



NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release
Photos available

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Asian American
Drum Performance

What: Mochitsuki 2008, 12th Annual Japanese American New Year Festival

When: Sunday, January 27, 2008
Mochitsuki with Aloha; 1pm and 3:15pm; Cultural Fair noon to 4pm

Where: Portland Community College, Sylvania Campus
12000 SW 49th Avenue, Portland, OR

Tickets: \$5-\$12; Brown Paper Tickets (800) 838-3006, online www.mochitsuki.org

Sponsors: Portland Taiko, the Portland Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, and Portland Community College Multicultural Center

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12TH ANNUAL JAPANESE AMERICAN NEW YEAR CELEBRATION **MOCHITSUKI 2008**

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Imagine sweet, pounded mochi rice cakes, taiko drumming and hula. That's right hula dance. This year when the annual Japanese celebration, Mochitsuki 2008, kicks off the Year of the Rat, it will take a Hawaiian twist.

The Portland area Japanese American community invites the public to join in its lively celebration. We welcome the New Year with a stage program of taiko drumming, hula, traditional Japanese folk dance, and storytelling, and a Cultural Fair featuring a community stage, displays and hands-on activities for all ages on Sunday, January 27th, on the Portland Community College Sylvania campus.

email:
info@portlandtaiko.org

Storyteller Alton Chung will emcee *Mochitsuki with Aloha* at the 1pm and 3:15pm performances in the Performing Arts Center. The exuberant Asian American drum performance group, Portland Taiko and their youth group, Tanuki Taiko, will deliver heart-pounding rhythms. This year's program will also include Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo's poetically playful storytelling and Japanese folk dance by Sahomi Tachibana's dance troupe and Fujinami-Kai. It wouldn't have aloha without some hula dance by `Aukai La'a and Ka'au Ahina and Hula Halau He Makana O Aloha. Tickets to *Mochitsuki with Aloha* cost \$12 for adults, \$9 for students and seniors (62 years or older), and \$5 for children (12 and under). There is no charge for children under 2. Tickets are available online at www.mochitsuki.org or by calling Brown Paper Tickets: (800) 838-3006. Admission includes access to the Cultural Fair.

At the Cultural Fair in the nearby College Center, Japanese American and Hawaiian community groups will come together to showcase their culture and traditions from noon to 4pm. Food and entertainment always go hand-in-hand at these festivals. The PCC Food Service Department will open its sushi bar and serve Japanese and Hawaiian specialties for the event while the Community Stage will feature local performing groups and clubs. Activities such as calligraphy, flower arranging and crafts provide hands-on opportunities and complement community organizations' informational booths. There is a suggested donation of \$2 for adults and \$1 for children for entrance into the Cultural Fair. Tickets for *Mochitsuki with Aloha* include fair admission.

One essential delicacy of any Japanese New Year celebration is mochi, a sticky rice cake. Traditionally, the rice is pounded into soft dough in a mortar, the *usu*, with a large wooden mallet called a *kine*. Pounding mochi requires a team effort and timing, with one person wielding the *kine* and another brave person flipping over the mound of hot, steaming rice between the impacts of the mallet. Once the rice has reached a smooth, consistent texture, the dough is pinched off into individual servings and shaped into a smooth round. Traditional mochi pounding demonstrations will take place at the Cultural Fair at 12:30, 1:45 and 3:00pm.

Now in its 12th year, Mochitsuki draws a crowd of more than 2,500 and is supported by the Portland Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, Portland Taiko, Portland Community College Multicultural Center, the Japan-America Society of Oregon, Japanese Ancestral Society, and Consulate General of Japan.

For the latest schedule and information about Mochitsuki 2008, visit our website at www.mochitsuki.org. For further questions, email info@mochitsuki.org or call Kim Tanada at (503) 804-9991.

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