

BSU Hosts Explosive Celebration SPECTRUM Feb. 28, 2008

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The Black Student Union's celebration of Black History Month culminated Saturday night with Black Explosion, an event designed to showcase African-American culture and talent.

The eighth annual dinner and fashion show was held for the second year at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Buffalo. With required formal wear and red carpet treatment, the event provided students from UB with an elegant night of food, friends and fashion.

"It's a celebration of the end of Black History Month and something for students to look forward to," said Simone Hicks, president of the BSU. "It celebrates fashion, culture, and presents underground artists to the UB community. Black Explosion is our biggest event, and has grown significantly in the past couple years."

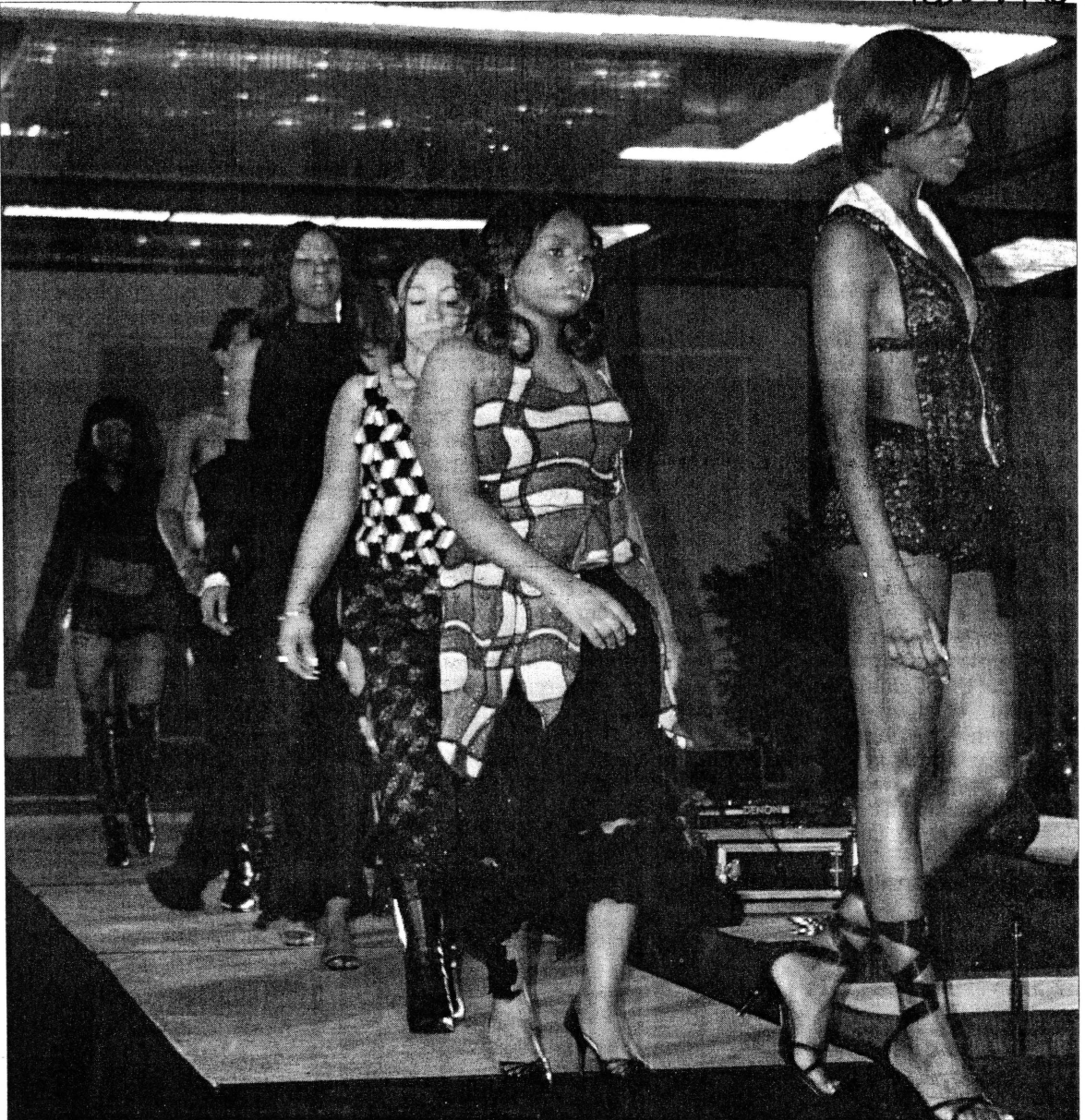
A \$25 ticket afforded students a sit-down dinner followed by a fashion show and singing performances. The night highlighted some little-known talent within the community while simultaneously helping a good cause. Ten percent of the profits raised Saturday night went to Oprah's Angel Network to support AIDS research.

"I like the fact that the BSU can showcase talented students within the UB community. It allows students to show themselves off. Overall, I think it's a nice event," said Samaria Crossdale, a graduate economics student.

Students attended the event to watch the show and see new styles, but what they were wearing was just as important.

"People came out and dressed their best. I know I put a lot of hard work into my outfit," said Rickey Brown, a junior psychology and Spanish major. "It's an interesting and unique show, it is very cultural, with good food and good people."

As the 500 well-dressed guests attending Black Explosion filtered into the hotel's grand ballroom they were greeted with candlelit tables and laid-back music. All the circular tables in



Jen Colloton / The Spectrum

Saturday's Black Explosion fashion show was equal parts elegance and attitude.

the room surrounded a large runway.

Meals were served at 7 p.m., but many people still weren't present in their seats to eat. It was clear that the fashion show, not dinner, was the anticipated event of the night.

As show time approached, people grabbed chairs from surrounding tables and crowded around the stage for a better view.

Offering clothing styles from Brooklyn designers such as Woodwear, Pela, and Softlines, the audience was able to see a wide range of fashion, from

evening wear and tuxedos to bathing suits.

"The designers were remarkable, I wish I brought my checkbook," said Christina Joseph, a junior communication and management major and model in the show. "The BSU e-board worked so hard to put this together, it's incredible. I can't wait for next year to be in the show again because it was so much fun. I didn't know Buffalo had this much going on."

There was no lack of skin shown off as models strutted their stuff up and down the runway in outfits that were by

no means modest. They received catcall and cheers from the enthusiastic viewers.

People were singing, dancing, and clapping along with the music throughout the audience, clearly enjoying themselves while supporting their friends and relatives on stage.

The audience was treated to music between runway presentations. Artists like Rhyson and Image entertained the audience with their different musical styles, ranging from rap to a cappella, in addition to the

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stylish runway show.

At the end of the night, it seemed as if most people were satisfied with the event, despite a few complaints.

"I think it could have been a little better. The host was dry and the food wasn't great. There could have been a little more variety," said Asisat Oladele, a junior exercise science major. "But I had fun because I was with great friends who made me laugh."

Despite the food, others appreciated Black Explosion simply for the night of entertainment it gave them.

"The scenery was beautiful, and the females were especially beautiful," said Bernard Blake, a senior accounting major and member of fraternity Omega Psi Phi. "The show was good and met my expectations. It was just a fantastic atmosphere."

Black Explosion, which continues to grow and expand each year, was seen by many as an example of what the BSU can do for the UB community.

"A lot of hard work and dedication is put into the show every year, and it keeps getting better," said Brown. "I know when I graduate I'll come back to Buffalo and see it again."

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BLACK EXPLOSION

FEBRUARY 26, 2005

