rooted in Hindu mythology. Through precise footwork, expressive gestures, and layered storytelling, audiences were guided through narratives drawn from Hindu tradition that explored devotion, transformation, and balance. Even viewers unfamiliar with the stories were drawn in by the clarity, precision, and emotional impact of the movement. The energy shifted with the Chinese Lion Dance by the Chien Hong School of Kung Fu. Two lions animated the stage, symbolizing strength, prosperity, and good fortune, responding to the beat of drums, cymbals, and gongs while playfully engaging the crowd. Children watched wide-eyed as the lions interacted with the audience, drawing cheers and applause from onlookers. Berdolé Flamenco invited the audience directly into the experience, prompting guests to practice cheering “Olé!” before launching into dramatic footwork, sweeping arm movements, and expressive storytelling. The percussive footwork (zapateado) echoed through Downtown, transforming the performance into a dynamic exchange between dancers and spectators. Additional performances followed, including Bollywood dance; Caribbean dance featuring a Moko Jumbie stilt dancer and interactive crowd dances such as limbo and dollar wine; Polish folk dance marked by colorful costuming and lively formations; and Tamil Parai drumming performed by a large, multigenerational ensemble of nearly 30 participants. Their powerful rhythms and coordinated movement emphasized cultural continuity, shared heritage, and community participation. Modern global culture was represented by anime rapper None Like Joshua, blending hip-hop with international fandom, before the evening concluded with a fire dancer showcase that brought the night to a powerful close. Performers wielded fire fans and torches set to a mix of cultural music, bringing the evening to a close with spectacle, awe, and celebration. Meanwhile, Parsons Alley offered a complementary experience with live Latin music by C.O.T. Band and interactive salsa lessons. Guests of all skill levels were encouraged to join in, learning basic steps together and turning the alley into a shared dance floor. International food trucks throughout Downtown—including hibachi, empanadas, Italian ice, tacos, and Hawaiian cuisine—reinforced the sensory connection between music, movement, and flavor. Together, these parallel experiences allowed guests to shape their own evening while remaining connected to the shared energy of Multicultural Night.

Saturday, August 9 | Grand Finale Saturday served as the culmination of Multicultural Week, offering programming from morning through evening that emphasized learning, creativity, and connection. Workshops & Cultural Learning At the Duluth Festival Center, daytime workshops allowed for deeper engagement. The Mini Piñata Workshop, presented by Piñatas Here U Go, invited children to design and decorate their own colorful piñatas, choosing from playful shapes such as Tako the octopus, Wadermelon, Ball-ita, and Pascake. The workshop emphasized joy, creativity, and cultural storytelling, ensuring each child left with a handmade creation and a sense of accomplishment. The Yin Yang Mandala String Art Workshop offered adults a quieter, reflective experience, combining guided meditation, tea, and hands-on artmaking. Participants explored balance and mindfulness while creating intricate mandalas, blending creative expression with cultural symbolism in a calm, intentional environment. Evening Performances In the evening, the Main Stage hosted a Korean Festival K-Pop Competition, drawing enthusiastic crowds as performers of diverse backgrounds showcased choreography, vocals, and stage presence.

The event celebrated contemporary Korean culture while fostering cultural exchange and youth engagement in a family-friendly setting. In Parsons Alley, guests enjoyed live Brazilian jazz by Fernanda Noronha & Peu Pereira, multicultural storytimes with Miss LuvDrop, and a featured performance by the Laotian American Society highlighting traditional dance and cultural heritage. The night closed with a shared sense of celebration, reflection, and appreciation for the diversity represented throughout the week. Overall Impact Multicultural Week created opportunities for global discovery and connection throughout Downtown Duluth. By pairing large-scale performances with intimate workshops, hands-on crafts, food experiences, and storytelling, the event welcomed attendees of all ages and backgrounds. The coordinated use of multiple Downtown locations encouraged exploration, supported local activity, and reinforced the role of shared public gathering places as spaces for cultural exchange and understanding.

