



# KA'AKBAY

JULY TO DECEMBER  
2019

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE PHILIPPINES IN NEW YORK

556 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10036 • Telephone: 212-764-1330 • Website: [www.newyorkpcg.org](http://www.newyorkpcg.org) •  
Email: [phcongen.newyork@gmail.com](mailto:phcongen.newyork@gmail.com) • Visit us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PHLinNY/>



## New Year 2020 Message of His Excellency Rodrigo Roa Duterte, President of the Philippines

I join the entire Filipino nation and the global community in welcoming New Year 2020. We celebrate this occasion with our loved ones, filled with gratitude for blessings received in the past and with much optimism for the wonderful possibilities ahead.

As this administration enters its fourth year, I am hopeful that all our policies and programs for the improved welfare of our citizens and the continued progress of the Philippines will be realized with the active participation of everyone. Let us begin anew with a stronger commitment in our shared task of nation-building and ensure that all our development efforts will be made sustainable and inclusive.

While the new year is indeed a time to reflect on lessons learned, it is also an opportune time to do better and aim higher. With the guidance and grace of the Almighty and the enduring spirit of bayanihan and malasakit, I am confident that we will achieve a stronger and brighter future for our people.

**RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE**  
President



## Holiday and New Year Message from Teodoro L. Locsin, Jr., Secretary Foreign Affairs

The entire Department of Foreign Affairs joins me, in wishing Filipinos all over the world peace, happiness and good health this Yuletide season. May this years celebration be more meaningful for everyone as we spend time with our families and loved ones

As we rejoice with thanksgiving for the year that was, and look forward with joy and hope to the coming year, let us be reminded that our strength as a nation lies in our unity - that is, our ability to transcend our difference and diversity for the common good.

May we all continue working with our Government and with each other to lift our country further, make our lives more secure and our future prosperous. Each year, we face challenges but through our collective contribution, we will succeed in our aspirations.

We at the Department of Foreign Affairs welcome the New Year with renewed vigor in providing world-class services that every Filipino deserves and in advancing our nation's interest in the world community. With our expanding presence in the world, through our various foreign missions, including those that will be opened soon, we hope to reach out to more Filipinos and foreign friends as we gather more support for the programs of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, particularly those that will most benefit the least among us.

I thank the men and women of the DFA for your dedication and tireless efforts to fulfill our mandate and serve our countrymen as best as we can.

Christmas is about generosity towards each other, oftentimes in the face of sacrifice. I hope that this spirit will drive our actions in the days to come.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and A Blessed New Year!

**TEODORO L. LOCSIN, JR.**  
Secretary of Foreign Affairs





## Fil-Am Community News

### Performances by Fil-Am Broadway Theater Actors, Panel Discussion on Career Perspectives Highlight the 8<sup>th</sup> Homecoming sa Konsulado



Alumni of Philippine colleges and universities during the 8<sup>th</sup> HSK. (Photo by PCGNY)

The 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the Homecoming sa Konsulado was successfully held on 26 October 2019 at the Philippine Center New York, with more than 160 alumni in attendance representing 23 Philippine colleges, universities and alumni associations.

Consul General Claro Cristobal welcomed the alumni to the Philippine Center and expressed hope that the alumni make beautiful memories as a great foundation to “Makisalamuha, Makibahagi, Magkaisa,” the theme for this year’s homecoming. He talked about the significance of each word and how important they are in community-building.

The homecoming festivities had a full slate of activities in addition to the traditional parade of colors. Dr. Joie Calub and Ms. Roxanne Cajigas updated the alumni with the recent Consul General Claro Cristobal welcomed the alumni to the Philippine Center and expressed hope that the alumni make beautiful memories as a great foundation to “Makisalamuha, Makibahagi, Magkaisa,” the theme for this year’s homecoming. He talked about the significance of each word and how important they are in community-building.

The homecoming festivities had a full slate of activities in addition to the traditional parade of alumni flags. Dr. Joie Calub and Ms. Roxanne Cajigas updated the alumni with the recent Gabay Mag-aaral Project outreach in their hometowns in August 2019 while Gulapa Law Of Counsel Atty. Al-Shwaid Ismael gave a brief talk about the rudiments of executing last will and advance directives here in the US that is enforceable in Philippine court. The alumni in attendance appreciated that the topic was included in the program as they find it very relevant.

A panel discussion on Career Perspectives moderated

by Silliman University’s Laura Garcia featured 4 Filipino-Americans from different fields, namely: Dr. Kevin Nadal - a professor of psychology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice and The Graduate Center of the City University of New York; Dr. Connie Uy - an Emerita Professor of Pediatrics at the Rutgers- New Jersey Medical School; Mr. Reagan John Rada - a fine jewelry designer, president of Serendipity Gems and owner of media entertainment Reagan John Productions; and Mr. Ricardo Cinco – a certified public accountant and the Director of Business Services of Eisner and Amper. They shared what prompted them to immigrate to the US, the challenges they faced, and how they overcome them in pursuing their career, as well as their thoughts on how to engage Filipinos to be involved and active in community building.

Aside from the informative discussions, the day was highlighted by outstanding performances of talented Fil-Am Broadway singers Diane Phelan, Jaygee Macapugay and Lydia Gaston, with pianist Justin Ramos, and Carla Mongado. It also featured a special dance performance by Mrs. Marilou Cristobal of the Tausug’s traditional Pangalay dance while Rowena O’Mary and Al Usman showed the ancient Filipino martial arts dance, Kuntao.

Dance instructor Noel Gamboa kept the alumni on their toes during a line dancing session in the afternoon. The participants were also in high spirits as some of them won raffle and door prizes provided by the different alumni associations and corporate sponsors, Philippine Airlines and Philippine National Bank. Marilyn Abalos of St. Paul’s College won the grand prize Philippine Airlines round-trip ticket to Manila. *(Continue to page 3)*





## Fil-Am Community News



(L-R) Moderator Laura Garcia with members of the panel Dr. Kevin Nadal, Dr. Connie Uy, Mr. Reagan Rada and Mr. Ricardo Cinco during the panel discussion on Career Perspectives. (Photo by PCG NY)



Members of the 2019 HSK planning committee (Photo by PCG NY)

*(Continued from page 2.. Homecoming sa Konsulado)*

The event was co-hosted by Ms. Nelsie Parrado of UPAAA, Dr. Fely Santiago of UPMASA and Ramil Buenaventura of PSK. Alex Esteban of PWU served as the Stage Coordinator for the event. Alex Esteban, who was one of the members of the 2019 HSK Steering Committee, served as the stage director for the event.

The participating alumni associations, colleges and universities who were also involved during planning meetings led by the Consulate were Assumption College, Ateneo family, Cebu Normal University, Centro Escolar University, De La Salle University, Letran College, Lyceum of the Philippines, Mindanao State University, Paaralan sa Konsulado, Philippine Women's University, San Beda University, Silliman University, St. Scholastica, St. Paul's College, University of San Carlos, University of Santo Tomas, UP Alumni Association in America (UPAAA), UP Alumni Association – NJ, UP Nurses of the East Coast (UPNEC), and UP Medical Alumni Society in America (UPMASA). St. Joseph's College of Quezon City joined for the first time while alumni from St. Louis University of Baguio City and Asia Pacific College attended as observers.



Madam Marilou Cristobal dances Tausug's Pangalay. (Photo by PCG NY)



(Left photo) Broadway singer Diane Phelan performs Paulo Tirol's "A Simple Transaction" with Justin Ramos on piano. (Right photo) Broadway singer Lydia Gaston sings Visayan folksong "Rosas Pandan" (Photo by PCGNY)



Noel Gamboa leads the line dancing session to keep the alumni awake in the afternoon. (Photo by PCGNY)



St. Paul's Marilyn Abalos wins PAL roundtrip ticket to Manila. (Photo by PCGNY)





## Fil-Am Community News

### US Northeast Filipino-American Community Directory Now on its 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition



(L-R) Nanding Mendez of Fiesta in America, Consul General Claro S. Cristo, Ms. Grace Labaguis of Synergy Production & Management with Consul Arman Talbo during the launch and release for the 2019 Fil-Am Directory.

One hundred sixty two (162) Filipino-American organizations, most of which sent representatives to the 5<sup>th</sup> Filipino-American General Assembly held earlier this year, are listed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Filipino-American Community Directory which was launched and released by the Philippine Consulate General in New York on 31 July 2019.

The Directory serves as a tool for community leaders and members, civic volunteers, and organizations to build a database to develop linkages, synergy and collaboration. It is one of the outcome projects of the 2<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly in 2016, and started with only 50 organizations registered with the Cultural and Community Relations Section of the Philippine Consulate General in New York.

In his remarks during the launch, Consul General Claro S. Cristobal underscored the importance of the Directory as a valuable resource for our kababayans to get connected with one another. He also encouraged the Fil-Am community organizations to make their presence known to the Consulate and promised that those on the list will be given priority for information, announcements, notices, invitations and Consulate support to their events.

