

CAFÉ NIGHT

We again held one of our biggest community events for the language department during National French Week, and it was due mainly to an AATF Small Grant. Several years ago, the language department at my school was discussing National French Week and what we could do as a community activity. We decided to have a café night with free food, student entertainment, and a raffle. The first year we had a little bit of food, a few acts, and several articles from the bookstore for the raffle. Each year the event has gotten a little bit bigger, and our funding needs have increased as well. Our school has 270 students. 200 of them as well as family, friends and faculty spent three hours in our student center listening to students perform poetry, skits, songs, and instrumental pieces. At the beginning of the night, we had so much food that there was not enough room to set it all out. Unfortunately, it disappeared in less than an hour.

Students do the preparation the day of the event. They sign up to be decorators, waiters, and cleaners, and performers. We never have to ask for help to prepare for café night, most students ask if they can do more than one thing, and there is always a group that stays behind to help clean.

This year we had a raffle, but it surpassed anything that we had ever done before. A parent went to local businesses and asked for donations. Raffle tickets were the only thing that cost anything during café night, and we were able to raise \$1100 to use as a scholarship for study abroad.

Our thanks to the AATF for making this event a reality for another year, for allowing us to bring our community together and celebrate language, and for also giving us a chance to raise money for a student to experience study abroad.

The man in charge of the student center where we hold the event came to me and said, "next year, let me help you find a bigger place, because this event has become so important and big that you have outgrown this place."

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