

## **Ferris State University Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant Report**

### **I. Identification**

Name of Primary Applicant: Sara Ansari  
Members of Team: Danielle Voorhies  
Elizabeth Matthews  
Ehsan Setork  
RSO Collaboration: Future Scholars Ubuntu  
Extended Departmental Support: Center for Global Studies and Engagement (CGSE)  
Ferris State's Hospitality Program

Department: Extended and International Operation  
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### **II. Event Title**

Nowruz - Persian/Iranian New Year Festival

### **III. Specific core value, strategic initiative, or goal related to diversity that the event will address.**

**Core Values:** Cultural Diversity, Collaboration, Excellence, and Learning

**Strategic Objectives:** **SO1-** Foster better understanding of Iranian culture

**SO2-** Project a positive image of Iranian community

**SO3-** Ensure unity and friendship among community members and students

### **IV. Abstract**

Nowruz - Persian/Iranian New Year Festival is a 1-day festival that was celebrated on the 20th of March with visitors from all walks of life. This was the first time it was celebrated on a Ferris State University campus.

Nowruz is a strong and unbreakable chain that connects several countries with diverse cultures, languages, and religions in different parts of the world that all once constituted the civilization of Greater Persia. All the Iranians in this great land, the Persian-speaking minorities in the U.S., Canada, and Europe; the people of Tajikistan and Afghanistan; and groups of people in Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Armenia, Albania, and Iraq celebrate Nowruz annually and consider it to be one of their main national festivals.

At this event, one beautiful and eye-catching Haft-Sin table was displayed in the IRC connector. Two

Persian students and community member explained the meaning and the symbolism of each item on the Haft-Sin table during the program.



There was an introduction about Nowruz, its history, and an explanation of the Haft-Sin Table by Sara Ansari in one of the rooms in IRC followed by a presentation about Persian culture and its connection with nature by Dr. Shahram Parastesh, Iranian Scholar at Ferris. In the evening, Persian food was served to all attendees to give them a taste of the Middle East as well take part in a Nowruz custom.





## V. Event Narrative

Nowruz is an ancient Persian festival that has been celebrated for 2,500 years, when the mighty and powerful dynasty of Achaemenids ruled Great Persia, expanding its dominance all over the Mesopotamia and Far East.

Nowruz is the name for the celebrations that observe the New Year for many Persian and Central Asian communities. The exact beginning of the New Year occurs when the season changes from winter to spring on the vernal equinox, which usually happens on the 20th or 21st of March each year.

The festivities of Nowruz reflect the renewal of the Earth that occurs with the coming of spring. Activities that celebrate the arrival of Nowruz share many similarities with other spring festivals such as Easter celebrated by Christians, and the Egyptian holiday called Sham Al-Naseem, which dates back to the time of the Pharaohs.

**SO1 & SO3:** The Nowruz festival enabled students to exchange their ideas about similarities of these festivities and learn more about other cultures and traditions.

People all over the world celebrate Nowruz, but it originated in the geographical area called Persia in the Middle East and Central Asia. The distinct culture based on the language, food, music and leisure activities that developed among the many people and ethnic groups who lived in this area is known as Persian. Nowruz became a popular celebration among the communities that grew from these Persian influenced cultural areas. While the physical region called Persia no longer exists, the traditions of Nowruz are strong among people in Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, India, Pakistan, Turkey, Canada and the United States. Therefore, it is a holiday that is celebrated by people from diverse ethnic communities and religious backgrounds. However, Nowruz is special and is known as a spiritual New Year in the Persian community.



**SO3:** Nowruz festival was a great opportunity to give a chance to students from a few of the above mentioned countries to share their traditions and specific ways of celebrating this event with Ferris State faculty, staff and students; as well as Big Rapids community members.



In Nowruz, Iranians living inside the country or those who are abroad would all try to reach a common goal: disseminate Iranians' message of peace for the world's citizens and introduce the true face of Iran's culture and civilization to the people around the globe.

In 2009, Nowruz was officially registered on the UNESCO List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. In 2010 the U.N.'s General Assembly recognized March 21 as the International Day of Nowruz and called on countries worldwide to draw on the holiday's rich history to promote peace and goodwill.

