

Students To Gather For Praise, Cultural Appreciation

By: Nick Schwerin

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Several hundred students are expected to gather Friday for a night of praise, worship and cultural appreciation. Place of Praise campus ministry will hold its second annual Gospel Explosion at the Bernhard Center, attracting WMU students, community youth and other students from around the state, said Crystal Vauters, president of Place of Praise.

"Our basic goal for the night, our theme, is to bridge the gap," said Vauters, a senior majoring in sales and business marketing. "Hopefully we'll have a great appreciation for different cultures, ethnicities and ministries."

Vauters hopes that this year's theme, "Bridging the Gap," will promote unity, a major focus of Place of Praise. She said the event is accepting of people from all different cultures, ministries, universities, churches and community groups.

Vauters said last year around 250 to 300 students attended the event, and expects it to be even larger this year. The night will include singing, dance and praise. The event will close with keynote speaker Pastor Elam, youth ministry president in Monroe, Mich.

"I know it's going to be explosive; we've been working so hard to make sure the whole campus knows about it," Vauters said.

"Hopefully they'll have a great knowledge of what Place of Praise is about," she said.

The organization helped with cleanup in New Orleans last spring break, and is involved with the local Big Brothers-Big Sisters of America Inc., and have also mentored high school students.

"Not only our organization, but [also] WMU campus is for our community, and we want to do stuff together," she said.

The Gospel Explosion event takes place this Friday at 7:30 p.m. in the East Ballroom of the Bernhard Center. Place of Praise holds bible study discussions every Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. in the Trimpe Building. They also hold Sunday worship services every Sunday at 4:30 p.m. in the Bernhard Center, led by Pastor Sean Holland, according to Vauters.

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