Copies of the directory were distributed during the event. Organizations which have not received copies are requested to pick up their copies or send a flat-rate self-addressed and stamped envelope in order for the Consulate to send them their copies.

The Fil-Am Community directory was printed in partnership with Synergy Production & Marketing, Inc with the support of GMA Pinoy TV, Philippine Airlines-New York, and Fiesta in America.



Samples of the three editions of the US Northeast Filipino-American Community Directories published in 2016, 2017 & 2019.

### The Philippine Consulate General in New York and Its Clients Commemorate the 41<sup>st</sup> National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Week



To raise awareness on the rights of Persons With Disabilities (PWDs), personnel of the Philippine Consulate General in New York, the Philippine Mission to the United Nations, the Philippine Center, and members of the public, recited the "Loyalty Pledge of an Advocate of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" during the Philippine flag raising ceremony held in the morning of 22 July 2019, at the Philippine Center.

### "The Filipino American Journey" Launched in New York

Josie Moralidad Ziman's book "The Filipino American Journey, Stories of Survival and Success" was launched on 12 July 2019 at the Philippine Center in New York. The book features the narratives of Filipinos in America from various backgrounds whose difficulties, ordeals and successes inspire and give hope readers and especially to the Filipino migrant community.

*(Continue to page 5)*



Ms. Josie Moralidad Ziman, author of "The Filipino American Journey" (seated, center) with some of the Filipino-Americans featured in the book (seated from L-R) Ruby Sibal, Josie Harrison, Cristina Osmeña, mother of Ms. Jocelyn Welsh, (standing from L-R) Ronnie Mataquel, Ramil Buenaventura, Atty. Nicholas Caraque and Ernesto Pamolarco.



## Fil-Am Community News

### Filipino Night with New York Knicks Caps Off Fil-Am History Month

Around 800 Filipino and Filipino-Americans from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut went to the iconic Madison Square Garden to cheer for the New York Knicks as it took on Chicago Bulls on 28 October 2019 in a game billed as Filipino Night in celebration of Filipino American History Month.

Members of the Staten Island Philippine American Group (Sipag New York), Queens Long Island Basketball, TOFA, Rise Hoops, and Xanders Basketball were among the Filipino community organizations present during the night. 2018 Ms. Universe Catriona Gray who got off the plane from Brazil went straight to MSG to join the enthusiastic Fil-Am community in the celebration.

Philippine Consulate and Philippine Mission officers, staff and their family, also participated in several pre-game and post-game activities at the court to make the Filipino Night, celebrating Fil-Am History Month, a memorable experience.

Fifteen Fil-Am kids get to stand on the court in front of NY Knicks players during the National Anthem, which was sang by Fil-Am TOFA artists. Two junior basketball teams from Sipag NY and Rise Hoops were given the opportunity to play at the center court during halftime. Members of other Fil-Am organizations participated in the pre-game shoot around and post-game free throw. Some groups were given the chance to have their post-game on-court photo. *(Continue to page 6)*



Filipinos in uproar as New York Knicks won 105-98 against Chicago Bulls during Filipino Night at MSG. (Photo by PCGNY)



Fil-Am kids stand in front of NY Knicks players during the National Anthem.

*(Continued from page 4... "Filipino American Journey")*

Ms. Ziman is a breast cancer survivor, correspondent for Radio Mindanao Network, writer for Manila Mail, and host of the radio show "Pilipinassa Amerika". Ms. Ziman announced that the proceeds from her book will be donated to Friends of Cancer Kids Foundation and Iloilo Inc. which provide financial assistance to children with cancer.

In his welcome remarks, Consul Arman R. Talbo applauded Ms. Ziman's effort to recount the stories of survival and success of the Filipino migrants in the book. He also congratulated the Filipino migrants whose experiences are testament to Filipino resilience, tenacity and commitment.

One family and eight individual Filipino migrants in the US Northeast are featured in the book including the Trinidad family from Teaneck, New Jersey; Kaitlyn Trinidad, a student at the College of Mount Saint Vincent; Ronnie Lumauag Mataquel, a math teacher at John Bowne High School in Flushing, Queens; Ruby Abangan Sibal, a newborn care specialist and CEO of Beyond Baby Care, LLC; Ernesto Pamolarco, Jr., a special education teacher; Richard Holsman, CEO and President of Holsman Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Centers in NJ and NY; Ramil Buenaventura, a math teacher at Renaissance Charter School in Jackson Heights, NY; Atty. Nicholas Caraquel, an immigration lawyer; and Jhett Tolentino, a three-time Tony award-winning Broadway producer.



Consul Arman R. Talbo welcomes Ms. Josie Moralidad Zirman during the Book Launch of the "The Filipino American Journey, Stories of Survival and Success" held on 12 July 2019 at the Philippine Center.



Ms. Josie Moralidad Zirman signs her book "The Filipino American Journey" Stories of Survival and Success





## Fil-Am Community News

### NBA's Brooklyn Nets Host Filipino Heritage Night

Over 2,000 Filipino and Filipino-Americans from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut went to the Barclays Center to cheer for the Brooklyn Nets as it took on Miami Heat on 1 December 2019 in a game billed as 4th Annual Filipino Heritage Night.

A pre-game cultural performance of the Philippine traditional "tinikling" dance was presented by the Filipino School of New York and New Jersey. Young Fil-Am basketball enthusiasts got to stand in the court in front of Brooklyn Nets players during the singing of the Star Spangled Banner which was sang by Fil-Am artists.

Several groups of young Filipino and Filipino-American basketball players were given the opportunity to play in the Brooklyn Nets court during halftime. The short game of the kids from the local basketball teams FABLI, JSAG, NJ Ballers and FALCON showcased the Filipinos' innate love and passion for basketball. Philippine brand Tanduay Rum is a sponsor of the Brooklyn Nets was prominently displayed in the venue throughout the game.

One of the event organizers', second generation Filipino-American Mark Anthony Agbuya who also organized the successful Filipino Heritage Night from 2016 to 2018 thanked everyone who came to support the event. After the game, Fil-Am Miami Heat Coach Eric Spoelstra greeted the Filipino fans and supporters.



Filipino American Miami Heat Coach Eric Spoelstra greeted fans and supporter of the Filipino Heritage Night



Deputy Consul General Kerwin Tate and Consul Arman Talbo were invited for the ceremonial turn-over of the basketball to the referee before the start of the game.



Halftime game between FABLI, JSAG, NJ Ballers and FALCON young Fil-Am (Photo by Lambert Parong)



Fil-Am Kids await their turn to enter the court for their Anthem experience with the players from the NY Knicks.

*(Continued from page 5... NYC Knicks)*

As the New York Knicks hit their first victory this early season, the estimated 800-contingent of Fil-Ams were in uproar, showcasing the Filipinos' love and passion for basketball.

Second generation Fil-Am Jordan Paderon, an account executive at MSG and son of a retired Philippine diplomat, said that he has been working on this Filipino Night project for a couple of years now. After seeing that the NBA has now a roster of prominent Fil-Ams such as NBA player Jordan Clarkson and Miami Heat coach Erik Spoelstra, the MSG management finally gave the project a go. NYPCG continues to engage the Fil-Am community, particularly the younger generations, through sports.



TOFA artists sing the National Anthem during the Filipino Night with the Knicks. (Photo by PCGNY)



Messages & greetings to NYPCG and other Fil-Am organizations displayed on Garden Vision during halftime.



Philippine Consulate NY staff and family post-game photo op. (Photo by PCG NY)



Ms. Universe Catriona Gray joins the Fil-Am community during Filipino Night with the Knicks. Photo by Esther





## Fil-Am Cultural Events

### Post Arrival Orientation Seminar for School Children, a New Program Under Paaralan sa Konsulado

The Paaralan sa Konsulado (PSK) continued its learning activities for around 40 students and, for part of some sessions, for the parents as well, as the first ever Post Arrival Orientation Seminar (PAOS) was held during Day 3 of the PSK aimed at establishing support mechanisms for newly arrived Filipino school children to help in navigating the American school system.

Ms. Rena Pedaria, a member of the Board of Directors of the Association of Filipino Teachers in America (AFTA) and a teacher-volunteer of the PSK, briefed the newly arrived families on programs of the New York City Department of Education. She guided the students through the NYC school system, from the family welcome centers to enrollment, school life, summer city programs, special education and other support systems for immigrant families including accessing government benefits, application assistance relating to immigrant status, healthcare, social services and civic classes.

The PAOS session was preceded by a talk on Anti Bullying by Mr. Brendan Lang, a Senior Program Manager of School Culture and Climate, NYC Department of Education (DOE) Office of Safety and Youth. Mr. Lang encouraged the students to share their thoughts and experiences at their respective schools in identifying and addressing bullying and bias-based behaviors in schools and communities. He also delved on cyber-bullying which is, according to him, prevalent and a serious concern among the youth.