#### **Detailed description of the DEI impact of the event/initiative:**

Multicultural Week advanced diversity, equity, and inclusion by intentionally centering cultural representation, access, and participation throughout four days of public programming. Rather than presenting culture as something to be observed from a distance, the event invited residents and visitors to actively engage through food, movement, artmaking, storytelling, and shared experiences. Performers, presenters, and facilitators represented a wide range of cultural backgrounds, generations, and artistic traditions, ensuring that authentic voices were not only included, but meaningfully highlighted and celebrated. Equity was supported through free and low-cost programming, accessible public locations, and activities designed for all ages and levels of familiarity. By distributing programming across multiple Downtown locations and integrating it into existing, well-attended event series, Multicultural Week reduced barriers to participation and welcomed both intentional attendees and casual passersby. This approach expanded access beyond those who might typically seek out cultural programming, allowing residents to encounter new perspectives organically within familiar spaces. Inclusion was reinforced through interactive, participatory elements that encouraged shared involvement across backgrounds and experiences. Line dances, collaborative crafts, call-and-response performances, hands-on workshops, and audience engagement moments created opportunities for connection through collective action rather than passive observation. These shared experiences fostered moments of belonging, curiosity, and mutual respect, allowing attendees to engage with cultures beyond their own in welcoming, approachable ways. Together, these efforts positioned Multicultural Week as more than a celebration of diversity—it functioned as an inclusive civic initiative that modeled how public programming can elevate representation, reduce barriers, and build meaningful connections across differences. By embedding DEI principles into both the structure and spirit of the event, Multicultural Week strengthened community connection and reinforced Downtown Duluth as a place where all cultures are visible, valued, and invited to participate.

#### **Estimated number of attendees?**

Approximately 14,100 visits during event hours over four event dates, based on Placer.ai foot traffic data for Downtown Duluth during the event windows.

#### **Testimonials or community feedback:**

“Dear Jessica, On behalf of the Atlanta Parai Team (APT), I would like to sincerely thank you and the City of Duluth for giving us the wonderful opportunity to perform at the Multicultural Night event last Friday, August 8th. It was an honor to be part of such a vibrant celebration of cultures, and we truly appreciate the warm welcome and support from your team. It was especially rewarding for our younger performers seeing their heritage valued in a public space. Thank you once again for making this event a memorable experience for our team and our students. We look forward to future opportunities to collaborate with the City of Duluth in celebrating cultural diversity. Regards, Rajesh Masilamani Atlanta Parai Team(APT)” “Dear Jessica, I wanted to take a moment to thank you for all your help in making last Saturday’s K-Pop contest a success. We truly had a wonderful time, and it was such a great example of what can be accomplished through collaboration. Your support and assistance were invaluable, and we deeply appreciate all that you did to help us bring this event to life. We’re already looking forward to working together again for next year’s event. Below is a short clip from Saturday’s contest, just to share a glimpse of the excitement and energy from the day. <https://youtu.be/avY8wr49Ang?si=Nnk1aDqnBTFWJgtj> Thank you again for everything. Warm regards, Gina Pollitt Korean Festival Foundation Chief External Affairs Officer”

# Wednesday Flavors On Main





# Parsons Thursday Nights Out





# Rock the Block: Multicultural Night























# Creativity Workshops



I WITNESS THE DARKNESS  
AND CALL ON THE LIGHT  
WITH MY PRAYER.  
THANK YOU UNIVERSE  
FOR GUIDING ME  
TO PERCEIVE THIS FEELING  
THROUGH THE EYES OF  
THE TEACHER  
OF LOVE.

