

Aurora Diwali celebration: A melting pot of cultures unites under the glow of lights



Aurora Mayor Richard Irvin with Alderwoman Sweta Baid officially proclaimed Diwali, a festival of lights, as a day of tolerance, compassion, and the triumph of good over evil. Courtesy of Suresh Bodiwala

Suresh bodiwala

11/9/2023 4:53 PM

Diwali, the esteemed “Festival of Lights,” is a time honored in celebration of hope, light, and unity for millions of people of Indian origin around the world.

In recent years, the City of Aurora in Illinois has become home to a remarkable Diwali celebration drawing a few thousand visitors, thanks to the Indian American Community Outreach Advisory Board.

This annual event, which was organized at Waubonsie Valley High School in Aurora, on Oct. 28, has grown in significance, transcending cultural boundaries and uniting the community in a radiant display of togetherness.

Supported wholeheartedly by Mayor Richard Irvin office of the City of Aurora and local volunteers, this event has reached new heights. The IACOAB Board members commenced the festivities with a traditional lamp-lighting ceremony, a symbol of hope and new beginnings. Sunil Patel, the Chairman of the Board, could not conceal his excitement at the remarkable turnout. He credited the event’s success to the unwavering support of his board members, volunteers, and the Mayor office and expressed his gratitude to Alderwoman Sweta Baid for helping the team with the amazing display of Rangoli, a traditional Indian art form made with sand.

Mayor Richard Irvin has consistently been a great supporter of the board and brought an electrifying energy to the crowd with his inspiring speech. The mayor officially proclaimed Diwali, a festival of lights, as a day of tolerance, compassion, and the triumph of good over evil. This proclamation resonates with the American and Aurora Spirit, which also celebrates these values.

The highlight of the event was the outstanding cultural program, which brought together Indian dancers and performers for a night of sensational entertainment. While the majority of the audience was of Indian descent, the event warmly welcomed people from all backgrounds who appreciated the vibrant Bollywood dances and delicious Indian food that was served.

The City of Aurora Diwali celebration is a community event that has brought together local participants to learn about the services provided by small businesses and local non-profit organizations. The participation of non-profit organizations such as Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh USAh, ISKON, Indian Nurses Education and Welfare Fund and Adhyatmik Vishwavidyalaya has helped to raise awareness of Indian culture and the community efforts to preserve their traditions and culture.

“This year, we saw great involvement from different vendors who offered unique merchandise not readily available in local shops, along with a wide array of delectable food options” Board members Nitin Fuldore and Ghosia Wajid.

Vice Chair Nadia Kanhai expressed her sincere gratitude to the local participants, stating that the event would not have been a success without their presence. She also extended an invitation to sponsors and merchants to join the event again next year. As the radiant lights of Diwali continue to shine brightly in Aurora, they remind us of the enduring power of community and the timeless significance of this beautiful festival. The future of the Diwali celebration in Aurora looks even brighter, casting a warm and welcoming glow over all who attend.