The students also enjoyed the traditional classes during the day, including the Kwentong Pilipino for the youngest group led by Deputy Consul General Kerwin Orville Tate who amused the children with the story "Ang Pagong at ang Matsing". Other traditional classes were Filipino Modern Heroes by teacher Ramil Buenaventura; Life of Jose Rizal by Ms. Olive Abarquez; Philippine Dances by teachers Catalino Arca, Sheridan Lambert, Cherubynot and Josette Ticzon; Arts by Doreen Casas and Josephus Reynes; Conversational Pilipino by teachers Nellie Gabatino, Rolita O'Meally and Lourdes Reynes and TuklasTalino facilitated by AFTA volunteer Carol Tanjutco.



Teacher Rena, Board of Director of Association of Filipino Teachers in America (AFTA), briefs the families who attended at the first ever Post Arrival Orientation Seminar on 13 July 2019 at the Philippine Center in New York.



Mr. Brendan Lang, a Senior Program Manager of School of Culture and Climate, NYC Department of Education (DOE) Office of Safety and Youth. Mr. Lang engaged the students during the Anti Bullying Session at PSK Day 3 held on 13 July 2019 at the Philippine Center in New York.



Deputy Consul Kerwin Orville Tate amused and engaged the Paaralan sa Konsulado (PSK) Group 1 students as he told the story "Ang Pagong at ang Matsing" during the Kwentong Pilipino class at PSK Day 3 on 13 July 2019 at the Philippine Center in New York.



Group 3 Paaralan sa Konsulado (PSK) students deliberate about modern heroes at the class facilitated by teacher Ramil Buenaventura.



## Fil-Am Cultural Events

### Classic Film “Noli Me Tangere” featured at the Opening of Sinehan sa Summer 2019



Consul Arman R. Talbo welcomes film enthusiasts and guests during the opening of the *Sinehan sa Summer 2019* held on 1 August 2019 at the Kalayaan Hall of the Philippine Center.

*Sinehan sa Summer 2019*, the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the Philippine Consulate General in New York's flagship program, opened with the 1961 multi-awarded film “*Noli Me Tangere*” on 1 August 2019 at the Kalayaan Hall of the Philippine Center. The classic film was produced by Antonio Riva and directed by Gerardo de Leon, National Artist for Film.

More than 120 guests attended the first day of screening which was co-sponsored by Knights of Rizal -New York, Metropolitan New York, and Long Island Chapters and the Handang Tumulong Foundation, Inc. (HTFI).

The film “*Noli Me Tangere*” is an epic screen adaptation of the Philippine National Hero Jose Rizal's novel of the same title. The film was released 100 years after Rizal's birth. Professor Luis Francia discussed the background of the book and expounded on how Rizal's two novels helped spark the 1896 Philippine revolution against oppressive Spanish colonial rule. He said the novels had an enormous impact on the burgeoning national consciousness of what it meant to be Filipinos during the time of the Philippine struggle to become a nation. He stressed how the novel certainly influenced the thinking of the revolutionaries in the Katipunan and inspired the Katipunan founder Andres Bonifacio. Professor Francia enumerated Rizal's array of characters in the novel, whose lives Rizal depicted in order to illustrate the abuses committed by the Spanish-backed colonial regime. Professor Francia emphasized that Rizal's works live on, proving that the pen is always mightier than the sword.

Consul Arman R. Talbo introduced the multi-awarded film which garnered the 1962 FAMAS awards for Best Picture, Best Supporting Actor and Actress, Best Director, Best Story and Best Musical. The film, he said, is fitting to open this year's *Sinehan* which also coincides with the celebration of 100 years of Philippine Cinema. He thanked the screening committee members - Mr. Gil Quito, Ms. Fiel Zabat and Mr. Paolo Bitanga - for their continuous support of the annual event and also expressed gratitude to the many Fil-Am organizations that have supported the *Sinehan* through the years.

The Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP) facilitated the permission for the rights to screen *Noli Me Tangere* in New York.

*Sinehan sa Summer* will showcase two Indie films, “*Mamang*” and “*Kung Paano Siya Nawala*” that are scheduled for screening on 15 and 29 August, respectively. *Mamang*, a Denise O'hara film, was the 2019 Gawad Urian Best Direction Winner and also won Best Feature Film at the 2019 Dhaka International Film Festival. *Kung Paano Siya Nawala* won the 2019 FAMAS award for Outstanding Achievement in Editing and was a nominee for Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role, Actor in a Leading Role and Achievement in Directing.

A line of 25 short films from Cinemalaya, Victory Liner, and selected entries from young film makers will be screened during the two short films nights scheduled on August 8 and 22. Different Fil-Am groups and organizations co-sponsor each viewing night. *Sinehan sa Summer* ran every Thursday of August from at 6:30 P.M. at the Philippine Center with free admission.



The Members of the Screening Committee (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> from L) Ms. Gil Quito and Ms. Fiel Zabat (sans Mr. Paolo Bitanga) and the Cultural and Community Relations Team of the Philippine Consulate General in New York led by Consul Arman R. Talbo (Center).

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Night of Sinehan sa Summer 2019 Featuring Shorts Film Draws Rave Reviews from Film-goers



Lineup of short films screened during the 2<sup>nd</sup> night of Sinehan sa Summer 2019 at the Philippine Center New York (Photo by New York PCG)

(See article in page 9)





## Fil-Am Cultural Events



Consul General Claro S. Cristobal (front row, 3rd from the right) with the members of the Sinehan sa Summer screening committee and representatives of the co-sponsor organizations at the closing night of the Sinehan 2019 (photo by NYPCG)

### Sinehan Sa Summer 2019 Completes Successful Run in New York

The annual *Sinehan sa Summer* in New York completed another successful run this year with the showing at its final night of the award-winning indie film "Kung Paano Siya Nawala" before a full Kalayaan Hall of the Philippine Center on 29 August 2019.

The blockbuster movie directed Joel Ruiz is a hilarious but poignant story of love and forgetting featuring actors JM de Guzman, Rhian Ramos, and Agot Isidro.

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(Continued from page 9... *Shorts Film Draws Rave Reviews from Film-goers*)

The Philippine Center New York's Kalayaan Hall was jam-packed on Thursday, 8 August 2019, turning the night into a standing room only event as more than 170 film-goers came for the screening of the 12 short films featured during the 2<sup>nd</sup> night of the Philippine Consulate General New York's Sinehan sa Summer 2019.



Reception at the Philippine Center Lobby before the start of the film screening. (Photo by New York PCG)

The twelve featured short films which were all directed by Filipino and Filipino-American upcoming film-makers, were Joey Agbayani's *Lola*; Carlo Francisco Manatad's *Jodilerks Dela Cruz: Employee of the Month*; Craig Nisperos' *Mr. Immature*; Jameelah Rose Lineses' *Atareek*; Gabby Malvar's *Walib*; Joel Ruiz's *Mansyon*; Nicole Dizon's *Boxed*; Raymund Eugenio's *Mukbang Masarap*; Emma Noelle Buhain's *Wedding Dance*; Mika Fabella & Rafael Froilan's *Yakap*; Wester Demandante's *Kaaway*; and Rommel Tolentino's "P". The trailer of the film "Yellow Rose" directed by Diane Paragas was played at the beginning of the film screening.

The short films received overwhelming positive reviews from the audience which is a mix Filipino, Filipino-Americans, and mainstream Americans. One described some of the films as "thought-provoking" while *Lola*, *Mansyon*, and "P" elicited good laughter from the audience.



Kalayaan Hall jam-packed during the 2<sup>nd</sup> night of Sinehan sa Summer 2019. (Photo by New York PCG)

During the talk back at the end of the screening, film directors Craig Nisperos, Jameelah Rose Lineses, Nicole Dizon, Raymund Eugenio, and Diane Paragas were at hand to answer questions from moderator Gil Quito and the audience. Responding to a question about challenges and opportunities they encountered in telling their stories, *Mukbang Masarap* Director Raymund Eugenio said that "family and food are the two things that always connect us and are always part of Filipino culture." *Boxed* Director Nicole Dizon shared that she wants to bridge the generational gap between her parents' generation and that of the young Fil-Ams, particularly during this time when culture in America tends to be individualistic. *Yellow Rose* Director Diane Paragas shared that it took her 15 years to develop and get the film produced. She added that the final release of the film comes at an opportune time when debate on immigration is intense.



Consul General Claro S. Cristobal (8<sup>th</sup> from right) is flanked by (L-R) Consul Arman Talbo, Craig Nisperos, Jameelah Rose Lineses, Nicole Dizon, Raymund Eugenio, Gil Quito, Diane Paragas, Rely Manacay of CDO-MISOR, Deputy Consul General Kerwin Orville C. Tate and Roel Medrano of FAAE. (Photo by New York PCG)

Consul General Claro S. Cristobal presented certificates of appreciation to the directors present and thanked them for allowing their films to be featured in the Sinehan sa Summer. Deputy Consul General Kerwin Tate likewise thanked the screening committee members, Cinemalaya, TBA Studios, the Cultural Center of the Philippines, and members of Friends from Abra, Association of Fil-Am Accountants Inc. NY (AFAA-NY), Cagayan de Oro City – Misamis Oriental Association of NY, Inc. (CDO-MISOR), Cebuano Engaging in Building Unity, Inc. (C.E.B.U.), and the Filipino-American Association of Engineers (FAAE) for their continuous support to the Sinehan sa Summer 2019.



