



Hawaii United Okinawa Association

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“Sharing Uchinanchu Aloha”
35th OKINAWAN FESTIVAL
September 2 and 3, 2017 at Kapiolani Park

HONOLULU – The Hawaii United Okinawa Association (HUOA) will be “Sharing Uchinanchu Aloha” at the 35th Okinawan Festival, set for Labor Day weekend – Saturday and Sunday, September 2 & 3 – at Kapiolani Park. This FREE event has been voted “Hawaii’s Best Ethnic/Cultural Festival” in the *Honolulu Star Advertiser’s* Hawaii’s Best People’s Choice Awards (2015, 2016). The Okinawan Festival promises to be a weekend full of delicious food, great entertainment and lots of fun for people of all ages! The Kapiolani Park Bandstand will be the setting for continuous live performances featuring performers from Okinawa, including Rimi Natsukawa, a contemporary Okinawan singer, Radio Okinawa’s 2017 Miuta Taisho (song contest) winner Airi Ishimine, as well as Hawaii’s own cultural arts groups.

FESTIVAL HOURS:

September 2 (Saturday) 9:00 a.m. – 9:30 p.m.

- Live entertainment & activities: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- Most food booths: 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
- Okinawan Festival Bon Dance: 5:30pm – 9:30pm, only select food booths open until 8:00 p.m. (Andagi, Andadog, Okinawan Soba/Maki Sushi and Shave Ice)

September 3 (Sunday) 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

- Live entertainment, food booths & activities, Craft Gallery close at 4:30 p.m.

2017 HIGHLIGHTS:

- Rimi Natsukawa, contemporary Okinawan singer, best known for her rendition of “Nada Sōsō”.
- Blue Zones Tent - Learn about Okinawan cultural lifestyle contributing to long life and how to make healthy lifestyle choices.
- Cultural Tent - Trace your Okinawan roots with assistance from the Okinawa Genealogical Society of Hawaii and Okinawa Prefectural Library.
- Capital Campaign Tent - Participate in various mini classes on “How to be Okinawan”.
- New food - vegetarian *champuru* and steamed Okinawan sweet potato.

Social Media

- Website: www.okinawanfestival.com & www.huoa.org
- Facebook: Okinawan Festival
- Instagram: @okinawanfestival
- Use hashtag: #okifest2017

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ANNUAL FEATURES AT OKINAWAN FESTIVAL

Opening Ceremony Parade – Don't miss one of the most impressive sights during the Okinawan Festival! The parade is scheduled for Saturday morning. Watch as marchers proudly carry colorful banners featuring the names of all 50 HUOA member-clubs. *Paranku* (small hand-held drum) players, *shishimai* (Okinawan lion dance) and *chondara* (Okinawan clown-like character) will accompany them around the Kapiolani Park Bandstand area.

Cultural Tent – Improve your knowledge of Okinawan culture and find your roots! The Cultural Tent features a variety of displays and activities highlighting Okinawan culture, including musical instruments, calligraphy, *Shimakutuba* (Okinawan language), and kimono and *paranku* dressing and picture taking (available for a fee). Returning exhibitors include the Okinawan Genealogical Society of Hawaii (OGSH), the University of Hawaii at Manoa Center for Okinawan Studies, Hawaii Bonsai Association, and the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii. OGSH will team up with the Okinawa Prefectural Library to help attendees find their Okinawan roots, visit website to download the request form ahead of time.

Machi-Gwa (Country Store) – Bring your reusable shopping bags and fill them with fresh, locally grown vegetables, fruits and other delicious treats to eat! Cool down with a refreshing mason jar of plantation tea. Support local businesses and eat local!

Heiwa Dori - Experience Hawaii's version of Okinawa's famous Heiwa Dori. Specialty foods from Okinawa will be on sale, such as *konbu* (dried kelp), *goya-cha* (bitter melon), Okinawa *soba* noodles, *andagi* mix, *shikwasa* (Okinawan lemon-lime) juice, *kokuto* (black sugar candy) and more.

Hanagi Machi Gwa (Plants) – Discover a fabulous selection of potted plants and flowers for sale, such as orchids, water lilies, succulents, vegetables, and fruits. Find the perfect addition for your houseplant collection and outdoor garden!

Ti Jukuishina-Mushimun (Arts & Crafts Gallery) – Explore a wide array of wonderful original arts and crafts by local artisans and crafters.

Capital Campaign Tent – Construction is underway for the Hawaii Okinawa Plaza! Celebrate with us and learn more about this project that seeks to secure the financial future of the HUOA. Also, join us for the "How to be Okinawan" series. 30-minute interactive classes covering a range of topics like how to talk (*shimakutuba*), dance (*kachashii*), sing, chant, stretch, eat, and whistle like an Okinawan. We'll also have professional storyteller Alton Chung sharing the Legend of the *Shisa*! Schedule will be made available on Facebook and at the tent. Don't forget to take advantage of the various photo ops!

Festival T-shirts – Add 2017 to your Okinawan Festival t-shirt collection! The 35th Okinawan Festival T-Shirt is available in men's, men's tank top, women's and youth sizes. Designs will be posted on the website and Facebook.

Children's Activities – Inflatables, dress-up and picture taking and interactive exhibits at the Cultural Tent, and "How to be Okinawan" mini classes and fun photo ops at the Capital Campaign Tent. We will not have children's games this year.

FOOD LOVERS DELIGHT!

Get a taste of Okinawan cuisine and try some onolicious local grinds – prepared and served by HUOA volunteers with TLC!

Andagi* – Okinawan deep fried doughnut – a local favorite!

