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Fernando Chavez will provide keynote during annual World Touch Cultural Heritage Week

Summary:

(March 23, 2005)-"The Year for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination" will be the theme of the 32nd Annual World Touch Cultural Heritage Week March 28-April 2 at the University of Minnesota, Morris.

"Spoken Word," a lecture with Toron Ballard, Bao Phi and various UMM students, will be presented at 7 p.m. Monday, March 28, in Oyate Hall of the Student Center. The event is co-sponsored by the Asian Student Association and the Black Student Union. The public is invited.

Thien-bao Phi was born in Sai Gon, Viet Nam, the youngest son to two mixed blood Chinese and Vietnamese parents who raised him in the Phillips neighborhood of South Minneapolis as a Vietnamese boy in the hood. A graduate of Macalester College and retired pizza delivery boy, Bao has performed at numerous venues and schools locally and nationally, from the Nuyorican Poet's Café to the University of California, Berkeley. He has twice won the Minnesota Grand Poetry Slam, and also won two poetry slams at the Nuyorican Poets Café in New York. He remains the only Vietnamese American man to have appeared on HBO's Russell Simmons Presents Def Poetry, and the National Poetry Slam Individual Finalists Stage, where he placed 6th overall out of over 250 national slam poets. His vision is to offer an alternative perspective on Asian American community building through the arts.

Keynote speaker Fernando Chavez will speak at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 29, in Edson Auditorium of the UMM Student Center. An attorney, Chavez is the oldest son of Cesar Chavez and Helen Chavez. He has dedicated his career to carrying on his father's legacy through public interest work. Cesar Chavez, for whom a UMM campus street is named, was instrumental in the development of the National Farm Workers Association. This event is free and open to the public.

The 22nd Annual Circle of Nations Indian Association 3K Peace Run will begin at 3 p.m. Wednesday, March 30, in front of the Multi-Ethnic Resource Center on the campus Mall.

Ventriloquist Buddy Big Mountain will entertain at 7:30 p.m., also on Wednesday, in Edson Auditorium. Big Mountain, a self taught ventriloquist, is the first internationally recognized Native American Master Ventriloquist Puppeteer. His hilarious blend of Native American comedy, ventriloquism, singing, magic and his beautiful hand crafted Marionettes has delighted audiences around the globe, bringing a spring of laughter and wisdom to the hearts of the people he performs for. His shy, but his youthful appearance and charming personality appeals to everyone he meets.

The week's activities will culminate with a film on Thursday evening and an Invitational Ethnic Dinner at 5:30 p.m. Friday, April 1, in Oyate Hall. Welcome will be given by Mike Miller, WTCHW coordinator. Multi-Ethnic Student Program (MSP) graduates will be recognized as they are presented by MSP director Aida Martinez. Following the dinner, entertainment by Los Llaneros will be co-sponsored by the United Latinos student organization at 8 p.m. in Edson Auditorium.

The annual CNIA Pow-Wow will be presented on Saturday, April 2, with Grand Entries at 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. in the campus P.E. Center.

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