**Fil-Am Cultural Events**

**Commemoration of the 123<sup>rd</sup> Martyrdom of Dr. Jose P. Rizal**



Consul General Claro S. Cristobal (7<sup>th</sup> from left, 2<sup>nd</sup> row) with Court of Appeals Associate Justice Sir Elihu A. Ybanez, KGCR Supreme Commander, KOR IHQ with the Knights of Rizal. (Photo by PCGNY)

The Philippine Consulate General in New York, in partnership with the Knights of Rizal-New York Chapter, held a commemorative event on 19 December 2019 at the Philippine Center on the occasion of the 123<sup>rd</sup> Death Anniversary of Dr. Jose P. Rizal with the theme "Jose Rizal: Huwaran ng Pilipino sa Ika dalawampu't Isang Siglo."

The event was highlighted by a discussion of Court of Appeals Associate Justice Sir Elihu A. Ybanez, KGCR, Supreme Commander of the Knights of Rizal, IHQ on the crimes committed by the Spaniards during the Spanish era in the Philippines.

Justice Elihu Ibanez said that "it has been the heroism of Rizal in the face of death that inspire many to be concerned about living for the Filipinos, giving them the decent life and giving strength and individual freedom."

Hence, he pointed out that "the question is not about how Rizal died, but how he lived." Instead of enumerating all his well-known qualities and achievements, Justice Ibanez said that he "advocates the renewed pledge of devotion to the ideas and ideals espoused by Rizal." (Continue to page 11)



(L-R) Mr. Gil Quito, Ms. Fiel Zabat, Consul General Cristobal, and Consul Arman R. Talbo during the awarding of Certificates of Appreciation to the members of the screening committee. (photo by NYPCG)

(continued from page 09... Sinehan sa Summer Completed)

The Sinehan sa Summer is a flagship project of the Philippine Consulate General in New York featuring award-winning classic and indie Filipino films, as well as short films submitted by upcoming Filipino and Filipino-Americans filmmakers and actors, all in English or with English sub-titles. It ran every Thursday evening of August and each show was either full or SRO. Talkback sessions were held to provide opportunity for the audience to interact with some of the directors and producers.

This year's Sinehan was a tribute to the celebration of 100 years of Philippine Cinema. It was held with the support of the Film Development Council of the Philippines, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Cinemalaya, TBA Studios, Arkeo Films, and Victory Liner which helped bring the different films for free viewing in New York.

Fil-Am organizations and groups co-sponsored the different showing nights and they provided Filipino merienda before each show, much to the delight of the audience who were able not only to enjoy the movies but also had a taste of our delectable Filipino cuisine.

Consul General Claro S. Cristobal thanked and presented Certificates of Appreciation to production designer/art director Fiel Zabat and writer/actor Mr. Gil Quito who were part of this year's screening committee of the Sinehan.



Mr. Ryan Letada (R) of Next Day Better talks about the trailer of his project Intersections which was shown before the feature film.



Newly-arrived Tourism Attache Francisco Lardizabal greets the Sinehan audience and gives them a preview of tourism priorities of the PDOT New York office.





## Fil-Am Cultural Events

*(continued from page 10...123rd Martyrdom of Dr. Rizal)*

The program included a Knighting Ceremony of three new members of the Knights of Rizal New York Chapter including Consul Ricarte B. Abejuela III of the Philippine Consulate General in New York and the elevation of other members to the second degree of knighthood. The Knighting ceremony was presided by Sir Justice Elihu A. Ybanez. Chapter heads and members of other areas in the US Northeast were present to witness the solemn ceremony.

The program also featured a dramatic Tableau of Jose Rizal's execution, staged by the New York Chapter, laying of flowers, and video presentation. New York Chapter Commander Sir Mariano Aquino Jr., KCR thanked Consul General Claro S. Cristobal for organizing the annual commemoration with the KOR.

A citation was given by the Supreme Commander to newly-elected Mayor of Bergenfield, New Jersey, Sir Arvin Amatorio, Esq., KCR and Sir Consul Arman R. Talbo, KCR for his contributions to the Filipino-American community.

### Philippine Consulate in New York Leads Filipino Christmas Tradition in the Big Apple



The windows of the Philippine Center in New York are adorned with traditional parol and Christmas decor. (Photo by PCGNY)



Tableau of Rizal's execution. (Photo by PCGNY)



New Knights of Rizal New York Chapter members including Sir Consul Ricarte B. Abejuela III (Leftmost). (Photo by PCGNY)



Newly-elected Mayor of Bergenfield, New Jersey, Sir Arvin Amatorio, Esq., KCR delivers his appreciation speech. (Photo by PCGNY)



Consul Arman R. Talbo receives citation for his contributions to the Fil-Am community. (Photo by PCGNY)

Filipino traditions of celebrating Christmas continue to warm the spirits of the Filipino-American community in New York and amaze the hundreds of thousands of Americans and tourists passing by the Philippine Center along the busy Fifth Avenue of Manhattan.

The glass windows of the Philippine Center are adorned with lights, sinamay, red poinsettia, and colorful parol from Pampanga. Giant LED screens continuously play scenes of Christmas celebrations and natural wonders all across the island, inviting passers-by to just pack a bag, book a flight, and celebrate Christmas the Filipino way, far from the biting winter cold. The display is an in-house joint undertaking of the Philippine Consulate, Department of Tourism- New York, and the Philippine Center.

*(Continue to page 12)*





## Fil-Am Cultural Events

(Continued from page 11... Filipino Christmas in NYC)

The lobby is decorated with bright Christmas lights and colorful capiz parol from different provinces in the Philippines. Nine unique lanterns made by the Fil-Am community during the parol-making workshop organized by the Consulate and the Filipino School of New York and New Jersey last 23 November 2019 are also displayed, each representing unique Filipino values and aspirations: kapayapaan, pagkakaisa, pagmamahalan, pamilya, pakikipagkapwa-tao, kasaganahan, pagpapatawad, pasasalamat, and pananampalataya. Every night, one parol was lighted beginning on 5 December 2019 which is the start of the traditional Simbang Gabi sa Konsulado until all the parols were lighted during the culmination of the nine-day mass last 13 December 2019.

Simbang Gabi Sa Konsulado is a popular Filipino Christmas tradition in New York now on its 31<sup>st</sup> year. It is a solemn celebration that brings together different members of the Fil-Am community: priests, partner organizations, choirs, volunteers and Filipinos who want to experience Pasko away from home. This year, 84 Fil-Am organizations partnered with the Consulate in organizing the Simbang Gabi sa Konsulado. In the spirit of the season and in solidarity with our kababayan in Mindanao, the community earmarked the donations and contributions collected in the nine nights of the Simbang Gabi for the benefit of the victims of the earthquakes in the region.

Each Simbang Gabi was followed by a salu-salo where partner organizations and Filipino caterers served Filipino food like lumpia, pansit, lugaw, puto bumbong, and kutsinta to the delight of the attendees. Free raffles added to the fun and spirit of camaraderie of the community.

Consul General Claro S. Cristobal thanked the community organization partners and the attendees of the Simbang Gabi, many of whom completed the nine masses. He said that the tradition did not only serve as venue for celebrating Christmas the Filipino way but also provided an opportunity for fellowship for Fil-Ams in the area.

With these colorful displays and meaningful celebrations at the Philippine Center, Pinoy Christmas tradition is alive and vibrant in the heart of the Big Apple.

The display ran until 6 January 2020 when the holiday season officially ends in the Philippines with the celebration of the Feast of the Three Kings.



Choir singing "Joy to the World" during the lighting of the first parol. (Photo by Mae Manubay)



Celebration of the first night of Simbang Gabi sa Konsulado. (Photo by PCGNY)



Volunteers from our Filipino community reenact the "Panunuluyan."



Consul General Claro S. Cristobal gives his closing remarks during the last night of the Simbang Gabi. (Photo by Ray M. Maranan)



Chargé d' affaires and Deputy Philippine Permanent Representative to the UN, Kira Christianne Azucena during the Offertory of the Simbang Gabi. (Photo by Ray M. Maranan)





## Engaging the 2nd Generation Fil-Ams



NY FYLPRO delegates during the program's Opening Ceremonies at Ayala Tower One, Makati, Philippines. Mr. Philjay Somera Solar of Boston (left) & Ms. Leezel Tanglao (right).

### New York Consulate's Delegates Recount Memorable FYLPRO 2019 Experience

For seven days at the end of November, 14 Filipino Americans from across the U.S. embraced their roots, enriched their identities and strengthened their ties to the land of their ancestors.

In its eighth year, the 2019 Filipino Young Leaders Program (FYLPRO) included a diverse and talented cohort of leaders who have excelled in their respective industries -- from medicine, law, technology, business and media. In cooperation with the Ayala Foundation and Department of Foreign Affairs, FYLPRO and its alumni have gone on to build and strengthen ties between the U.S. and the Philippines via businesses and civic engagement projects.