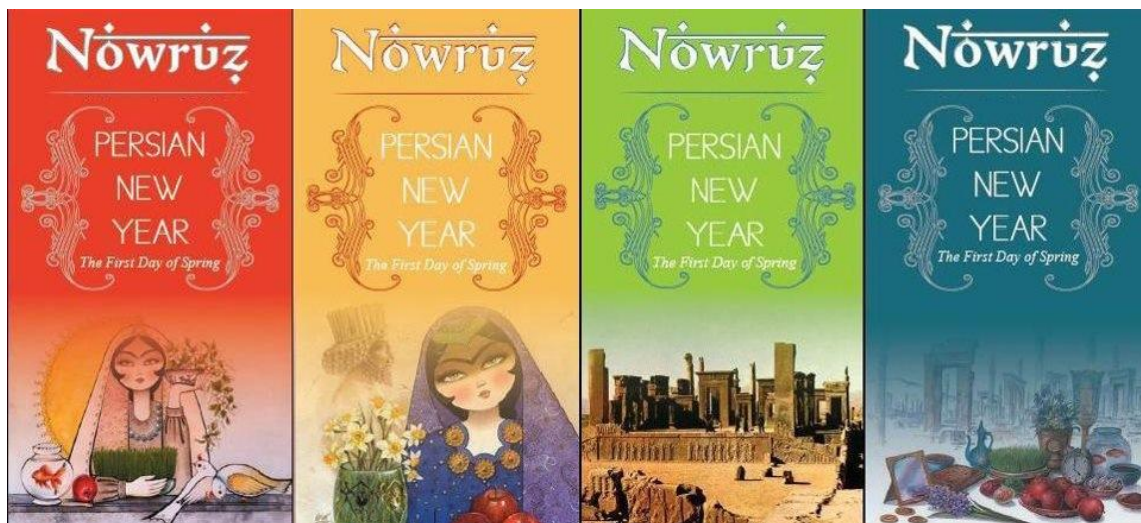
**SO1 & SO2:** Attendees learned more about Iran and Iranians far beyond what they have learned through the media. They will have the opportunities to meet Iranians, to give a face, and a cultural tradition/holiday, to what they have heard on the media (most likely negative). This fostered students to achieve a greater understanding and a positive view of Iran.

**SO1, SO2, & SO3:** The Haft-Sin table was set for the guests in IRC in order to prompt numerous conversations about the ancient history of Iran and how Nowruz has and continues to be a time of peace, unity, and new beginnings by those who celebrate it in Iran and throughout the world.



This Festival was the first Persian festival in the Big Rapids area which helped students and the community to learn about the Persian culture, understand and respect other cultures through education, and project an accurate and positive image of the Iranian community throughout the Big Rapids and Ferris State communities.

To advertise this event, flyers were distributed around the university. There were four 3ft by 8ft banners standing in 4 different high-traffic locations on campus. Facebook invitations were sent to all international students and all members of the Ferris State International Facebook page and as many other pages as possible. The campus calendar and university wide emailing were utilized as well. Therefore, around 150 students and community members attended this festival.



**Timeline:**

The Haft-Sin table was displayed at 10AM when the pre-survey process starts. People were drawn to the extravagant haft-Sin table and once they approached we told them about our event and had them take a short 4-5 question quiz about Nowruz and the Iranian culture. The purpose of this quiz is to assess how much knowledge our community has about Nowruz and Iranian culture. By completed the quiz, they were entered into a drawing for a prize donated to our planning committee by the Office of International Education. We notified them that they must be present at the beginning of the event in order to claim their prize if they were selected. This helped motivate people to actually attend the event besides just handing out flyers and educating people in the hall about the event. At 6PM the dinner was served and people got excited about the variety of new tastes from Middle East.

**Nowruz Quiz Results**

The people taking the quiz only had their own personal knowledge, press releases, and the items displayed at the table to reference when filling out these quizzes. The low scores on these quizzes quantify the need of the campus community to be educated about this topic. All of the topics questioned in the quiz, along with many more, were discussed during the presentations at the Nowruz celebration.



### **Nowruz Quiz**

1. What is the exact meaning of Nowruz?  
a. New Year      b. New Day      c. Old Empire      d. History
2. How many days is Nowruz celebrated?  
a. 7      b. 13      c. 15      d. 21
3. How many principle items need to be on the haft-sin table?  
a. 7      b. 13      c. 15      d. 21
4. In what year did the U.N. recognize the International Day of Nowruz?  
a. 1967      b. 1995      c. 2001      d. 2010
5. Nowruz is an international holiday celebrated by many countries. However, which country is Nowruz typically associated with today?  
a. Afghanistan      b. Saudi Arabia      c. Persia      d. Iran

To be entered in the drawing for a prize, please provide the information below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Quiz Results:**

Total number of quizzes completed: 142

#### **Correct Answer and % Correct**

1. B - 32%
2. B - 33%
3. A - 39%
4. C - 13%
5. D - 40%

At 3:00PM, the event started by displaying the Haft-Sin table and presenting the items on table and their symbolic meanings. At 3:30PM, the first presentation (an introduction of Nowruz), started and continued until 4PM. The second presentation started after the 10-minute short film with famous Nowruz songs and pictures from Iran. The second presentation continued for 30 minutes and was followed by the dinner.

