



“It is a great credit to you that **so many people attended** this year’s festival in spite of the miserable weather.”
 —Dan Miller, Executive Director of Iowa Public Television

The cold weather and wind did not keep people from attending the annual Asian Heritage Festival. Approximately 21,000 people bundled up in coats, hats and gloves to experience Asia in Iowa at Water Works Park in Des Moines on May 13th.

In its fourth year of existence, the Asian Heritage Festival has become a highly anticipated tradition and the largest Asian American event in the state.

Leah Moore, who adopted her daughter from Cambodia, said, “I work a lot of weekends at my clinic and have asked for today off a year ago. We wouldn’t miss it for the world”. This year’s Festival was co-hosted by ABC Virtual Communications, Polk County Board of Supervisors, and Toyota of Des Moines.



Each year our festival grows in scope and size as we build on our popular features and incorporate new items to keep the event fresh and exciting. Some of the favorite ways to experience Asia in Iowa:

- ❖ Visiting the 12 “villages” (Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Hmong, Indian, Japanese, Korean, Laos, Nepalese, Taidam, Vietnamese, and Thai) that offers cultural exhibits, handmade products, history, art, gifts and food. New in 2006 was the Nepalese Village that drew upon its Iowa connection to Charlie Wittmack, the first Iowan to climb Mountain Everest. Visitors to the Nepalese village saw Charlie’s climbing gear, the rock he brought back from Mount Everest, his tent, photos and other memorabilia. They listened to Nepalese music, enjoyed sizzling mo-mos, and could purchase jewelry, prints, and pashmina shawls among many other items.
- ❖ Riding the dragon boats and trying different forms of martial arts demonstrated by a dozen martial arts academies.
- ❖ Enjoying Asian food that ranges from the traditional to the exotic, to today’s contemporary fusion — 35 food vendors to choose from!
- ❖ Experiencing day long Asian entertainment that includes music, dancing, singing, and a fashion show. This year the fashion show featured Asian weddings from our twelve showcase communities. Polynesian dancers and Filipino-American Youth Dancers transported the cold spectators to the tropics.
- ❖ Over 50 games and activities for children. The Children’s Activities Village sponsored by the Principal Financial Group offered children first-hand experiences of Asia in Iowa with 23 activities surrounding the five senses. The Principal Financial Group also presented a simple introduction to money management using Asian currencies.



FESTIVAL SHOWCASE COMMUNITIES

- ❖ Angkor Wat Friendship Association
- ❖ Chinese Association of Iowa
- ❖ Filipino-American Association of Iowa
- ❖ Hmong Alliance Church
- ❖ Indo-American Association of Iowa
- ❖ Japan-America Society of Iowa
- ❖ Korean Cultural Center of Iowa
- ❖ Lao-American Association of Iowa
- ❖ Nepalese Association of Iowa
- ❖ Tai United Foundation
- ❖ Thai Association of Iowa
- ❖ Vietnamese-American Community in Iowa



New in 2006:

In keeping with our mission to grow Iowa through the united Asian American community, the Iowa Asian Alliance partnered with the newly established Commission on the Status of Iowans of Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage to host a VIP brunch that united festival sponsors and IAA corporate partners with Asian consulate representatives. The event strengthened international relationships, and promoted tourism and business opportunities between Iowa and the Asian international markets.

“I had a wonderful time, ate lots of great food, and met many interesting people. Thanks for the hospitality and thanks to everyone involved in making it one of our community’s top events.”

—Tom Slaughter, *the international law firm Faegre & Benson LLP*

Since art is an integral part of every culture, our panel juried an “Asian Inspiration” art competition and exhibits in the Art Pavilion. Featured works were either done by Asian artists, were Asian-inspired, or had an Asian subject.

Although the Asian Heritage Festival is an important cultural event, it is also a critical marketing tool for reaching the Asian American consumer and workforce. In response to the need of our corporate sponsors, the Iowa Asian Alliance created the festival’s first Job Fair Village sponsored by Nationwide.

“Recruiting diverse candidates can be challenging – that’s why opportunities such as the job fair at the Asian Heritage Festival are so important. Events like this give organizations the chance to reach out and attract a broader variety of talent.”

—Susan McGinness, *Vice President of Human Resources at Nationwide Insurance*

The new Health & Wellness Village sponsored by Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield housed 23 health-related entities focused on providing access and resources to all segments of our community. The Health and Wellness Village focused on community education, prevention and wellness.

Our Youth Village expanded to include a cricket demonstration, a sipa (or Takraw) tournament, and a kite flying field.

“You can count on Citigroup participating next year at the same level or above. In our second year of being part of this great event, it has quickly become a tradition that we look forward to every year! Great job to you, your staff and the committee for all of their hard work on this event.”

—Dan Clute,

Vice President of Public Affairs at Citigroup





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