*(Continue to page 12)*

### Philippine Consulate Hosts Networking Event for Filipino Lawyers Taking Post-Graduate Studies in the US Northeast



(L-R) Resource speakers Atty. Christian Drilon (Allen & Overy), Atty. Gonzalo Go III (Mayer Brown), Atty. Ryan Castillo (Mayer Brown), Atty. Licelle Cobrador (Cobrador & Associates, PLLC) and Consul General Claros S. Cristobal. (Photo by NYPCG)



(Seated L-R) Resource speakers Atty. Christian Drilon (Allen & Overy), Atty. Gonzalo Go III (Mayer Brown), Atty. Ryan Castillo (Mayer Brown), Atty. Licelle Cobrador (Cobrador & Associates, PLLC) and Consul General Claros S. Cristobal together with the Filipino lawyers who are former and current LLM students in different universities in the US Northeast. (Photo by NYPCG)

The Philippine Consulate General in New York hosted a networking event for Filipino lawyers taking post-graduate studies at different universities in the US Northeast last 20 November 2019. With the support of Gulapa & Baclay LLP, Post organized the event as part of its efforts to coordinate with Filipino student groups and to help them establish networks within the Fil-Am community.

The students are all lawyers from the Philippines who are currently enrolled at New York University, Columbia University, Fordham University, Cornell Tech and Yale University. Former LLM students also attended the event.

During the meeting, Consul General Claro S. Cristobal encouraged the students to participate in the different activities of the Consulate and be the Consulate's partners in assisting members of the Fil-Am community particularly in legal issues.



Atty. Ryan Castillo sharing his insights during the Q&A portion of the networking event. (Photo by NYPCG)

The meeting served as venue for sharing of experience on studying LLM, passing the New York State Bar, law practice in New York and giving back to the Fil-Am community with Atty. Christian Drilon (Allen & Overy), Atty. Gonzalo Go III (Mayer Brown), Atty. Ryan Castillo (Mayer Brown) and Atty. Licelle Cobrador (Cobrador & Associates, PLLC) serving as resource speakers. The resource persons were themselves former LLM students from different universities in the US.

The participants thanked the Consulate for reaching out and organizing the event. They expressed their appreciation for the valuable information they gained from this networking event and committed to assist the Consulate in future similar activities. Consul General Cristobal thanked the resource persons and Atty. Yas Sanchez-Hereira (Fordham 2019) and Atty. Patricia Peña-Drilon (Columbia 2018) who assisted in organizing the event.



## Engaging the 2nd Generation Fil-Ams



FYLPRO Delegates pose with Mayor "Isko" Moreno (center) after a courtesy call in his office at City Hall of Manila. Photo by FYLPRO.

*(Continued from page 13... FYLPRO)*

Solar currently serves as the Commissioner of the Asian American Commission for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, where he sits as Chair of the AAPI Young Leaders Symposium. He is the youngest and only Commissioner of Filipino descent. He is also the founder of Fil-Lennials of New England which highlights young Filipino-American professionals to inspire youth and build a stronger Fil-Am community. Solar is also involved in several organizations, including the Philippine American Mainstream Advocacy for Non-Partisan Associations, Inc. (PAMANA), National Federation of Filipino-American Associations (NaFFAA), BOSFilipinos, and the Massachusetts Youth Leadership Foundation.

Tanglao, who is a multimedia bridge journalist and media consultant, has worked at several major news organizations, including ABC, CBS, Vice, CNN and The Associated Press. She currently leads membership and innovation at Huff Post. She is currently a Reynolds Journalism Institute Non-Residential Fellow and is developing a tool to better measure the impact of stories. She most recently was selected as a 92Y Women in Power Fellow for 2020. In addition, she is an advisor for Filipino Americans in Science Technology Engineering Arts + Math New York Chapter (FASTER NY) and has presented at several past Filipino American National Historical Society conferences.

During the FYLPRO immersion week in Manila, Solar and Tanglao, along with their fellow delegates, met with representatives and leaders from government, business, community and culture.

Delegates explored Intramuros via bamboo bikes and then paid their respects at the Manila American cemetery. They heard from representatives from the Ayala Foundation, Department of Foreign Affairs and Rappler on the nation's current state of affairs.

They learned about the Philippine tax system from Tax Whiz Raymond "Mon" Abrea, founder of the Asian Consulting Group and connected with local businesses through the Makati Business Club and American Chamber of Commerce.

FYLPRO alums who have started businesses in the Philippines also gave delegates a look into the process.

The delegates also visited the Department of Tourism and Department of Trade and Industry and made a courtesy call at U.S Ambassador Residence with Deputy Chief of Mission John Law.

The delegates likewise paid a visit to Manila Mayor Francisco "Isko" Moreno Domagoso.

On community day, delegates traveled to Pampanga, to Sitio Monicayo and learned about the Aeta community and the efforts to provide water access and sanitation via Manila Water Foundation.

On the final day, delegates met with their mentors in conjunction with their legacy project.

Solar's legacy project includes leadership development and programming for Filipino American middle school and high school students in New England. Tanglao's legacy project is a multimedia deep dive into people's relationship to debt (utang ng loob) and surfacing those stories to a wider audience.

The FYLPRO immersion trip marks the beginning of the delegates' deeper connection and ties to the Philippines and their Filipino identity.

"Participating in FYLPRO was an uplifting once in a lifetime experience that has empowered me to make an impactful splash back in my community which will send ripples of positivity and inspire others to follow," said Solar. "Being able to hear from like minded, committed Fil-Am leaders like myself as well as stakeholders in the Philippines has fueled my personal thinktank of the many ideas we can all collaborate together to advance Filipinos globally."

For Tanglao, FYLPRO was a transformative experience. "It's never been more important to build bridges with our kababayans no matter where they are in the diaspora. Connecting with the community in the motherland has been the accelerant to the fire that burns deeply within me to tell the stories of our people. Our stories matter," Tanglao said. "The community I found with my fellow FYLPRO delegates has shown me the power of diverse voices coming together who are united with a shared mission to serve our fellow Filipinos. I'm most excited and inspired by the collaborations that will be born out of this opportunity."



Fourteen 2019 FYLPRO delegates pose in traditional Filipiniana dresses and barongs in celebration of completing their Immersion Program during the Closing Ceremonies. (Photo by Ayala Foundation, Inc.)





## Public Diplomacy/Political Diplomacy

### Consul General Cristobal meets with the Fil-Am Press Club of New York



Consul General Claro S. Cristobal (9<sup>th</sup> from the left) with the Filipino-American Press Club of New York (FAPCNY) members at the ConGen Media Hour held on 12 September.

Consul General Claro S. Cristobal met with the members of the Filipino-American Press Club of New York during the ConGen's Media Hour at the Philippine Center on 12 September 2019.

During the meeting, Consul General Cristobal shared his experiences connecting with the Filipino communities in Egypt where he served as the Philippine Ambassador and in Hong Kong and Tokyo where he was Consul General. He discussed several topics that concerned Filipinos in the US particularly on how important it is for the Filipinos to participate in the 2020 US Census. According to the 2010 Census, Fil-Ams are the third largest Asian group in the US.

Following the discussion, he entertained questions raised by the media on various topics like; the usual problems of Filipinos overseas, how he assesses the Filipino community in the US East Coast, his most rewarding post.

The members of the FAPCNY thanked Consul General Cristobal for his time and the information he shared during the meeting.



Members of the FAPCNY listen attentively as Consul General answers their questions.

### PCG New York, FILVETREP Honor Filipino WWII Vets Anew

The Philippine Consulate General in New York, working in close partnership with the Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project (FILVETREP) presented the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal (CGM) to ten Filipino World War II veterans in a ceremony held at the Kalayaan Hall of the Philippine Center in New York on 03 December 2019.

The ten veterans who were honored were Capt. Juan R. Bacani, Carlos C. Calub, Isidro G. Dela Torre, Pelagio A. Fariñas, Benjamin F. Gonzales, Sr., Capt. Enrique S.D. Manaois, Arcadio R. Nepomuceno, Cirilo F. Ofilada, Basilio T. Toledo, and Johnson S. Villanueva. Of the ten awardees, Mr. Nepomuceno is the only one who is still alive, but because of his advanced age, could not attend the ceremony. Family members represented all the veterans and received the medals on their behalf.

The Congressional Gold Medal recognizes the valor and sacrifice of the Filipino soldiers and recognized guerillas who fought alongside American troops during that war. The grant of the medal was the result of many years of lobbying by the veterans and their supporters. The law granting the award was passed in 2015, 70 years after the end of the war.

In his speech during the ceremony, MGen (ret.) Antonio Taguba, FILVETREP Chairman, recounted the struggle of his father, also a World War II veteran, who, after enlistment and after having fought in the war was given his pay of \$22.80. This unfairness is what drove Gen. Taguba to work tirelessly to make sure that the veterans are recognized, no matter how many years have passed.

Gen. Taguba travels all over the United States, working closely with the Filipino community and the Philippine Consulates to find opportunities to present the award to Filipino Veterans. Gen. Taguba emphasized that, with the march of time, it is also imperative to preserve the stories of the bravery and struggles of the veterans, before they all pass and in order for present generations not to forget their sacrifices.