# Korean Festival Foundation K-Pop Competition





## MULTICULTURAL WEEK | EVENT HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE

- **FOUR-DAY, CITYWIDE CULTURAL CELEBRATION**  
Activated areas throughout Downtown Duluth over four consecutive days, featuring global cuisine, music, dance, storytelling, film, and hands-on cultural experiences.
- **MULTI-LOCATION ENGAGEMENT MODEL**  
Programming spanned Main Street, Town Green, Parsons Alley, and the Duluth Festival Center—encouraging movement, exploration, and discovery across Downtown rather than concentrating activity in a single venue.
- **ACCESSIBLE ENTRY POINTS THROUGH FAMILIAR EVENTS**  
Integrated multicultural programming into existing, well-attended series such as Wednesday Flavors on Main, Parsons Thursday Nights Out, and Rock the Block—welcoming both intentional attendees and casual passersby.
- **GLOBAL REPRESENTATION ACROSS ART FORMS**  
Featured cultural expressions from around the world, including Mariachi, African dance, Indian classical dance, Chinese lion dance, flamenco, Bollywood, Caribbean dance, Polish folk dance, Tamil drumming, Brazilian jazz, K-pop, and contemporary global pop culture.
- **HANDS-ON CULTURAL PARTICIPATION**  
Included interactive craft stations, collaborative workshops, line dances, call-and-response performances, film screenings, and audience engagement moments designed for all ages and experience levels.
- **INTERGENERATIONAL & MULTIGENERATIONAL PROGRAMMING**  
Offered experiences for children, teens, adults, and seniors—from family-friendly crafts and storytimes to reflective adult workshops and youth-centered competitions.
- **STRONG DEI FOUNDATION**  
All programming was free or low-cost, hosted in accessible public spaces, and designed to reduce barriers to participation while centering authentic cultural voices.

## WHY THIS EVENT STANDS OUT

- **CULTURE AS PARTICIPATION, NOT PERFORMANCE**  
Multicultural Week moved beyond passive viewing by inviting attendees to actively create, dance, learn, and engage—fostering connection through shared experiences rather than observation alone.
- **DEI EMBEDDED IN STRUCTURE, NOT ADDED ON**  
Equity and inclusion were built into the event’s design through accessible locations, free programming, integration into existing community events, and intentional representation across cultures and generations.
- **CITYWIDE VISIBILITY OF CULTURAL EXPRESSION**  
By distributing programming across Downtown, the event reinforced the idea that cultural expression belongs throughout the city—visible, valued, and woven into everyday public spaces.
- **BALANCE OF SCALE AND INTIMACY**  
Large, high-energy performances were paired with smaller workshops, crafts, and reflective experiences—allowing attendees to choose how they engaged while remaining connected to the broader celebration.
- **AUTHENTIC REPRESENTATION & COMMUNITY VOICE**  
Performers and presenters reflected lived cultural experiences, creating opportunities for learning rooted in authenticity, respect, and storytelling.
- **A MODEL FOR INCLUSIVE CIVIC PROGRAMMING**  
Multicultural Week demonstrated how cities can celebrate diversity while strengthening community connection, curating experiences that center authentic representation, remove barriers to participation, and invite residents to learn from one another in shared public spaces.

**EVENT BUDGET**

**Multicultural Week: \$22,530 Total Budget**

<b>Wednesday, August 6</b>		
Budget	Description	Vendor
1,500	Mariachi	Mariachi Mexico
600	Free Henna	Joonie & Jake
1,500	Photo Booth	Starpix
<b>Thursday, August 7</b>		
Budget	Description	Vendor
1,700	Movie Screen	Magnolia
20	Samsura DVD	Amazon
1,125	Hawaiian Dancers	DreamFriends
1,000	African Dance	Manga African Dance
300	Music/Sound Production	Julie Gribble
200	Crafts	Amazon
	Sponsor	Window Nation
175	Craft Help	Happy Craftery
<b>Friday, August 8</b>		
Budget	Description	Vendor
3,000	LED Show/Ambient Entertainment	Liquid Sky
1,500	Step Dancers	Liquid Sky: Southern Pearls of Atlanta
700	DJ	Jessica Its All Good
1,500	Parsons Alley	C.O.T. Band
2,500	Production	Sound Solutions
600	2 Face painters	Joonie & Jakes
500	Indian Drumming	Atlanta Parai Team
160	Anime Rapper	None Like Joshua
0	Classical Indian Dance	Parama Roy Bardarahn
1,000	Chinese Lion Dance	Chein HOIn School of Kung Fu
500	Flemenco Dancers	Berdale Flamenco
0	Bollywood	Damali Bacchus
725		Caribbean Dance of Atlanta
200		Mazury Polish Folk Dance Ensemble
<b>Saturday, August 9</b>		
Budget	Description	Vendor
800	Fernanda Noronha & Peui Music	Sugarloaf Entertainment
425	Story Time	Miss Luvdrop
300	Loatian Dance	Laotian American Society

