



Hawaii United Okinawa Association
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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 676-5400 (Hawaii Okinawa Center)

HONOLULU - The 36th Okinawa Festival is at the Hawaii Convention Center on Labor Day weekend - September 1 and 2, 2018!!

In the past few years, the weather and the decreasing manpower has affected the festival preparations. Moving the festival indoors to the spacious and welcoming Hawaii Convention Center provides the festival to showcase new additional activities and displays. The accessibility for many of our members with wheelchairs, walkers and strollers will find a much smoother surface to navigate. The center is accessible by foot, city buses, the festival shuttle service and parking is conveniently available at the convention center.

The festival doors will open at 9:00 am but the program will not start until 9:30, allowing the attendees to leisurely move into the festival hall on both days. The favorite Okinawan food booths and vendors will be present along with new experiences on the third floor. The bon dance will be held on Saturday from 5:30 - 9:30 pm. There is great excitement and anticipation for the continuation of a successful **“Sharing Uchinanchu Aloha”** with the community.

This FREE even has been voted “Hawaii’s Best Ethnic/Cultural Festival” in the Honolulu Star Advertiser’s Hawaii Best People’s Choice Awards (2015 and 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 Convention Center will be the setting for two levels of featured entertainment, food and activities. Special performances from Okinawa will include Radio Okinawa’s 2018 Mi-uta Taisho (song contest) winner, eisa, hula and yui buyo (line dancing).

FESTIVAL HOURS :

September 1 (Saturday) 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

- Live entertainment and activities : 9:30 am - 5:00 pm
- Bon Dance : 5:30 pm - 9:30 pm Center parking open from 7:00 am; Shuttle from McKinley High School begins at 7:00 am
- Convention Center Doors open at 9:00 am ; center closes at 10:00 pm

September 2 (Sunday) 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

- Live entertainment and activities : 9:30 am - 4:00 pm
- Center parking open from 7:00 am; Shuttle from McKinley High School begins at 7:00 am
- Convention Center Doors open at 9:00 am ; center closes at 10:00 pm

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

- Entertainment from Okinawa
- Exhibit floor features
 - Main stage for dances, koto, sanshin, karate, eisa, hula and shisa performances!
 - Food booths- andagi, andadog, pig feet soup, okinawa soba, champuru, yakisoba, okidog, chili plate, chili frank, chicken, yakitori, sushi, coffee
 - Hanagi Machiya-gwa : plant store for additions to your garden;
 - Machiya-gwa : country store with local products
 - Warabi Ashibi (children at play): activities/games, including Xtreme inflatables
- Hawaii Okinawa Plaza update: completion of the new addition to HOC in Waipio
- Visit “the Mura - the Okinawan Village” on the third floor
 - Festival T-shirts
 - Craft Gallery (Ti Jukushira-Mushimun): features various craft vendors
 - Heiwa Doori - Okinawan products
 - We are HUOA! - gift shop and program displays; club and school displays
 - Okinawa Now!! (travel information, a sanshin shop, HOCA Shisa - lions)
 - Mini stage for alternate performances
 - Yuimaaru - pictorial and historical displays with storytelling by Alton Chung
 - Blue Zones Okinawa - longevity secrets shared
 - Hiyamikasa! - Volunteer and Hospitality
 - Live Painting Demonstration by 7sketches (PowWow artist)

Photo Contest

- Help to document the festival by submitting photos for the contest in the following categories : Ohana and Culture

Social Media

- Website : www.okinawanfestival.com & www.huoa.org
- Facebook: Okinawan Festival
- Instagram : @okinawanfestival

- Hashtag: #okifest2018

“ The Festival” on the exhibit floor

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 through the festival and to the main stage.

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!

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!

Warabi Ashibi (children at play) — Children’s Activities include favorite inflatables and games on the exhibit floor. A Keiki (children under 5) section incorporates interactive activities. Different photo opportunities are available throughout the festival and village floors.

Hawaii Okinawa Plaza / Okinawa VIP Booth – The Hawaii Okinawa Plaza is completed and ready for business! Celebrate with us and learn more about this project which helps to secure the financial future of the HUOA. Updates from the HOP committee will be on display and visit with our local and Okinawa partners who helped make this dream come true!

Hawaii Bonsai Association : Carefully sculptured and designed miniature trees and plants displayed by the members of the Bonsai association are shared at the festival.

Okinawa Geneological Society of Hawaii : OGSH will teams up with the Okinawa Prefectural Library to help attendees find their Okinawan roots, visit website to download the request form ahead of time.