Philippine Consul General to New York Claro S. Cristobal thanked the family members of the veterans for "braving the cold brought by the first snowfall" and expressed hope that the "patriotic acts of those veterans being honored tonight will bring a sense of warmth and camaraderie to those who are present."



Philippine Consul General to New York Claro Cristobal (5<sup>th</sup> from left) and FilVetRep Chairman MGen. Antonio Taguba (8<sup>th</sup> from left) join the 10 next of kins of WW2 veterans honored during a US Congressional Gold Medal Award Ceremony in New York. (Photo courtesy of Carol Tanjutco).



## Political Diplomacy

### PCG New York Marks Fil-Am History Month with Film Screening of Manila 1945 and a Panel Discussion on Filipino Americans Across Generations

In celebration of Filipino American History Month, about 110 guests mostly Filipinos, Filipino Americans, and Americans, showed up at the Philippine Center New York on 24 October 2019 for the film screening of Spyron-AV Manila's documentary film, "Manila 1945: The Rest of the Story" and a panel discussion featuring five distinguished Filipino-Americans of diverse background coming from different generations to share their experiences growing up as Filipino Americans.

Next Day Better's animated short video entitled "The Filipino American Story" was also played after the film screening.

In his welcome remarks, Consul Arman Talbo said that "as we remember the achievements of those who arrived in America before you, let us not forget that the Filipino American History Month is also about you; it is about the story of success and struggle of each one in this room. Let us continue the great story of the Filipino Americans."



Panelists during the discussion on Filipino-Americans Across Generations. (Photo by NY PCG)

The guests and the members of the panel all appreciated that the documentary film Manila 1945 was shown as they were able to learn more about the Battle for Manila from the perspective of World War II survivors, veterans, historians and experts. Some have expressed that they now understood the war's effects on the Filipinos' psyche and the Philippine culture and society today. Spyron-AV Manila's New York representative Janette Andrada who introduced the film said that the film was shown not to open wounds but as a way for Filipinos, Americans, and Japanese alike to heal and forgive. She encouraged the audience, particularly the younger generations not forget the sacrifices of these unsung heroes and do everything in their power to avoid war and history repeating itself.

Philippine Consul General Claro Cristobal said that "after looking back, learning our history, the next thing to do is to look around, see where we are as a people and as a community. And hopefully after looking around, we can look ahead, to see the future and define what we have to do as a community so that our presence in this country will be felt even more."

The panel discussion themed "Filipino Americans Across Generations: Challenges and Opportunities" featured Anthropology Professor Cherubim Quizon of Seton Hall University as moderator, and retired US diplomat and army officer Santiago Busa, Jr., New York City Mayor's Office of Media Entertainment Commissioner Anne del Castillo, New York State Assembly Chief of Staff Steven Raga, and Huff Post's journalist and media consultant Leezel Tanglao as members of the panel.

Noting each of the panels' diverse background, upbringing and age difference, Professor Quizon asked the panel to share their narratives, including the challenges they faced as Filipino-Americans. She also asked them if they believe there is a gap between the first, second and third generations of Fil-Ams and if that is the case, how can we unite and harmonize efforts across generations to find synergy and common voice.



(Photos L-R) Retired US diplomat and army Officer Sonny Busa, NYC MOME Commissioner Anne del Castillo, NY State Assembly Chief of Staff Steven Raga, FYLPRO 2019 Delegate Leezel Tanglao of HuffPost and Seton Hall Anthropology Professor Cheree Quizon during the panel discussion. (Photo by Lambert Parong)

Sonny Busa, who is the only Filipino to teach both in the US Military Academy and the Philippine Military Academy, said that although he considered himself a Southern Californian, he decided later in life to use his being a Filipino as an advantage - not to the advantage of victimization - but as a source of strength. He encouraged parents raising Fil-Am kids to always make sure that Philippine culture comes to the fore and not to be suppressed. Speaking about bridging the gap between generations, he said that the only way for the older generations of Fil-Ams to empower and engage the young ones in community involvement is to trust and give them control over planning and implementation. *(Continue to page 17...)*





## Economic Diplomacy

### Investment Forum Held in New York

The Philippine Consulate General in New York, the Philippine Trade and Investment Center (PTIC), the Center for Strategic Reforms in the Philippines (CSR) and Philippine National Bank – New York (PNB New York) conducted a forum entitled “*Kapihan at Kuwentuhan: Investing in the Philippines*” on 11 September 2019 at the Philippine Center Kalayaan Hall.

Mr. Mon Abrea, founder of *Center for Strategic Reforms of the Philippines (CSR Philippines)* – an organization that aims to empower the fast-growing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) sector, and currently serves as an adviser to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue on tax administration reforms, discussed about entrepreneurship, doing business, and tax reforms in the Philippines. More than twenty members of the Filipino-American community in the US northeast who are interested in business participated in the event.



PCGNY officials and staff, Mr. Mon Abrea of the Center for Strategic Reform of the Philippines (CSR), Special Trade Representative Nicanor S. Bautista of Philippine Trade & Investment Center New York (PTIC), Mr. Eric Bustamante, General Manager of Philippine National Bank – New York (PNB) and members of the Filipino-American community during a forum entitled “*Kapihan at Kuwentuhan: Investing in the Philippines*” held on 11 September 2019 at the Philippine Center Kalayaan Hall. (Photo by NYPCG)

*(Continued from page 16... Manila 1945)*

MOME Commissioner Anne del Castillo, whose mother hails from Isabela, Negros Occidental, related how she has struggled to find her identity as an American and Filipino. She acknowledged that Fil-Ams who were born and raised here in the US feel they do not have the same certainties as those Filipinos who migrated to the US and are secure in their identity as Filipinos. She sees the importance of attending Philippine Independence Day events and cultural activities so that they can identify and know Philippine history and culture.

Leezel Tanglao is from Carson, California and has been in NY for 9 years. She is a bridge journalist having worked for every type of media company ranging from digital, print, broadcast, start-up, wire service, and innovation. Citing her work as a bridge journalist who has been at the intersection of a lot of spaces, she “looks at identity as very dynamic” and asks “why can’t we be both?”

Steven Raga, the first Filipino to become chief of staff at the NY State Assembly, shared that although bridging generational gap has been a challenge for a long time now, his experience in being both Filipino and American has helped him in gaining a wide network which is essential in his line of work. He said that he is American when he is with Americans and Filipino when he is dealing with the Filipino community.

Special Trade Representative Nicanor S. Bautista of PTIC presented short video clips which highlighted the government’s economic gains and targets, and the benefits of investing in the Philippines. His presentation was followed by PNB – New York General Manager Eric Bustamante who gave an overview of the products and services they offer to the public to promote business and investment.

Consul General Claro S. Cristobal moderated the event which was streamed live on Facebook and watched online by members of the Fil-Am community who were not able to personally attend the forum.



Atty. BetheenaDizon of Ernst & Young during the Q&A portion of the forum. (Photo by NYPCG)



Special Trade Representative Nicanor Bautista of PTIC (3<sup>rd</sup> from left) answers a question from one of the members of the Filipino-American community. (Photo by NYPCG)



Some of guests join Consul General Claro Cristobal (top row, 9<sup>th</sup>), Philippine Consulate Officers and Staff, distinguished panelists, and NaFFAA officers at a photo opportunity at the end of the FAHM event. (Photo by Lambert Parong)



## Economic Diplomacy

### Filipino Scientists and Researchers Hold *Saliksikan* 2019 at Harvard University

Filipino scientists and researchers mostly from Harvard and MIT held a flash talk of their current research projects and fields of expertise on 14 December 2019 at Harvard. The event was dubbed ***Saliksikan* 2019** and was attended by more than 30 participants.

Program hosts Glen Andrew de Vera, PhD; Erlyn Macarayan, PhD; and Joann Arce, PhD, said that the event was aimed at providing the participants an overview of the research projects of Filipinos in Massachusetts and to build camaraderie and strengthen ties among them.

At the event, thirteen young scientists, doctors, and researchers took turns in presenting their work and research. After the presentations, the participants took the opportunity to network. The flash talk was followed by the group's Christmas party celebration and the culmination of their "*Tabang Mindanao*" fundraising project to provide support to the families affected by the earthquakes in Mindanao.

Post was represented by Consul Arman R. Talbo who encouraged them to participate in the Balik Scientist Program. Some of them indicated their interest to participate in the Program next year. Post will continue to coordinate with them and extend assistance in facilitating their application. Consul Talbo likewise encouraged the scientists and researchers to volunteer as mentors in the P-Grad program of the Consulate where they can mentor fresh grad Fil-Ams who are in the same field or profession.



Consul Arman R. Talbo (standing, 11th from the left) join the young Filipino scientists and researchers based in Massachusetts who held a flash talk on their research and expertise at Harvard. (Photo by NYPCG)

### Forum on Estate Tax Amnesty in the Philippines Held in New York

The Philippine Consulate General in New York (PCGNY) and the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce, Inc. (PACC) hosted a forum on estate tax amnesty in the Philippines on 23 July 2019 at the Philippine Center Kalayaan Hall.

