

# CUNA Celebrates Dashain

## The biggest festival of Nepal



**Performing in medley:** CUNA members performed in the medley of Nepali and Indian Bollywood songs representing the close cultural connections between the two countries.



There is no long vacation. There are no family gatherings. There is no visiting of temples. There is no shopping all day and no swinging in the big swings or kite competition. But still there was the excitement and happiness among the Nepalese students at Cameron when the Cameron University Nepalese Association (CUNA) organized the Dashain Program on Oct. 9 in CETES. It was not only a gathering of the Nepalese students but also friends, family, faculty and staff members from Cameron as well.

In the Dashain festival hosted by CUNA, the students from Nepal performed cultural dances, modern dances, songs and a skit. There also was a slideshow presentation, showcasing different natural and cultural aspects of Nepal. One of the main attractions of the celebration was Nepali food, which gave a taste of Nepali cuisine to the guests.

Dashain is the biggest festival of Nepal, which is devoted to the worship of goddess Durga. Goddess Durga is the symbol of power in the Hindu religion. She achieved victory over the demon Mahishashur, which is also symbolized as the victory of virtue against evil. Dashain has evolved as a cultural festival in Nepal. Not only Hindus but also Buddhists celebrate Dashain. During this festival, the people visit their families and relatives and the younger members of the families take blessings from the older members. The festival of Dashain is 15 days long. The first nine days are devoted to worshipping of goddess Durga, which is called Navaratri. The 10th day is the Tika, when the elders put tika (mixture of uncooked rice, vermillion powder, and yogurt) on the forehead and jamara (a plant that is green in color) on the head or on the ear of the young ones. This goes on for five days and the 15th day marks the conclusion of the festival.



**Cultural dances:** Nepali students also performed the cultural dances of Nepal, showcasing the rich cultural diversity of the nation.



**Tika and Jamara:** The elders put Tika (the red substance) on the forehead and Jamara (the green plants) on the head or ear of the younger individuals as a blessing of goddess Durga. Tika and Jamara have a great significance in the festival of Dashain in Nepal.



**Inauguration:** The adviser of CUNA Sarah Stroud and Dr. Aaron Rudolph, Instructor with the Department of English and Foreign Languages, inaugurated the program.



**Delicious menu:** The Nepali food was one of the main attractions of the Dashain celebration. There was a variety of Nepali food that gave a glimpse of the cultures' cuisine to the guests.