

Blessed Culture and Sports Festival (BCSF) held at UTS in Barrytown, NY

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The Blessed Culture and Sports Festival (BCSF) celebrated its 15th year last week at the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) in Barrytown, NY under the theme "Our Time." It was an incredible event upholding its tradition of letting young athletes and artists showcase their talents over five days of intense sports, music, arts and artisan foods all in a healthy, principled environment.

Due to changing demographics and competing events, this BCSF had a smaller turnout with just over 300 registrants. However, many participants reported feeling that this was actually one of the best years ever with a greater feeling of community and better chances to make personal connections with new and old friends.

Most of the staple sports were played this year: Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Ultimate Frisbee, Badminton, Rock Climbing, and more, along with some new additions like Arm Wrestling and Martial Arts, which was hosted by the USA National Tong Il Moo Do. The cultural center of BCSF, known as "The Artists' Village," took on an even more beautiful appearance this year thanks to a stellar team of volunteers and incredibly talented vendors.

One awesome addition was a giant tent that allowed most major cultural events to happen outdoors! This was a game changer, and will be a tradition going forward. Having the open mic, the BCSF 8:00 a.m. Service, and opening and closing ceremonies held outside in the beautiful evening breeze was a fantastic experience and created a unified feeling between all the events.

The events themselves were excellent this year. For example, many of the staff and participants who have attended BCSF for years testified to the incredible talent and heart behind every performance at the open

mic. Or the amazing African-themed fashion show.

Many thanks go out to the incredible participants and communities who showed up from as far as Texas and California, as well as the volunteers, UTS staff, and generous donors who made the event possible. With your help, BCSF will continue to grow and progress for years to come.