Andadog* – Okinawan version of the corndog; basically, a hot dog on a stick that is dipped into *andagi* batter and deep-fried. Mmmmmm!

Champuru Plate – If you love Okinawan food, you will love this plate! Sliced vegetables, luncheon meat and deep-fried tofu are stir-fried *champuru*-style and served with your choice of white or brown rice, shoyu pork and *andamisu* (a *miso* sauce cooked with finely chopped pork). New items this year include vegetarian *champuru* and steamed Okinawan sweet potato.

Okidog – A hot dog covered with chili and wrapped in a soft tortilla with shredded shoyu pork and lettuce. So delicious!

Chili & Rice – Chili & rice in a bowl. Sold at the Okidog tent.

Chili Frank Plate – Chili & rice plate served with a hot dog. Sold at the Okidog tent.

Chicken Plate – Barbeque chicken prepared local style and served with hot rice and corn, or just chicken in a carry out bag.

Pig Feet Soup – Pig's feet cooked in soup stock and garnished with *konbu* (seaweed), *daikon* (turnip), *togan* (squash), and mustard cabbage, served with hot rice. In *Uchinaaguchi* (Okinawan language), it's called *ashitibichi* and is a traditional family favorite!

Okinawa Soba* – Okinawan-style *soba* noodles served in hot soup and garnished with *kamaboko* (fishcake), shoyu pork, green onions and red ginger.

Yakisoba – Okinawan-style *soba* noodles stir-fried with vegetables and luncheon meat, and seasoned with a special chef's sauce.

Yakitori Stick – Chicken skewers grilled to perfection with teriyaki sauce.

Maki Sushi* – Sushi rice rolled in *nori* (seaweed) and sliced for easy eating. Sold at the Yakitori, Okinawa Soba* and Chicken booths.

Shave Ice* – The perfect cool-down treat on a hot summer day in Kapiolani Park! Don't forget to add the *azuki* beans and sweetened condensed milk!

Coffee – Andagi and coffee – available hot or iced – are a perfect combo!

**Denotes food booths open until 8:00 p.m. during the Bon Dance on Saturday night.*

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PARK FREE & RIDE HUOA'S OKINAWAN FESTIVAL SHUTTLE BUS FOR \$3

The Okinawan Festival Shuttle Bus between Kapiolani Community College (KCC) and Kapiolani Park will run continuously during the Festival. Park free at KCC and hop on a cool, air-conditioned bus to Kapiolani Park. A storage compartment on the side of the bus is available for baby strollers and large bags. In addition, the bus drivers will happily assist passengers in getting on and off the bus. The \$3 return tickets can be purchased at the Festival Information Booth and Shuttle Stop Booth at Kapiolani Park.

Shuttle Drop Off & Pick Up Locations:

- At Kapiolani Community College: at City Bus stop outside KCC parking lot along Diamond Head Road.
- At Kapiolani Park: Near parking lot along Monsarrat Avenue.

Shuttle Hours:

- **Saturday, September 3: 7:00 a.m. – 10:30 p.m.**
Last departure from Kapiolani Park at 10:30 p.m.
- **Sunday, September 4: 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.**
Last departure from Kapiolani Park at 6:00 p.m.

FESTIVAL PINS FOR \$5

Okinawan Festival Commemorative Pins will be available for purchase for \$5 at the Hawaii Okinawa Center (pre-sale), as well as at the Festival Information Booth. Festival pins entitle the purchaser to a FREE round-trip shuttle ride between KCC and Kapiolani Park; \$2 off a festival T-shirt purchased at the festival; free azuki beans for your purchased shave ice; a special discount at the Country Store and other coupons for Sunrise Restaurant, Tamashiro Market and Zippy's.

ABOUT THE OKINAWAN FESTIVAL

The Okinawan Festival is known as the largest ethnic festival in Hawaii with an estimated 2-day attendance of 40,000. The Okinawan Festival Bon Dance on Saturday night is known as the biggest outdoor bon dance in Hawaii. It is organized and operated by an army of 2,000-plus volunteers from the HUOA's 50 member-clubs and their extended '*ohana of Uchinanchu and Uchinanchu-at-heart. Proceeds from the Okinawan Festival fund the HUOA's cultural programs. The first Okinawan Festival was held in 1982 at McCoy Pavilion at Ala Moana Park and, subsequently, at Thomas Square. In 1990, the 90th anniversary of the Okinawan immigration to Hawaii, the Festival moved to Kapiolani Park, attracting a larger, broader and more ethnically diverse audience. The move proved to be one of the most successful means of sharing the Okinawan culture with residents and visitors alike. For more information, visit <http://www.okinawan festival.com>.*

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ABOUT THE HAWAII UNITED OKINAWA ASSOCIATION

The Hawaii United Okinawa Association is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization whose mission is to promote, perpetuate and preserve Okinawan culture. The organization consists of 50 member-clubs, whose combined membership exceeds 40,000 members. The organization is governed by a Board of Directors, made up of one voting representative from each of the member-clubs, and an elected Executive Council.

HUOA employs a full-time Executive Director and a small staff of full- and part-time employees. HUOA is a volunteer-driven organization, whose supporters share their time, talents, expertise and energy in the performance of a variety of tasks, including becoming officers, chairing events and projects, clerical work and manual labor to maintain the Hawaii Okinawa Center. HUOA is best known for its biggest undertaking of the year – the Okinawan Festival, traditionally held on Saturday and Sunday of Labor Day weekend at Kapiolani Park in Waikiki.

For more information about the Okinawan Festival or Hawaii United Okinawa Association, contact us at (808) 676-5400 or email: info@huoa.org.

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