



**Hawaii United Okinawa Association
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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The 37th Annual Okinawan Festival returns to the Hawaii Convention Center
Hawaii's largest ethnic festival on August 31 & September 1, 2019

HONOLULU - The Hawaii United Okinawa Association (HUOA) presents the 37th Annual Okinawan Festival "Sharing Uchinanchu Aloha" at the Hawaii Convention Center! As Hawaii's largest ethnic festival, the Okinawan Festival promises to be a weekend full of delicious food, great entertainment and lots of fun for people of all ages!

Last year, the Okinawan Festival moved to the Hawaii Convention Center and had a record number of attendees estimated at 56,000 over the weekend. Moving the event indoors to the spacious and air-conditioned Convention Center provided the Festival an opportunity to showcase additional activities and displays. The comfortable environment made for a smoother experience, especially for our attendees with wheelchairs, walkers and strollers. "It was the first time my grandfather went and years since my aunts attended the festival – and they had the best time!" said Lopaka Purdy, an Okinawan-at-heart from Waimanalo, HI.

Admission to the HUOA Okinawan Festival will be \$2 (cash only). Senior citizens over 65 and children 12 and under will be free. Proceeds from the Okinawan Festival benefit a myriad of programs including cultural classes and programs held at the Hawaii Okinawa Center, Hawaii-Okinawa Student Exchange Program, Children's Cultural Day Camp, Senior Health & Wellness Fair, and the Community Service Outreach Picnic. (huoa.org)

Parking is available at the Convention Center for \$10. Overflow at McKinley High School with Festival shuttle service (\$3.00). We also strongly recommend carpooling, using city buses, taxis, Biki and rideshare services to get to the Festival. Drop off allowed in the front of the Center.

Reminder: No hardshell coolers, no lawn/beach chairs, no pets allowed for safety reasons.

Entertainment will start at 9:30 am on both days with special performances from Okinawa include the winner of Radio Okinawa's 2019 Miuta Taisho Song Contest, the Ikuko Matsukawa choral group, and minyo (folk music) and eisa drummers and performers from Yomitan Village. Local performing arts groups will be gracing the stage with Okinawan dance, karate, taiko, and live music. The largest indoor Bon Dance will be held on Saturday only from 5:30 - 9:30 pm. Only select food booths (Okinawa soba, andagi, andadog and bento) will be sold during bon dance.

Doors will open at 9:00 am both days; on Saturday it closes at 5:00 pm and on Sunday at 4:00 pm. Entertainment begins at 9:30 am. There is great excitement and anticipation to continue “Sharing Uchinanchu Aloha” with the community.

**37th Annual Okinawan Festival
August 31 & September 1, 2019**

Admission \$2 per person (cash only). Children 12 under, Seniors 65+ are free

Hawaii Convention Center

1801 Kalakaua Ave. Honolulu, HI 96815

August 31 (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 (Booths will be closed except Okinawa Soba, Yakisoba, Andagi and Andadog will be sold during bon dance until 8 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 1 (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

Social Media

- Website: www.okinawanfestival.com
- Facebook: Okinawan Festival
- Instagram: @okinawanfestival
- Hashtag: #okifest2019

Parking and Transportation

- Parking at the Hawaii Convention Center for \$10. Entrance is on Kalakaua Ave, opens at 7AM
- Park at McKinley High School & ride HUOA's Okinawan Festival Shuttle Bus for \$3 roundtrip. The shuttle will run between McKinley High School and the Hawaii Convention Center will run continuously during the Festival.
- Coming from Waikiki? The Trolley will stop at Ala Moana Shopping Center, which is about a 8 min walk from the Convention Center.
- Lyft Ride Share discounts from Friday Aug 30-Sept 1! New users use discount code OKIFEST2019 for \$2 off the first 10 ride (up to \$20 in credit); existing users use OKIFEST19 \$5 off Lyft XL ride.

ABOUT THE OKINAWAN FESTIVAL

The Okinawan Festival is the signature event of the Hawaii United Okinawa Association (HUOA) and is known as the largest ethnic festival in Hawaii. It is organized and operated by over 3000 volunteers from the HUOA's 50-member clubs and their extended 'ohana of friends and family. 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 Festival moved to Kapiolani Park, attracting a larger and more ethnically diverse audience. In 2018, the Festival moved to the Hawaii Convention Center, which proved to be one of the most successful means of sharing the Okinawan culture with residents and visitors alike. Learn more at www.okinawanfestival.com.

ABOUT THE HAWAII UNITED OKINAWA ASSOCIATION

The Hawaii United Okinawa Association (HUOA) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to promote, perpetuate and preserve Okinawan culture in Hawaii. The organization consists of 50-member clubs, whose combined memberships is approximately 40,000 members. The Hawaii Okinawa Center is home to the HUOA and provides a home for the association's many workshops, meetings and gatherings. Besides the Okinawan Festival, HUOA hosts many programs such as the Hawaii-Okinawa High School Student Exchange, the Children's Cultural Day Camp, the Senior Health and Wellness Fair, the HUOA Community Outreach Picnic and much, much more. For more information about the Okinawan Festival or Hawaii United Okinawan Association (HUOA), contact us at (808) 676-5400 or visit www.huoa.org.

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