



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Lilian Ongelungel, Event Coordinator
coordinator@mochipdx.org
www.mochipdx.org

Mochitsuki, Portland's Japanese New Year Event, Celebrates 22nd Anniversary

Family-friendly festival offers a wealth of cultural experiences, tastes and entertainment

Portland, Ore. — For over two decades, attendees have gathered in Portland to celebrate the New Year by sharing Japanese culture with the community. The Mochitsuki festivities return to Portland for its 22nd year on Sunday, January 28, 2016, at Portland State University's Smith Memorial Student Union.

Mochitsuki translates to the pounding of rice into mochi, a sticky rice cake that symbolizes the start of a New Year full of hope, happiness, and good fortune ahead. The 22nd annual Mochitsuki event in Portland is a family-friendly festival that offers live cooking demonstrations, local vendors, musical performances, and a number of hands-on cultural experiences.

Community partners at the festival look forward to sharing traditional Japanese foods that are rich in symbolism for the New Year. Utsuki Kai returns to Mochitsuki to provide live mochi pounding demonstrations throughout the day, which children can take part in. Free mochi samples will be distributed during the festival by Konko Church of Portland. Daizu Kitchen will also return to lead children's bento cooking lessons during the festival. A number of food vendors will also be featured at the 2018 Mochitsuki festival for those who want to take home a taste of Japan.

Special guest Alton Takiyama-Chung will return this year for another round of storytelling. Experience traditional Japanese drumming and musical guests also include: Portland Taiko, Utsuki Kai, Unit Souzou, Oregon Koto Kai, singer and songwriter Joe Kye, and violinist Tomoki Martens. Witness Japanese classical dance by the Sahomi Tachibana Dancers.

VOLUNTEER: We always need volunteers to help at the event. If you are interested in volunteering please visit our website www.mochipdx.org.

And if you would like to be part of the Utsuki Kai mochi pounding team, you are encouraged to join and contact Chris Lee, leechristopherd@gmail.com.

MORE INFO: Please visit us online at:

www.mochipdx.org

www.facebook.com/MochitsukiPDX

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PRESENTED BY

Portland JACL

Oregon Nikkei Endowment

Konko Church of Portland

Portland Taiko

Portland State University