VI. Budget (Receipts are enclosed to this report)

Nowruz Festival Budget (Around 150 attendees)			
	Requested Grant Funds	Funding from other sources	TOTAL BUDGET
Gifts & Prizes	\$99.75		
FOOD	\$1,121.06	\$539	
PRINTING (Flyers, Small Posters, & Surveys, 450 color prints)		\$45	
PROMOTION (For Banners: 4* \$25 Posters: 4* \$ 26)		\$207	
SUPPLIES (Items of Haft-Sin table)	\$279.19 (91.85+72+5.99 +109.35)		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>	<b>\$791</b>	<b>\$2,291</b>

Some links for the event assessment

<http://news.pioneergroup.com/bigrapidsnews/?s=Nowruz&x=0&y=0>

<http://news.pioneergroup.com/bigrapidsnews/2013/03/20/big-rapids-celebrates-persian-new-year-start-of-spring/>

<http://news.pioneergroup.com/bigrapidsnews/2013/03/18/ansari-big-rapids-community-invited-to-celebrate-persian-new-year-on-wednesday-go-beyond/>



Sara Ansari  
 Research Project Analyst  
 Extended and International Operation  
 231-591-2711  
[ansaris@ferris.edu](mailto:ansaris@ferris.edu)

Enclosed:



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Big Rapids, MI 49307 - #203  
(231)527-0200 meijer.com

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\*\*\*\*SAVINGS TODAY\*\*\*\*  
\* TOTAL NON-COUPON SAVINGS 1.84 \*  
\*SAVINGS TOTAL 1.84\*

## GENERAL MERCHANDISE

9268	FISH		
3 @	.19		.57 CT
4713817480	ACRYLC PAINT		1.49 CT
41911414	DAFFODIL BULBS		6.00 CT
41911613	HYACINTH		6.00 CT
41984718	TULIPS 10 STEM		
3 @	6.99		20.97 CT
88351550478	GIFT BAG		6.99 CT
4310045144	JOURNAL		9.99 CT
73452454540	PAPYRUS CARDS		15.95 CT
*1645554550	ACRYLIC PAINT		
was	.79	now	.59 CT

## GROCERY

4125066341	MEIJER EGGS		1.58 N
4016	RED DELICIOUS		7.52 F
3.78 lb @	1 lb /	1.99	
7457485000	GARLIC		1.99 F
*7040400100	WINE VINEGAR		
was	1.62	now	1.45 F
*2668410061	WHEAT GRASS		
2 @ 2 /	4.00		
was	4.98	now	4.00 F
*1980080137	AP CLEANER		
1 @ 2 /	5.00		
was	2.99	now	2.50 N

## TOTAL

MI 6% Sales Tax	4.26
TOTAL TAX	4.26
TOTAL	91.85

## PAYMENTS

VISA Payment	TENDER	91.85
XXXXXXXXXXXX6443		

NUMBER OF ITEMS 20

See meijer.com or the Service Desk for  
current return policy.

For additional savings and details visit  
mPerks.Meijer.com.



Tx:79 Op:550 Tm:99 St:203 12:11:06

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(231)527-0200 meijer.com

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GENERAL MERCHANDISE			
41900435	PUSSY WILLOW		
2 @ 6.99		13.98	CT
41900436	CURLY WILLOW		
2 @ 6.99		13.98	CT
4402158014	POSTER FRAME		
4 @ 9.99		39.96	CT

TOTAL			
	MI 6% Sales Tax	4.08	
	TOTAL TAX	4.08	
	TOTAL	72.00	

PAYMENTS			
VISA Payment	TENDER	72.00	
XXXXXXXXXXXX6443			

NUMBER OF ITEMS 8

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Tx:155 Op:553 Tm:102 St:203 17:19:53

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5752-0750-0102-0123-000

Survey should be completed within 72 hrs.



## Order Receipt

Product	Quantity	Price Each	Total
Midnight Persian 4-pc CoasterRug® Set (CMP-C)	1	\$19.95	\$19.95
Northwest Persian, Licensed from de Young Museum 4-pc CoasterRug® Set (MFC-C)	1	\$19.95	\$19.95
Assorted Metropolitan Museum of Art 4-pc CoasterRug® Set (CRA-MOI)	1	\$19.95	\$19.95
Early Turkmen, Licensed from de Young Museum 4-pc CoasterRug® Set (MET-C)	1	\$19.95	\$19.95
Kashan Silk 4-pc CoasterRug® Set (MKS-C)	1	\$19.95	\$19.95
		Subtotal	\$99.75
		Tax	\$0.00
		Shipping via UPS 2nd Day Air	\$18.95
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$118.70</b>

