

UCSB Polynesian Club Presents an Evening to Treasure

By Daniella Elghanayan | Posted on 05/19/2008



'Island Wishes,' a showcase of cultural dancing and drumbeats, is a benefit for Hospice of Santa Barbara.



Iaorana Te Otea, seen at last year's 'Island Wishes' benefit showcase, performs dances that originate from the islands of Tahiti. Students are responsible for costume designs that are reflective of Polynesian culture. (Morgan Simental photo)

Get ready for grass skirts and island drumming at "Island Wishes," a benefit concert put on by Iaorana Te Otea, UC Santa Barbara's Polynesian Club, at 8 p.m. May 31 at UCSB Campbell Hall.

Iaorana Te Otea - Polynesian for "greetings from the drumbeats" - is a student-taught organization that celebrates the dynamic cultures of the Polynesian Islands. The group performs dances that originate from the islands of Tahiti and are made up of oteas, fast-paced dances set to drumbeats, and aparimas, graceful dances that tell a story, accompanied by chants and lyrics.



This year's 'Island Wishes' event will include more than 20 dances and musical performances. (Tuan Duong photo)

On May 31, the club will host its sixth annual "Island Wishes" benefit showcase from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. The nonprofit [Hospice of Santa Barbara](#) has been chosen as the beneficiary of the event. Hospice of Santa Barbara is a volunteer hospice organization that works to heal emotional, social and spiritual pain associated with life-threatening illness and death. All services are free.

"We're really excited that our performance can support a group that provides such critical services to our community," said Pooneh Aminian, president of Iaorana Te Otea.

With more than 40 active members, the student organization practices fall and winter quarters in preparation of the event. This year's Island Wishes concert will include more than 20 dances and musical performances.

The group is committed to preserving the legacy of Polynesian culture and creating a new legacy in the community through its 18-year presence. Dances have been passed down from students since the group was founded in 1990. Since then, students have been choreographing their own dances to add to their repertoire. Students are responsible for costume designs that are reflective of Polynesian culture.

Tickets are \$5 in advance and \$7 at the door. To purchase tickets or for more information, call Amanda Kastelic at 805.563.8812. Tickets will be available to UC Santa Barbara students from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday through Friday at the University Center and May 27 through May 30 at the Arbor.

Daniella Elghanayan is a public relations associate for SurfMedia Communications.

