



Unity Festival shows off young talents

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A mass of people turned out for the Long Beach Unity Festival for music, food and entertainment.

The festival, which took place on Saturday and Sunday at Rainbow Lagoon Park, was held to recognize and encourage talented locals by allowing them to show off their skills and passion for the arts. The event also brought unity of the music styles, ethnicities, cultures and backgrounds with the many stage presentations.

Over a dozen white pop-up tents, a wooden cutout of Michael Jackson and roughly 100 chairs decorated the front of the large stage. Along the pathways of the park, the white tents held stalls of hand-crafted jewelry, clothing and other items by the local Long Beach artists.

Different types of music from local bands, choirs and singers graced the stage as the main attraction. The festival featured more than 60 local artists, bands, dance troupes and choirs.

The aromas of sponsoring food vendors such as Buono's Pizzeria and Carson Fatburger filled the air.

The festival also held a special tribute to Michael Jackson by a few Long Beach children who performed their own choreography to their favorite Jackson songs. The talented children included dancers and singers; ages ranged from five years old to 10 years old.

In addition to promoting young talent, the Unity Festival also held the 2010 Long Beach Unified School District Unity High School Star Search, judged by Barry Fasman, owner of Foz Sound; Stephanie Powell, a dance professor at Long Beach City College; and Paula Moffett of Capital Records.

The highlighted 15 finalists from Long Beach high schools demonstrated their talents on stage. Cory Swanner of Lakewood High School won the first place trophy for his rendition of "You're Beautiful" by James Blunt.

Special performances of local bands and mass choirs included the band Neverwonder, led by top 25 American Idol finalist, Megan Bobo. A tribute to James Brown by J.B. Sax and the Los Angeles



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The 2010 LBUSD Unity High School Star Search first place winner, Cory Swanner of Lakewood High School, shines as he accepts his trophy.

Inner City Mass Choir closed out on the final day of the festival.

The festival was sponsored by local community centers and partners. Charter College raffled off iPods and cameras to support the Charter College nurses to take vitals, including body temperature, pulse rate and blood pressure.

Though the seats were not completely filled, a constant crowd stuck around to support the two-day event.

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