Order Id	124774
Transaction Id	5084345559
Time Stamp	03/14/13 12:28pm MT
Email	ansaris@ferris.edu
<hr/>	
Billing Name	Sara Ansari
Billing Phone	231-591-2711
Billing Address Line 1	410 Oak St, ALU 113
Billing City	Big Rapids
Billing State	Michigan
Billing Zip	49307
Billing Country	United States
<hr/>	
Shipping Name	Sara Ansari
Shipping Address Line 1	521 FULLER AVE APT 301A
Shipping City	Big Rapids
Shipping State	MI
Shipping Zip	49307
Shipping Country	United States
<hr/>	
Amount Charged	\$118.70
Card Type	Visa
Card Number	6443
Card First Name	Sara
Card Last Name	Ansari
Expiration Month	08

Reza's Restaurant

432 W. Ontario  
Chicago, IL 60610  
(312) 664-4500

Delivery

Server: nz Station: 6

Order #: 277215 Delivery  
(231) 530-5903 sara  
1301 s state st; 134 Chicago  
Guests: 1

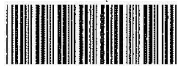
Remarks: michigan big rapids or 231591271  
1 del at 5 45 march 20 set up for 150

>> SETTLED <<

130 L-Koub'deh	1,033.50
> tomatoes only	
1/2WR 1/2DR	
medium	
1 Maust <del>Muscat</del> Kabob	125.00
10 Vegetable Kabob	69.50
Delivery Charge	250.00
SUB TOTAL:	1,478.00
Tax 1:	132.01
ORDER TOTAL:	1,610.01
Gratuity:	50.00
TOTAL:	\$1,660.01
===== Visa Tendered:	1,660.01
6443 XX/XX	
EDC Tran ID: 210227420	
===== CHANGE:	0.00

>> Ticket #: 30 <<

Created: 3/13/2013 12:37:49 PM  
SETTLED: 3/13/2013 12:48:30 PM





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Store #07810  
842 S. STATE STREET  
BIG RAPIDS, MI 49307  
(231) 796-8659

Register #3 Transaction #552039  
Cashier #78109485 3/06/13 10:15AM

WELLNESS+ SAVINGS  
 Dsct Card#: 95XXXXX5744  
 1 RA PANTRY INST REG 8Z 5.99  
 1 Items Subtotal 5.99  
 Tax 5.00  
 Total 5.99  
 \*VISA \* card \* #XXXXXXXXXX6443  
 VISA App # AUTO  
 Ref # 035249  
 Card Present  
 Tendered 5.99  
 Cash Change .00



\*\*\*\*\*

Your wellness+ point total as of 03/05/2013  
25

2/26/13

Order Receipt



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# Thank You for Shopping With Us! Order #7169

Home > My Account > Order Details

Order Details

Order Date: 2/26/2013

My Account

### Billing Address

Sara Ansari  
Ferris State University  
410 Oak Street, ALU 113  
Big Rapids, Michigan 49307  
United States

### Shipping Address

Sara Ansari  
Ferris State University  
410 Oak Street, ALU 113  
Big Rapids, MI 49307  
United States

### Order Status

Received / Unpaid / Unshipped

Orders






Address Book

Change Password

Change Email

Logout

### You Purchased the Following Items

Item	Price	Quantity	Total
 <b>Magic Nowruz Egg Wraps (12)- Free Shipping</b> 90-7634 Shipping Status: Unshipped	\$7.99	1	\$7.99
 <b>Map of Iran 3D for Persian New Year - Sabzeh-e-Nowruz</b> 90-7633 Shipping Status: Unshipped	\$9.90	1	\$9.90
 <b>Mountain Ash - Sanjed 4 oz.</b> 13-0951 Shipping Status: Unshipped	\$3.99	6	\$23.94
 <b>Sumac Ground 6.5 oz.</b> 06-1440 Shipping Status: Unshipped	\$2.99	5	\$14.95
 <b>Semenec 6 oz</b> 98-9200 Shipping Status: Unshipped	\$4.99	5	\$24.95
 <b>Coin for Weddings and New Years Color Gold 1 pc</b> 90-7630 Shipping Status: Unshipped	\$0.99	7	\$6.93

### Payment Information

### Payment Details

Discount codes used:

https://www.sadaf.com/Receipt.aspx?id=14e37674-18cd-49b9-a211-250dca032671

2/26/13

Order Receipt

Credit Card:	\$109.35   Credit Card 8443	Subtotal:	\$88.66
Payment Received:	\$0.00	Tax:	\$0.00
Total:	\$0.00	Shipping:	\$20.69
Refunded:	\$0.00	Handling:	\$0.00
<b>Amount Due</b>	<b>\$109.35</b>	<b>Order Total:</b>	<b>\$109.35</b>

Additional Information

Shipments

Public Notes

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[Print Order](#)

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