Soccer and Cultural Diversity

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06/10/2014

Over the past few months I have spent time providing and polishing cultural and linguistic competence training among the various divisions at the CPD and other agencies/organizations outside the university. One of the areas of emphasis is to better understand the diverse community we serve. Understanding some cultural practices and history is imperative to relate, establish relationships of trust and deliver services in an appropriate and sensitive manner. The more we know about our clients, partners, families and people we serve, the better off we become at establishing relationships of trust and quality service delivery. This month we celebrate one of the most celebrated sports in the world—soccer.

One of the most exciting and world-wide viewed sporting events is about to begin this week, the FIFA World Cup of Football (soccer in the United States). Soccer is one of the most celebrated sports in the world. The cultural diversity of the participant nations will be displayed in Brazil, the host nation for the tournament. The eyes of the world are in one nation, because of the beauty of the game and what it does to unite the whole planet.

Every four years, a nation is selected to host the tournament (similar to the Olympics). This year Brazil is the hosting nation. It is said that the sport “wasn’t born there, but it is the nation that embraced it and perfected it, so it is going home.”

The tournament begins on June 12 with the opening ceremony and followed by the Brazil vs. Croatia game. The final game will take place in Rio de Janeiro on July 13.

Thirty-two nations will compete for the coveted World Cup trophy. The host nation, Brazil, is a strong favorite, but power-house and current world champion Spain, as well as Argentina and Germany, are also strong candidates to take the trophy. No European nation has won the Cup in the American continent, however.

The United States, under the direction of German head Coach Jurgen Klinsman, will be a strong contender. They have been regular participants during the last five World Cups, doing a good job advancing to the second round.

The games will be televised in different television networks, many of those in ESPN and ABC. I encourage you to watch a game or two and witness a sensational cultural experience!

For more information and details you can visit the FIFA Website at: http://www.fifa.com/