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A Taste of Colorado Features Learning Opportunities with a Mix of Entertainment

DENVER – Colorado’s rich history and promising future are celebrated through exhibits and performances in the Festival of Mountain and Plain area and on the Colorado Heritage Stage presented by Westword at the 26th annual A Taste of Colorado. Entertainers will showcase the state’s heritage and diversity during the four-day, free admission, food, music, and entertainment Festival, taking place Labor Day weekend, Sept. 4 through Sept. 7, in Downtown Denver’s Civic Center Park.

A Taste of Colorado provides opportunities to experience a range of music and dance groups that reflect the diversity of the state’s cultures on the **Colorado Heritage Stage** presented by **Westword**. **Colcannon** features a charming blend of traditional Celtic melodies, as well as original songs and instrumentals performed in all-acoustic sets. The group uses humor and contemporary sounds to entertain its audiences. Founded in 1976, **Denver Taiko Percussion Ensemble** performs an ancient Japanese cultural tradition that was originally used in battle to intimidate and frighten the enemy. The **Felonius Smith Trio** brings traditional blues heritage to the stage, performing acoustic, “down home” music based on the pre-electric blues styles from the 1920s and 1930s. **Planina - Songs of Eastern Europe** is a group of singers celebrating twenty years of performing haunting music from Croatia, Macedonia, Russia, Serbia, and the Ukraine.

The following is a lineup of music, dance, and cultural performances on the Colorado Heritage Stage presented by Westword:

FRIDAY, Sept. 4

11:45 a.m.	DAGDA
1:45 p.m.	Dan Treanor & The Afrosippi Band
4:35 p.m.	Flamenco Denver
6:15 p.m.	Emily Griffith Opportunity School Fashion Show
7:45 p.m.	Mohammed Alidu

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SATURDAY, Sept. 5

10:45 a.m.	Mike & Margie Aman - Virtuoso Accordion Show
1:00 p.m.	Jr. Wahines
2:15 p.m.	Huitzilopochtli
3:30 p.m.	Lorenzo Martin
5:45 p.m.	The Kusogea Nobi Drum Ensemble
7:15 p.m.	Colcannon

SUNDAY, Sept. 6

10:45 a.m.	The Mullins Brothers
12:45 p.m.	Barbelfish Balkan Band
3:30 p.m.	A Step Above
4:30 p.m.	Denver Taiko Percussion Ensemble
6:00 p.m.	Henry the Fiddler
7:30 p.m.	Felonius Smith Trio

MONDAY, Sept. 7

10:45 a.m.	Istari World Percussion
12:45 p.m.	Colorado Hebrew Chorale
2:45 p.m.	Great Wall Chinese Academy
3:45 p.m.	Filipino-American Community of Colorado
5:00 p.m.	Planina - Songs of Eastern Europe

Protecting our environment and renewing the land while producing energy are among the important lessons presented in the **Colorado Mining Foundation** tent. Festivalgoers can participate in free gold panning, a fossil hunt, and pick up educational materials on dinosaurs, volcanoes, rocks, minerals, energy production, and conservation. Complimentary educational materials are available for teachers, librarians, home-schooled students, and scouts to take home.

The **Rocky Mountain Raptor Program** will present its live raptor display, including eagles, owls, hawks, and falcons, and conduct educational presentations promoting the value of raptors and the environment throughout the weekend. The presentation teaches ways in which the public can become involved in helping to protect birds of prey. The program features question-and-answer sessions with the handlers and an opportunity for attendees to come within a few feet of the majestic birds.

In addition to these educational and cultural demonstrations and performances, families can journey back to the roots of Colorado and have fun learning about the state's pioneer past, nature, and the environment. In the **Festival of Mountain and Plain area**, featured artisans will demonstrate Navajo weaving and culture, spinning, rug braiding, lace crocheting, felting, instrument-making, and quilting, along with the popular blacksmith demonstration.

In addition to the Colorado Heritage Stage, the Main Stage and three other stages located throughout the Festival will serve up a continuous menu of entertainment, featuring rock, country, jazz, and blues.

More than 50 of Colorado's favorite food establishments will be selling a wide variety of small portions to full meals, ensuring that there will be something for every palate. The Fine Dining area, sponsored by Sub-Zero and Wolf, will host some of Denver's finest restaurants. The Culinary Showcase features local and nationally-renowned chef demonstrations creating simple, yet elegant meals.

Festivalgoers can shop in more than 250 Marketplace booths for original arts and crafts, home and gift items, furniture, jewelry, imports, and more. Shoppers can also explore the Home & Lifestyles area, which features a variety of exhibitors displaying products and services such as window installation, kitchen remodeling, cookware, basement refinishing, and salons and spas.

There will be plenty of music, magic, clowns, and puppets on the KidzStage, and the KidZone features play equipment and hands-on craft activities. Kids and adults can also enjoy carnival rides and games Saturday through Monday.

Sponsors of this year's Festival are: 9NEWS, Aggreko, All Copy Products, American Medical Response, American Satellite – An Authorized DIRECTV Dealer, Barefoot Wine & Bubbly, Blue Moon, Cascadian Farm, Cold Front Distribution, Coors Light, Corona, *The Denver Post*, Downtown Denver Partnership, Inc., Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream, Eldorado Natural Spring Water, Famous Dave's Bar-B-Que, Grand Lodge On Peak 7, Killian's, LÄRABAR, LBA Realty, Less Stress Powersports, Levinson Eye Clinic, Microtech-Tel, Mike's Hard Lemonade, Molson, Muir Glen, New Belgium Brewery, The Other White Meat Tour, PEPSI, PlayStation, Residence Inn Denver City Center, SOYJOY, Sturgeon Electric, Sub-Zero & Wolf, T-Mobile® Limited Operated by On The Go Wireless, Travelers Insurance, and Xingtea.

Festival hours are Friday, Sept. 4, 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Saturday, Sept. 5, and Sunday, Sept. 6, 10:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.; and Monday, Sept. 7, 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Festival of Mountain and Plain ... A Taste of Colorado is a community celebration that is produced by and benefits Downtown Denver Events, Inc., the Downtown Denver Partnership family's community events non-profit organization. The Festival is an opportunity for people throughout the region to come together to experience and appreciate our diverse cultural traditions, and to learn more about our state's Western heritage. The Festival highlights visual and performing arts in addition to featuring educational programs and culinary demonstrations.

Visit www.ATasteofColorado.com, www.facebook.com/ATasteofColorado, www.twitter.com/ATasteofCo, www.myspace.com/ATasteofColorado, or call (303) 295-6330 for more information.

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