Republic Act (RA) No. 11213 or the Tax Amnesty Act was signed by President Rodrigo Duterte on 14 February 2019 and took effect on 15 June 2019. It aims to provide the taxpayers a one-time opportunity to settle estate tax obligations through an estate tax amnesty program that will give reasonable tax relief to estates with outstanding estate tax liabilities.

Atty. Betheena C. Dizon, Senior Director of SGV & Co. and Head of the Philippine Desk of Ernst & Young in New York, gave an overview of this new law and cited examples/illustrations of how it applies. More than fifty (50) members of the Filipino-American community in the US northeast, many of whom are lawyers and landowners in the Philippines, participated in the event.



Members of the Filipino-American community, Consul Arman R. Talbo and Atty. Betheena C. Dizon during a Forum on Estate Tax Amnesty in the Philippines. (Photo by NYPCG)

Atty. Dizon's presentation was followed by an open forum where the attendees were given the chance to ask questions regarding their properties in the Philippines.

Mr. Aureo Sales, President of PACC, said that this topic is of interest to many Fil-Ams who are entitled to benefit from lower estate taxes as a result of the amnesty.\

Consul Arman R. Talbo moderated the event which was streamed live on Facebook and watched online by members of the Fil-Am community who could not personally attend the forum.





## Economic Diplomacy

### Second Installment of the Forum on Estate Tax Amnesty Law Held at the Philippine Center



Atty. Sean Borja (standing) gives a presentation on the Estate Tax Amnesty immediately after the presentation of Atty. Janine Mesina (seated) (Photoby NYPCG)

The Philippine Consulate General in New York (PCGNY) and Gulapa and Baclay LLP hosted a Forum on the Estate Tax Amnesty of the Philippines (Republic Act 11213) on 20 September 2019 at the Philippine Center.

While a forum on the same topic was already held on 23 July 2019, in partnership with the Philippine American Chamber of Commerce, Inc., PCGNY decided to have an installment considering the paramount importance of this piece of legislation and the "limited-time offer" of the amnesty.

Following the instructive presentation was a Q & A where Attorneys Sean Borja and Janine Mesina addressed the legal queries raised by the audience. For the benefit of our *kababayans* who were unable to attend, the said Forum was also broadcasted through PCGNY's *Facebook Live*.

All those interested to avail of the amnesty, pursuant to Republic Act 11213, are reminded to file the estate tax amnesty return on or before 14 June 2021.



Attorneys Sean Borja (5<sup>th</sup> from right, front row), Jaine Mesina (4<sup>th</sup> from right, front row), and Oliver Baclay Jr. (2<sup>nd</sup> from right, front row) and Vice Consul Tanya Faye O. Ramiro (3<sup>rd</sup> from right, front row) pose for a group photo with some of the audience, after the conclusion of the Forum (Photo by NYPCG)

### Philippine Products on Display at NY NOW Trade Show in New York



(L-R) Consul General Claro S. Cristobal, Ms. Rome Angela Oamil and Mrs. Marie Oamil of Mele+Marie, STR Nicanor Bautista, and Consul Arman R. Talbo, at the Mele+Marie booth showcasing luxury bags from Cebu.

World-class Philippine products ranging from high-end wooden bowls, mother of pearl hand bags, t'nalak and abaca clutches, to jewelry boxes and woven baskets are on display and are being offered to wholesalers and retailers at the NY NOW trade show at the Javits Center in New York.

The economic team of the Philippine Consulate General in New York led by Consul General Claro S. Cristobal attended the exhibit on Monday and spoke with importers and distributors of Philippine-made products. Together with Senior Trade Representative Nicanor Bautista and Consul Arman R. Talbo, Post's economic officer, the team likewise encouraged other retailers and wholesalers to participate in the Manila FAME this coming October 17-19, 2019 and consider buying and distributing Philippine-made and Filipino-designed products in the US mainstream market.

Consul General Cristobal listened to the experiences of the Filipino exporters and designers who attended the exhibit to market their products. He offered the assistance of the Consulate in helping promote Philippine products and design in New York.

NY NOW (formerly New York International Gift Fair), is a premiere U.S. event for the best products and lines across the home, lifestyle and gift spectrum. Held twice annually in January and August, the show is organized into three collections - Home, Lifestyle and Handmade (including artisan) to help independent and specialty retail buyers, interior designers/firms, distributors, importers and wholesalers find everything they're looking for from the 2,500 exhibitors from all 50 states and 80 countries and 400 product categories. The exhibit ran from 10-14 August 2019.



Paulo Manaid, founder & creative designer of Matzumomo, presents to Consul General Cristobal, Consul Talbo, & STR Bautista, his fashion products and designs which carry the brand *Natibo Atbp.*



## Assistance to Nationals (ATN) / Sports Diplomacy

### Labor Trafficking Victim Grateful for Financial Assistance from the Philippine Government

Deputy Consul General Kerwin Orville C. Tate handed a check in the amount of US\$1,000.00, as financial assistance from the Philippine Government to Overseas Filipino Worker Ms. Lea Fe Abarcar Obillo on 29 August 2019 at the Philippine Consulate General in New York (PCGNY).

Ms. Obillo is a victim of labor trafficking. Her case is currently being handled by a Boston-based non-government organization. PCGNY is closely coordinating with Ms. Obillo and the organization to resolve her case.

Aside from Ms. Obillo, other victims of labor trafficking were also granted financial assistance. Ms. Obillo expressed her gratitude to the Philippine Government and PCGNY saying that the "amount would be of big help to me and my family in Iloilo."



Deputy Consul General Kerwin Orville C. Tate hands over the assistance of the Philippine Government to Overseas Filipino Worker, Ms. Lea Obillo, who was a victim of labor trafficking (Photo by NYPCG).

### POLO-WDC/NYPCG Dialogue with Nurses' Groups & Other Stakeholders



(Above Photo: Far from left) Deputy Consul General Kerwin Orville Tate meets with The Philippine Overseas Labor Office in Washington DC and the Philippine Consulate General in New York met with various nurses' associations, lawyers/advocates and other stakeholders at the Philippine Center on 23 November 2019.

The Philippine Overseas Labor Office in Washington DC and the Philippine Consulate General in New York met with various nurses' associations, lawyers/advocates and other stakeholders at the Philippine Center on 23 November 2019.

The meeting is part of the Philippine Government's continuing effort to uphold the rights and protect the welfare of Filipino workers in the US northeast. It came at the heels of the Consulate General's drive to combat human and labor trafficking, especially in the light of the Paguirigan, et. al vs. Sentosa decision of the US District Court of New York and the recent complaint filed by the New York Nurses Association against the Albany Medical in New York on behalf of Filipino nurses.

The meeting was attended by various nurses associations, lawyers/advocates and other stakeholders. The group discussed, among others, the present issues and concerns of the healthcare professionals and explored further areas of cooperation and collaboration from all sectors, specifically on the proposed Master Employment Contract for healthcare professionals.

### Philippine Consulate Conducts Sports Diplomacy



PHL Basketball Team participated in NABA 2019

Philippine Consulate staff, friends and family members dubbed as PHL Basketball team participated in the 32<sup>nd</sup> NABA Tournament under the Albany Filipino American Basketball League (AFABL) team banner.

This year's tournament was held in Nation Harbor, Maryland from 30 August - 1 September 2019. Thirty six sports organization and more than 5,000 Filipinos and Filipino-American took part in the competition or supported their respective teams during the event.

Most of the participants came from the US Northeast, specifically the states of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, New England region, Maryland, Washington DC, Baltimore, Chicago, Virginia and Florida. Teams from as far as Montreal, Winnipeg, and Ontario, Canada, and a team from Milan, Italy and some basketball organizations in the Philippines like Assumption College, Tigers Basketball and Community Basketball Association (CBA) also competed.

The NABA tournament is one of the most popular sports-oriented Fil-Am programs in the US and boasts of being the training ground for present and future Filipino-American players at the collegiate, amateur, and professional levels. The tournament is regularly scouted by sports agents in the Philippines to identify possible recruits for university, professional, and national teams.





### Philippine Consulate Hosts Carbo-loading for Pinoy Marathoners



Consul General Claro S. Cristobal and Mrs. Marilou Cristobal joins our Filipino runners during the Carbo-loading even at the Philippine Center. (photo by PCGNY)



Consul General Claro S. Cristobal giving his welcome remarks. (Photo by PCGNY)

The Philippine Consulate General in New York hosted a carbo-loading reception for Filipino runners who participated in the 49th New York City Marathon on 1 November 2019 at the Philippine Center. The 2019 New York Marathon, the largest and most popular in the world with more than 53,625 finishers this year, was held on 3 November.

More than 200 runners and guests from all over the world participated in the highly anticipated event which served as venue for networking and sharing of marathon experiences among the runners. Expert runners shared marathon tips with beginners while everyone was loading with carbohydrates and enjoying pansit, spaghetti, empanada, cassava cake, and of course, New York pizza and bottles of soda.

