



# celebrAsian

5TH ANNUAL ASIAN HERITAGE FESTIVAL • 2007

# REPORT

**"The crowds were amazing, and the booths and events were outstanding.**

**It was truly a wonderful 5th year celebration.**

**I am already looking forward to next year. Congratulations again on a festival that helps us celebrate and better understand Asian heritage."**

*Laura Douglas, Provost of the Urban Campus at Des Moines Area Community College*



Just five days before CelebrAsian: The 5th Annual Asian Heritage Festival, spring rains and flooding required that the entire festival be moved from its originally planned location. The Iowa Asian Alliance (IAA) demonstrated its resiliency and resourcefulness during a seamless transition from Water Works Park to the Blank Park Zoo. Approximately 40,000 people joined the CelebrAsian to experience the growing sensation.

Dan Clute, Vice President of Public Affairs at Citigroup, said, "A truly great organization is nimble. IAA certainly

demonstrated that quality with the outstanding success of its quick change of venue to the Blank Park Zoo. Congratulations on a tremendous success! Citi was proud to be a part of the festival and is already looking forward to next year!"

The Asian Heritage Festival has now grown to be one of the largest Asian-American celebrations of its kind in the region. This year's Festival was co-hosted by the Polk County Board of Supervisors, Toyota of Des Moines, and Terrible's Lakeside Casino.



## HIGHLIGHTS

This year's theme — **"A growing sensation!"** — inspired IAA to include more vendors, activities, entertainment, and other features to create an Asian experience in Iowa:

- Twelve villages (Burmese, Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Japanese, Lao, Nepali, Tai Dam, Thai, Vietnamese, and the new Diplomacy Village) offered cultural handicrafts, souvenirs, food, history, and activities. Festival passport holders received stamps from each village for a pan-Asian experience.
- Sports fields featured popular Asian games. Cricket historian and writer Tom Melville provided instruction during informal cricket demonstrations.
- Warrior Spirit came alive in the Martial Arts Village, featuring thirteen schools from throughout Iowa performing in an elevated fighting ring and demonstration area.
- Cultural performances and live music, on two different stages, entertained festival-goers all day. National headliners I.B.U. and Lil Jordan shared the stage with local talent, while our Asian communities showcased traditional and contemporary music and dancing.
- The annual Fashion Show highlighted traditional clothing alongside current trends.
- Food vendors enticed festival-goers with traditional Asian dishes and contemporary Asian fusion fare.
- Demonstrations in the Cooking and Gardening center taught Iowans how to bring a little piece of Asia home with instruction on Asian cuisine and gardening.
- Young Festival goers enjoyed celebrating the Year of the Pig at the Children's Activities Village and left with a creation for mom in honor of mother's day.
- Along with free massages, full health screenings & information were made available at the Health and Wellness Village.

**"The festival was a success! My friends and co-workers couldn't stop talking about it. They were amazed that there were so many people and all the beautiful decorations each village had."**

*Sanaye Chung, Cambodian community representative*

**"Thanks so much for organizing this event, which is fun, entertaining and enlightening for all the people who attend it. The attendance has been on the increase with every passing year."**

*Mike Mazhar,  
Indo-American Association of Iowa*



## FESTIVAL SHOWCASE COMMUNITIES

- Angkor Wat Friendship Association
- Chinese Association of Iowa
- Filipino-American Association of Iowa
- Indo-American Association of Iowa
- Japan America Society of Iowa
- Lao-American Association of Iowa
- Nepalese Association of Iowa
- Society of Burma
- Tai United Foundation
- Thai Association of Iowa
- Vietnamese-American Community in Iowa



## NEW IN 2007:

**“I thought the festival was fantastic this year! It was an absolute delight to volunteer and help out.”**

*Vone Phonesavanh, Volunteer*

- Extended hours featuring musical headliners. National performing artists I.B.U. and Lil Jordan pumped up the volume and brought contemporary flair to this year’s entertainment! Gimmik and New Moon showcased the talents of local contemporary Asian musicians.
- Visitors to CelebrAsian were treated to a complimentary visit to Blank Park Zoo.
- The 12 villages included the Burmese village, which featured traditional delicacies and crafts, and the Diplomacy Village, which featured government and non-profit organizations dedicated to promoting international relations with Asia.
- High school student, Christine Her beat other talented Asian American performers to become the “Next SensAsian” during the final round of the talent competition by performing an original song she wrote.
- The Fine Art Pavilion showcased a by-invitation-only collection of “Asian Inspired” art while a retrospective photography exhibit highlighted past Asian Heritage Festivals.

**“We offer our congratulations, not only for a flawless festival, but for uniting the Asian community in Des Moines, Iowa. We have done many festivals, and it is very rare to see all the Asian communities united the same way.”**

*Glenn Bermejo, Artist representative for Festival headliner I.B.U.*



## FESTIVAL SPONSORS

### CO-HOSTS



### CHAMPIONS



### LEADERS



**“The 5th CelebrAsian Asian Heritage Festival was a huge success. The Principal was privileged to sponsor the Children’s Village once again this year. Congratulations to IAA, committee members, and to the villages for their accomplishments. We value our partnership with IAA and look forward to next year’s festival.”**

*Renee Neppi,  
Diversity Consultant, Principal Financial Group*

### SUPPORTERS

Bankers Trust • Des Moines Area Community College • Faegre and Benson ING • Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc • Prairie Meadows • Wells Fargo

### ASSOCIATES

Arthur V. Neis • Iowa Arts Council • UPS

### FESTIVAL FRIENDS

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Commission on the Status of Iowans of Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage