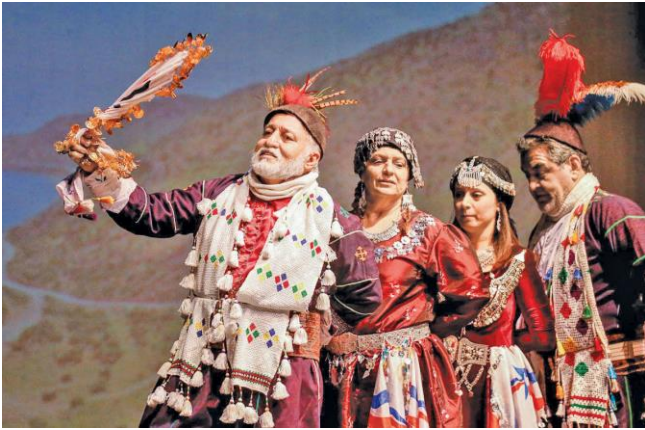


## C AND G NEWSPAPERS

# Diversity celebrated at school event



A traditional Assyrian dance is performed during International Evening March 27 at the Chippewa Valley High School auditorium. The event celebrated ethnic and cultural diversity in the school district and in the community.

Photo by Patricia O'Blenes

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By: [Nick Mordowanec](#) | Fraser - Clinton Township Chronicle | Published April 9, 2018



A traditional Slovakian dance routine is performed.

Photo by Patricia O'Blenes

CLINTON TOWNSHIP — The United States is a melting pot where individuals can learn from others, all while simultaneously finding out about themselves.

That was the main message derived from Chippewa Valley High School's international club and student activities group, which hosted the school's first International Evening March 27 at the school auditorium.

The years-in-the-making event encouraged community members to see diversity in the flesh, in the form of a wide array of ethnic music and dancing, cuisine from local restaurateurs, and educational cultural displays from local groups and from the students themselves.

Cultures represented included American, Bulgarian, Chaldean, Chinese, Irish, Polish, Slovakian, Serbian and more. School teachers Natalie Srbinovski and Kristin DeLuca — who helped facilitate the event — called the evening a great chance for people of different backgrounds to celebrate their similarities while acknowledging and learning about their differences.

Srbinovski, who teaches German to grades 10 through 12 and is also the international club advisor, said she wanted to host such an event for a long time due to a growing number of different ethnicities commonly represented in the district.

However, the pieces just never fell into place — until now.

“Our school and community is becoming increasingly more diverse,” Srbinovski said. “Each culture has so many unique things to offer. It is an event to celebrate our similarities more than our differences.”

DeLuca, who teaches Spanish and is a facilitator of the student activities group, said she and Srbinovski ruminated about hosting such an event as a method of exposing students to different cultures. Celebrating diversity is important, she said.

“Our school and community is so diverse, so I think it’s important to help our students and community to understand different cultures so that we can appreciate one another and coexist,” DeLuca said.

It was the inaugural event, but both educators said turnout was greater than expected. That’s a good sign for years to come, as they hope to continue this tradition into the future. A pending date of March 21, 2019, is already being looked at for the second annual event.

“It was wonderful to see how everything and everyone came together to celebrate all the different cultures,” Srbinovski said. “A huge number of students and community members showed up and enjoyed the performances and ethnic dishes made by our students, as well as being provided by some local restaurants.”