Bill # 73-16

**The Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA)**

**The Pennsylvania State University**

****

**of the 73rd Assembly**

November 15, 2023

*Be it decided by the Assembly of Elected Delegates,*

**Iranian Student Association Co-Sponsorship**

**Funding for Shab-e-Yalda (Yalda Night)**

(Decided: [ Y / N / A ])

**Nature of the Situation:**

Shab-e-Yalda (Yalda Night) also known as Shab-e Chelleh is one of the most ancient Persian festivals annually celebrated on December 21 by Iranians all around the world. Yalda is a winter solstice celebration; it is the last night of autumn and the longest night of the year. Yalda means birth and it refers to the birth of Mitra; the mythological goddess of light. Since days get longer and nights to get shorter in winter, Iranians celebrate the last night of autumn as the renewal of the sun and the victory of light over darkness. On Shab-e-Yalda, people gather in groups of friends or relatives usually at the home of grandparents or the elderly to pass the longest night of the year happily by eating nuts and fruits, reading Hafiz poems, making good wishes, and talking and laughing all together to give a warm welcome to winter, and a felicitous farewell to autumn.

Eating is a delicious part of Yalda Night. Iranians eat nuts, watermelons, and pomegranates on this special night and share the last remaining fruits from summer together. Fruits of Shab-e-Yalda have symbolic significance as well. Some believe that watermelon symbolizes the sun by its spherical shape while others believe that eating watermelon keeps one safe from being hurt by winter diseases. Pomegranate is also a symbol of birth, and its bright red seeds symbolize the glow of life.

Nuts (ajil), and dried fruit (khoshkbar) are eaten on Yalda night. The special foods that are prepared for this night change from family to family and also depend on the availability of ingredients in different regions of Iran. The variety is endless but to mention a few: Mahi Polo, Fesenjoon, Khoresh Bademjan, Aash Reshteh, and traditional desserts such as Fereni and Sholeh Zard may be prepared for this night.

Reading poems from Divan-e-Hafiz (Fal-e Hafiz) is an entertaining tradition of Yalda Night. Each of the members of a family or a group of friends makes a wish-while keeping it a secret- and randomly opens the book; then the eldest member of the family or friends reads the randomly selected poem loudly. Since the poem is believed to be the interpretation of the wish and the way it would come true, it is fun to interpret the poem and guess the wishes others make. In this way, the last and the longest night of autumn comes to an end happily and the first great day of winter begins.

Shab-e-Yalda and its traditions are so amusing and interesting which is also celebrated in countries such as Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and in some of the Caucasian states such as Azerbaijan and Armenia whilst they share the same traditions as well.

The estimated total attendance is 300 people (~250 graduate students), and the event is free to attend.

**Recommended Course of Action:**

The Graduate and Professional Student Association agrees to co-sponsor the ISA Shab-e-Yalda event in the amount of $1,700.

Total requested from GPSA: $3,000

Total cost of event: $3,765

An itemized budget is below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item Requested** | **Item Requested** | **Vendor** | **#** | **Cost/item** | **Total** |
| Food | Fruit | Sam's club | 1 | 200 | **200** |
| Nuts | Sam's club | 1 | 200 | **200** |
| Traditional sweets | Yas Bakery | 1 | 900 | **900** |
| Drink | Sam's club | 1 | 39.6 | **39.6** |
| Tea | Global food | 1 | 10 | **10** |
| Cake | Wegmans | 1 | 300 | **300** |
| Sugar cubes | Global food | 2 | 5 | **10** |
| Water bottle (45 count) | Sam's Club | 8 | 3.54 | **28.32** |
| Water 2.5 Gal (10 counts) for persian tea | Sam's Club | 3 | 6.54 | **19.62** |
| Decoration | Tables flower (2cuts per table) | Trader Joe's or Wegmans | 30 | 6 | **180** |
| Vase (1/table) | Dollar Tree | 30 | 1 | **30** |
| Tablecloth  | Amazon | 7 | 100 | **700** |
| Tablecloth (2/pack) | Dollar tree | 15 | 12.98 | **194.7** |
| Fall Hafez(traditional poem) | Amazon | 100 | 5 | **500** |
| Traditional table décor | Amazon | 1 | 200 | **200** |
| **Supply** | Food Warmer Canister2 Hour Safe Heat W/PowerPad (18ct.) | Sam's Club | 4 | 18.75 | **75** |
| Napkins (600 count) | Sam's Club | 1 | 26.73 | **26.73** |
| Cutlery Combo (180 count) | Sam's Club | 2 | 11.98 | **23.96** |
| Paper Plates 10" (204 count) | Sam's Club | 2 | 16.72 | **33.44** |
| Paper Plates 6.25" (330 count) | Sam's Club | 2 | 14.43 | **28.86** |
| Paper Cups (360 count) | Sam's Club | 2 | 12.88 | **25.76** |
| **Competition winners' gift** | Gift card | Amazon | 2 | 20 | **40** |
|  |
|  | **Total** | **3765.99** |

Respectfully submitted,

**Mary Ogidigben**

Delegate, College of Engineering

President \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/s/Lawrence Miller\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Affirmed

The Graduate and Professional Student Association