

# Two Worlds-One Spirit

by **Steve Kakaruk**

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"TWO WORLDS-ONE SPIRIT" was the theme of this years production from the East High School Native American Program, presented in three parts March 20, 1986.

The production was East's contribution to Native Emphasis Week that has been visible throughout the Anchorage School District.

Part one, a "Drama" directed by Linda Ayagarak, was put together by the 4th hour Culture Club. The students performance, dealt with how kids face feelings walking as one spirit in two worlds (Native and Non-Native). Often going from the new modern ways back to the old ways and at times living life confused and seeking peace.

Part two was the East High Native American, "Traditional Dress Show" coordinated by Doris Bergeron. Some costumes were donated by parent Ruth Kalerak of the Indian Education Program, and others brought their own. The "Traditional Dress Show" consisted of Alaska Native and American Indian traditional garb.

The third and last part of the show was the East High Native Culture Club Dancers led by Ben Snowball. The dancers performed and at the end in-

vited from the audience to share the invitational dances. All three parts were put together by the students at East High School.

The students performed three shows, the first, perhaps the most difficult, was performed in front of high school peers. The 600 seat auditorium was crammed as the "curtains opened."

Principal, Mr. McCormick said, "I have a feeling that maybe ten years ago the students (Native) would not have done this. It's been incredible, the ripple effect is going on throughout the whole school," Mr. McCormick added, "I really enjoyed this weeks show."

Jeanne Fischer, Indian Education Teacher said, "The students began to put this together five weeks ago, every day during fourth hour the production took place and is where the students wrote their own script," Fischer added, "the Chevak Dancers inspired them and they did the rest."

The education in Alaska has come a long ways. Some of the tension and prejudices in the classroom for Alaska Natives have evaporated.

Fischer explained that the Native Students have been visible during the Native Emphasis Week. The Drama Club for East High School as a group are popular and outgoing. Fischer

said, "Non-Natives now see that Natives are a group of good, talented people. Some of these kids are extremely shy for the most part, but they performed anyway. Students (Non-Native), even other ethnic groups would walk by room 40 and see Native Students working and often in most cases not know what was going on in there."

Derek Inga, Student and Performer said, "It took alot of work as a group, everybody counted, they all had unique parts in the play and in the production" adding, "we as students assimilated the feelings of other people."

Kim Thorp, performer in the Traditional Dress Show, and contributor to playwright said, "I thought the production very good, it showed us how the

direction is put together. Jeanne, Linda, Agnes, Doris and Jackie, we couldn't have made it with out their help."

Luke Snyder, Student Participant said, "All of us participated, we had no argruments with one another and everyone helped one another."

Sharon Green, Student Participant said, "I played the confused person caught in two worlds. During the performance I learned about the culture and the part showed us about what we represent."

Yvonne Louth, Student Participant said, "It feels great to know we have all those kids out there looking up to us and seeing the performance. Its a great feeling."



*East High produced, wrote and performed their own for the Native Emphasis Week.*  
photo by Steve Kakaruk