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University at Buffalo, NY – November 2, 2009—International Education Week (IEW) will be celebrated at the University at Buffalo on November 16-20, 2009. IEW is a joint initiative of the U.S. Departments of State and Education to promote programs that prepare Americans for a global environment and attract future leaders from abroad to experience the U.S.

The keynote events of the week will focus on Afghanistan and Pakistan, providing rich cultural content and insightful analysis of the region. Paula Newberg, Director of Georgetown University’s Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, will deliver the keynote address, “What Next for Afghanistan?” on Wednesday, November 18 at 7:00 p.m. in 106 O’Brian Hall on UB’s North Campus.

IEW’s “Culture in Motion” film events include “Afghan Star” (Afghanistan/UK 2009), Sundance Film Festival winner of Best World Cinema Documentary Directing and Audience Award, and “Son of a Lion” (Australia/Pakistan, 2007), an official selection at the Berlin Forum and Pusan Film Festival.

“Afghan Star,” a film showcasing Afghanistan’s first pop-idol TV contest, highlights four young finalists as they risk their lives to become the nation’s top music star. Director Havana Marking explained her surprise at the “positive feelings of hope” emanating from people involved in making the TV show and from those watching it. The film will be shown on Monday, November 16 at 7:00 pm in the Student Union Theater on UB’s North Campus. This free event will be followed by commentary by Afghan students.

“Son of a Lion,” filmed entirely with native Pakistanis in the country’s volatile North West Frontier Province, portrays the tenuous relationship between a widowed father who manufactures and sells weapons and a son who dreams of going to school.
Director Benjamin Gilmour co-wrote the screenplay with ethnic Pashtuns. Gilmour noted, “It is very distressing for Pashtuns to be perpetually depicted as extremists. With ‘Son of a Lion’ I wanted to give these people a platform to express themselves.” This free screening will take place on Tuesday, November 17 at 5:30 pm in the Student Union Theater on UB’s North Campus.

UB international students will take IEW on the road as they visit Buffalo area elementary, middle and high school classrooms to share their culture and educational experiences in their home country. Students from China, India, South Korea, Taiwan and Iran will present their cultures through story-telling, simple language lessons, crafts and presentations about their school experiences in their home country. “Our goal is to increase the cross-cultural awareness, curiosity and knowledge of students in Buffalo schools. It is our belief that the tragic events of September 11, 2001 illustrate the need for more—not less—cultural sharing, awareness and education,” comments Ellen Dussourd, director of International Student and Scholar Services at UB.

UB’s global outreach efforts will also be showcased through the “Without Borders” lecture series. Topics of this year’s lectures include “History Without Borders: Remembered Pasts in South Asia”, “Public Health Without Borders: Health Care in Brazil” and “Social Work Without Borders: Investigating Gender Violence in Pakistan”.

Other IEW events include films, presentations, performances, a photo exhibition and interactive displays. The topics of the week’s events range from Tae Kwon Do and Tai Chi demonstrations, Arab line dancing, and belly and tango dancing to presentations on holidays in China and Indian classroom culture. The Study Abroad Photo Contest and Exhibition will feature photos by UB students who returned from study abroad experiences. There will also be a Global Beats Party: Latin Night featuring music by the Latin Jazz Project and dance instruction by the Latin American Institute.

IEW events at UB are made possible through generous support from AT&T, Bank of America, Haylor, Freyer & Coon, Inc., HSBC Bank, M&T Bank and UB’s Asian Studies Program, English Language Institute and Office of International Education.

The University at Buffalo ranks No.12 among 2,700 accredited U.S. universities in international enrollment, according to an annual report released by the Institute of International Education. The University has exchange agreements with more than 70
institutions in over 30 countries. UB is the largest and most comprehensive campus in the State University of New York. UB's more than 27,000 students pursue their academic interests through more than 300 undergraduate, graduate and professional degree programs. Founded in 1846, the University at Buffalo is a member of the Association of American Universities.

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