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CONTACT:
Milind Pendse
(541) 210-7801
info@aasocv.org

Free Asian American Celebration marks 20th year in Richmond

Families will enjoy authentic Asian food, an Iron Chef-style cooking competition, hands-on activities, cultural performances, exhibits and more.

RICHMOND, Va. — The Asian American Society of Central Virginia will hold the 20th Annual Asian American Celebration on Saturday, May 20, 2017, at the Greater Richmond Convention Center (403 N Third St., Richmond). Admission to this event is free to the public. The event will be open 11 a.m.-7 p.m.

For the past 19 years, more than 10,000 visitors a year have enjoyed this unique celebration of Asian culture and heritage. The theme for this year's celebration will be "Amazing Asia." May has been designated by the U.S. Congress as Asian Pacific American Heritage month.

"Even though we've been hosting this event for 20 years, each year brings something new for attendees," said Mahmud Chowdhury, the society's chairperson. "Our guests keep coming back year after year because they know it will be a fun and exciting day with activities for the whole family. And, thanks to the generous support of our sponsors, once again we are able to offer this event for free to the community."

Visitors will be entertained by various cultural dances and musical performances from many Asian communities from across Central Virginia. The event also offers visitors a delicious opportunity to sample an array of Asian foods in one location.

Cultural booths will feature exhibits on Asian heritage from 16 countries — Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Philippines, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. There will be interactive hands-on activities for children and a quiz for students. Many vendors will be on site to offer special ethnic items for sale. The event also will showcase a cooking competition in which participants will prepare traditional Asian dishes in front of a live audience.

This year, the Asian American Society of Central Virginia expresses its sincere thanks to Dominion Resources, Altria Group and the counties of Chesterfield and Henrico for providing major support for this event.

Established in 1998, AASoCV is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization, representing over 50,000 people with Asian roots living in the Central Virginia area. We strive to foster cultural awareness and to promote diversity and unity within our community. We strongly believe that an integral aspect of good citizenship is giving back to the community where we live, work and play.