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## Holi Festival: Celebrating spring and new beginnings

Keira Gilmore

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During the Holi festival of colors, colorful powders are thrown in the air in celebration of spring and new beginnings. The Gujarati Student Club and Indian Student Association celebrated Holi on Saturday.

Keira Gilmore

Lake Claire arose with a lively, colorful atmosphere on Saturday afternoon as students celebrated Holi, the festival of colors.

For the first time, the Gujarati Student Club and the Indian Student Association teamed up to bring the Holi Festival to life with help from the Multicultural Student Center.

Holi is a festival typically celebrated in March every year in India throughout cities and communities, welcoming in the season of spring and new beginnings.

At the festival, people throw colorful powders to symbolize different aspects of their culture and beliefs. Each color means something different. For example, red symbolizes love and fertility, and green stands for new beginnings.

Aayush Shah, senior aerospace engineering major and president of GSC, grew up in India and moved to the United States in 2017. Shah said that in India, Holi is the most fun two days of the year, and it feels almost like a giant game of paintball.

“There’s a lot of festivals we celebrate, but Holi is the type of festival that brings people together because the more people there are, the more fun it is,” Shah said.

Students received a free white Holi 2024 shirt and then were able to grab cups of colorful powders, such as blue, green, yellow, pink or orange, and let loose to have fun with each other. Students threw color into the air and onto each other’s faces and shirts in celebration of Holi.



Students smile for selfies with their colorful faces while celebrating Holi with the Gujarati Student Club and the Indian

Student Association on Saturday.

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Pranav Nadello, junior biomedical major and vice president of ISA, helped organize this event and bring the festival of colors to life.

“It’s a forum for us to just celebrate our heritage that you don’t get every day or by just going to class,” Nadello said. “It bridges the gap between student life and our culture.”

The festival was GSC’s first time helping host this event partnered with ISA, as GSC is a new club on campus. Anagh Patel, senior information technology major, is vice president of the club.

“This festival brings a lot of people together, and breaks boundaries culturally between people,” Patel said. “Nobody is different here; everyone is together.”

Gujarati culture is a diverse culture characterized by the arts, beliefs, values and customs of the Gujarat State of India.

“Being able to start our own club at UCF was like finding a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow,” Shah said. “It’s like building a family and giving others the same opportunity.”

Many people now celebrate this festival outside of India, as it has gained popularity around the world. The event was GSC’s first celebration of Holi at UCF, although many of the members have participated in the festival before with ISA.

“For us, this is the beginning of a new chapter,” Shah said. “It allows us to look back at what we accomplished and what to look forward to next.”