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February 25, 2007

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## Hundreds come to International Festival

BY JEFF SCHWEERS  
FLORIDA TODAY•

MELBOURNE — Zeeshan Usmani found plenty to criticize at first.

For starters, his native flag of Pakistan hung upside down. And he had a problem with his fellow Arabs dancing in public.

But the first thing he did upon showing up at Florida Tech's International Festival was march right into the Israeli display tent and ask about the Gaza Strip. That proved educational for the computer science grad student.

"It's a very good chance to learn things about other countries," Usmani said. "It's a nice way to understand different cultures and promote interfaith harmonies."

Hundreds turned out for the university's first outdoor international festival Sunday afternoon. Crowds went from booth to booth, looking at clothing and jewelry from India, China, Zimbabwe and eating food from Mexico, Colombia and the Caribbean. They sat on

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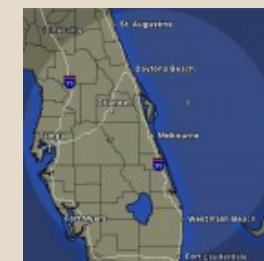
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the lawn sloping toward the new amphitheater and watched dancers from Israel and flutists from Peru.

They watched a group of men kneel and pray to Allah. And they had henna tattoos applied to their hands.

“Since we are a multicultural university, we have everybody here,” said Martha Delacruz, a Florida Tech grad who organized the food vendors.

“I love it,” said Alfonso Ocasio, a physical therapist who moved to Palm Bay from Palm Beach County four years ago. “I think the nicest thing about Brevard is the diversity.”

Usmani, who earned his master’s from Florida Tech and is working on his Ph.D., said Brevard is the nicest place he’s been in the three years he’s lived in the U.S.

He’s been to 30 states.

“I like Melbourne the most,” he said. •

**Contact Schweers at 242-3668 or [jschweers@floridatoday.com](mailto:jschweers@floridatoday.com).**

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starting the story about a Islamic Fundamentalist Student...not a good sign.

2nd part:

Hundreds turned out for the university's first outdoor international festival Sunday afternoon. Crowds went from booth to booth, looking at clothing and jewelry from India, China, Zimbabwe and eating food from Mexico, Colombia and the Caribbean. They sat on the lawn sloping toward the new amphitheater and watched dancers from Israel and flutists from Peru

Sounds like Third World International Fair. Welcome to the non-flushing toilet countries of the World.

Posted by: **Panzer\_M** on Sun Feb 25, 2007 6:28 pm

"Zeeshan Usmani found plenty to criticize at first.

For starters, his native flag of Pakistan hung upside down. And he had a problem with his fellow Arabs dancing in public."

I get flamed for my alleged tolerance, but not for this guy. Ugh.

This would be a fine time for Arabs, particularly Muslims, \*especially\* guests in our country, to be polite and harmonious. Try to fit in, for pete's sake!

They often shake fists in London and Minneapolis and other cities demanding the rest of us learn about and respect Islam.

Give us a reason to, guys.

Posted by: **PurpleMan** on Sun Feb 25, 2007 7:49 pm

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