Entertainment (main stage) - seating for 600 will be provided to watch the local school odori (dance), koto, sanshin, karate students perform on Saturday and Sunday.

Eisa and taiko clubs will also join the line-up along with Okinawan line dancing and special Okinawan performing artists.

The Mura - (Village) on the Third Floor

Festival T-shirts – Add 2018 to your Okinawan Festival t-shirt collection! The 36th 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.

Cultural Room (Bunkwanushima) – 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 the University of Hawaii at Manoa Center for Okinawan Studies, and the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii. A new Mini Day Camp center will periodically share activities learned by the children at the summer camp.

Heiwa Doori - Experience Hawaii's version of Okinawa's famous Heiwa Doori (marketplace in Naha). 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.

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

Yuimaaru or “Communities supporting one another” is the core part of our community. Learn about the history and legacy of the Hawaii Okinawan community and what makes it so special. Exhibits will tell the stories of the Hawaii Okinawan-owned restaurants, the Battle of Okinawa, Pigs from the Sea and the Okinawa Prefectural Peace Museum. Storyteller Alton Takiyama Chung will bring to life the stories of the Himeyuri and the Pigs from the Sea. Step back in time to discover the roots of the Hawaii Okinawan community!

Okinawa!! - Visit Okinawa through Okinawa Culture and Travel Bureau's colorful display of places to explore and visit. Talk story with the Okinawans and members of Hawaii Okinawa Creative Arts and their shisa! Opportunity to get a real sanshin from authentic sanshin shop!

We are HUOA! - Clubs, schools and HUOA events sharing and membership opportunity! Come find out what HUOA does and stands for. HUOA logo and gift shop items will be available as well as selected Okinawan artifacts from local families will be available for sale with proceeds going to specific HUOA programs.

Blue Zone Okinawa -Find the secrets of Okinawan longevity! Windward and Wahiawa communities will share these practices with you!

Hiyamikasa! Rallying together for Everyone's Success - check in and hospitality room for volunteers.

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 *Uchi-naaguchi* (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.

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.

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

The Okinawan Festival Shuttle Bus between McKinley High School and the Hawaii Convention Center will run continuously during the Festival. Park free at McKinley High School (enter from Pensacola Street) and hop on a cool, air- conditioned bus to the Convention Center. 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 Hawaii Convention Center.

Shuttle Drop Off & Pick Up Locations:

- McKinley High School at the Pensacola bus stop
- Hawaii Convention Center - porte cochere - driveway fronting the center on Atkinson Drive.

Shuttle Hours:

- **Saturday, September 1: 7:00 a.m. – 10:30 p.m.**
Last departure from Hawaii Convention Center at 10:30 p.m.
- **Sunday, September 2: 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.**
Last departure from Hawaii convention Center at 6:00 p.m.

FESTIVAL PINS FOR \$5 (includes shuttle ticket)

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 McKinley High School and the Hawaii Convention Center ; \$2 off a festival T-shirt purchased at the festival; a special discount at the Country Store and other coupons (tbd).

FESTIVAL BAGS \$5

In keeping with the recycle bag habit, add a Okinawan Festival bag for \$5 to your collection and carry your items to and from the parking lot! These bright colored bags will be available at the Information booth.

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 was the largest outdoor bon dance and will now be the largest indoor 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 the McCoy Pavilion at the 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.

In the past years, the weather and the decreasing manpower has affected the festival preparations and a new change has occurred - moving the festival indoors to the spacious and welcoming Hawaii Convention Center. Additional activities and displays are now possible with the new facilities and the accessibility for many of our members with wheelchairs, walkers and strollers will find a much smoother surface to navigate. The center is accessible by foot, city buses, the festival shuttle service and parking is conveniently available at the convention center.

The festival doors will open at 9:00 am but the program will not start until 9:30, allowing the attendees to leisurely move into the festival hall. The favorite Okinawan food booths and vendors will be present along with new experiences on the third floor. The bon dance will be held on Saturday from 5:30 - 9:30 pm. There is great excitement and anticipation for the continuation of a successful "Sharing Uchinanchu Aloha" with the community.

Volunteers are being recruited for two to three hour shifts in different booths and activities on both days. If interested, please call the HUOA office at 676-5400.

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 memberships is approximately 20,000 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 undertak-

ing of the year - the Okinawan Festival, traditionally held on Saturday and Sunday of Labor Day weekend, now at the Hawaii Convention Center.

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