Consul General Claro S. Cristobal welcomed the runners to New York and wished them a safe and fun marathon. The Consulate distributed Philippine flag stickers with the hotline number of the Consulate and he encouraged them to place a sticker on their marathon bib to facilitate identification and communication in case of emergency.

Games and music provided by Fil-Am DJs added to the energy and excitement of the participants. Mr. TJ Isla, a trail runner based in the Philippines, thanked the Consulate General and its partners on behalf of the runners for organizing the event. Mr. Paul Casino who has completed several NYC Marathons, gave advice on how to finish the marathon. He said emphasized the importance of running safely while enjoying the experience. Fr. Patrick Longalong, Filipino priest based in Queens, led the prayer for the safety of the runners.

The event was held in partnership with the Philippine department of Tourism in New York, Fil-Am Triathlon Club, JCI Philippine- New York, and Balut Patrol, with the support of GMA Pinoy TV, Pinoy Runners Global, Pinoy Runners USA, Papa's Kitchen and International Women Artists.

Consul Arman R. Talbo and New York-based marathoner Bel Molina served as the event's emcees.

The Consulate and different Fil-Am groups set up cheering areas along the marathon route, encouraging Filipino runners and giving them water and food, if needed. Based on data from the New York Road Runners, the event organizer, there are 197 runners (101 men, 96 women) who identified themselves as runners from the Philippines. There are other Filipino runners who chose to be listed under their country of residence. Mr. Mark Deligero is the top finisher from the Philippines with a time of 2:50:28, followed by Juan Francisco Balagtas with a time of 3:11:22. The oldest Filipino who completed the event is Josephine Villanueva, 66 years old from Quezon City. She finished the marathon with an official time of 7:24:40.



All smiles for the camera during the carbo-loading event.



Consulate staff and members of the Filipino community cheer on the runners as they approach the final 3 mile stretch.



Filipino runner Florian Cabuyao waves to the cheering Filipino crowd. (Photo by PCGNY)





**Philippine Center News**

**UgnaySining's Contemporaneo Filipiniana  
Artworks Displayed at  
The Philippine Center New York**



Consul Arman Talbo (2<sup>nd</sup> from left) together with the artists (L-R) Henry Lim, Art Zamora, and Rene Canlas during the talkback at the Opening Reception of Contemporaneo Filipina. (Photo by Philippine Center New York)

Visual artworks of eight Filipino UgnaySining artists from the Philippines and the United States are on display at the Philippine Center in New York from 29 July 2019 until 9 August 2019.

Dubbed as “Contemporeano Filipiniana,” the exhibit features the varying styles showcasing the ingenuity and artistic talents of Art Zamora, Rene V. Canlas, Maryrose Gisbert, Henry Lim, Ted Luna, Oying Madrilejos, Bonnie Jimenez, and Erwin Canlas. Their collaborative works range from painting, wood art to photography.

During the opening cocktail reception on 29 July, the artists were able to convey the inspiration behind their personal art journeys at Ugnay Sining Manila, which was established to unite visual artists in the Philippines through arts regardless of the medium they used or genre they are accustomed to.

Consul Arman Talbo thanked the artists for choosing the Philippine Center New York to display their recent works. He added that the Philippine Center supports Filipino and Fil-Am artists by providing them the venue where they can promote their artwork to the Fil-Am community and mainstream American public.



**Philippine Landscapes and Waterfalls Exhibit  
Opens at the Philippine Center**



Mr. Raul Tangco, (center) cuts the ribbon, together with wife (right), and Vice Consul Tanya Faye O. Ramiro (left) (Photoby NYPCG)

“Bucket List Trek,” an exhibit of waterfalls and landscapes of the Philippines by photographer Raul Tangco, was unveiled on 15 July 2019 at the lobby of the Philippine Center in New York.

Family and friends of Mr. Tangco, including members of The Camera Club of the Philippines, graced the occasion.

Mr. Tangco’ first solo photo exhibit features enchanting landscapes and waterfalls that are often the subject of Philippine folklore, such as Hulugan Falls, Kawasan Falls, and Asik-Asik Falls. Mr. Tangco regaled the audience with the arduous journey he had to take to capture these photographs - from horse-back riding and paddling a boat to trekking precarious steps.

Vice Consul Tanya Faye O. Ramiro, (who concurrently serves as Assistant Manager of the Philippine Center), during her welcome remarks, congratulated and thanked Mr. Tangco for promoting Philippine tourism through the exhibit. With the Philippine Center receiving an average of 300 (three hundred) visitors a day, Vice Consul Ramiro said that the exhibit will inspire many visitors to take a trip to the Philippines, and see these natural wonders for themselves.



Guests admire the 24 (twenty-four) photographs of the “Bucket List Trek” exhibit. (Photo by NYPCG)





## Philippine Center News

### Mga Dahon ng Lahi: Art Exhibit opens at the Philippine Center in New York

The exhibit of the works of celebrated Filipino artist Fernando "Pando" Manipon dubbed *"Mga Dahon ng Lahi"* (Pages of Heritage) opened on 27 August 2019 at the Lobby Gallery of the Philippine Center. The one of a kind exhibition features 43 of his unique artworks made mostly from dried leaves and other natural materials.

In his welcome remarks during the opening reception, Consul General Claro S. Cristobal applauded how Pando's works reflect the beauty of nature and the strength of our faith as highlighted by the fact that some of the artworks are made of leaves that fell during the devastation of typhoon Haiyan.

Pando graduated from the University of the Philippines before he became a successful fashion designer who represented the Philippines in various trade shows across the fashion capitals of the world. After decades-long career in fashion, he reinvented himself and pursued leaf mosaic. His gift to Pope Francis "Basilica of St. Peter in Vatican," a dried leaf mosaic collage on an ostrich egg showing the dorsal view of St. Peter's Basilica, earned him his title "papal artist."

Pando's works have been exhibited at the Senate of the Philippines, the San Agustin Museum, and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts. His exhibit in New York was organized by the San Lorenzo Ruiz Global Ministry of New York and Philippines in coordination with the Philippine Center Management Board.



(R-L) Consul General Claro S. Cristobal, H. E. Bernardito Auza, the Holy See's Permanent Observer to the United Nations in New York, featured artist Fernando "Pando" Manipon, Fr. Ermo Diaz, Mr. Jose Ramos and Atty. Dean Suba, Regional Commander of Knights of Rizal – USA Eastern Region cut of the ribbon at the opening of the Mga Dahon ng Lahi art exhibit at the Philippine Center in New York on 27 August 2019.

### Ysabel's "Meeting Rosie" Solo Art Exhibit

The first solo exhibit featuring the artwork of Ysabel Simon, a young Fil-Am artist based in New York is on display at the Philippine Center in New York from 2 to 20 September 2019.

Consul General Claro S. Cristobal led the cutting of the ribbon at the opening reception of the exhibit on 5 September 2019.

Dubbed as "Meeting Rosie," it features oil painting portraits and lithographs prints of the 21-year old Ysabel. The series is a narrative of the artist's grandmother who is now living with dementia. The artworks are serious, amusing, and funny, though a few reflect the more negative range of mental states and emotions typically seen in advancing dementia. The collection was produced under the guidance of two prominent American artists, Bruce Lieberman and Howardena Pindell.

Ysabel's love for art does not come unexpected since she is the daughter of the Award-winning OPM composer Dodjie Simon. She studied in the Philippines, Australia, US and Europe. Her oil-painting entitled *"Tinik"* won a New York City wide art competition and was exhibited in the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. She is currently finishing her college at Stony Brook University with triple concentration of fine arts, business and Asian and Asian-American studies.



(Right photo) Consul General Claro S. Cristobal, featured artist Ysabel Simon, Filipino Soprano, Evelyn Mandac, and Award-winning OPM composer and father of the artist, Mr. Dodjie Simon, at the Opening Reception of "Meeting Rosie" art exhibit at the Philippine Center New York.

### SPAA's Annual Art Exhibition at the Philippine Center New York



Consul Arman R. Talbo (5<sup>th</sup> from left, 1<sup>st</sup> row), Mrs. Fe Cabactulan, Mrs. Marilou Cristobal, (6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> from left, 1<sup>st</sup> row) joined SPAA President Art Zamora (3<sup>rd</sup> from right, 1<sup>st</sup> row) and SPAA members and Board members in cutting the ribbon at the Opening Reception of the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual SPAA Art Exhibition. (Photo by Philippine Center New York)

The Society of Philippine-American Artists (SPAA) held the opening reception of the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual SPAA Art Exhibition on 15 October 2019 at the Lobby Gallery of the Philippine Center. Members and officers of SPAA, artists, art enthusiasts, and members of the Filipino-American community attended the opening ceremony.

Consul Arman R. Talbo, Manager of the Philippine Center, congratulated SPAA for the successful launch of the exhibit and thanked the members for their many contributions in the field of arts and for inspiring and encouraging both Filipino and Filipino-American artists to pursue their passion.

(Continue to page 24)



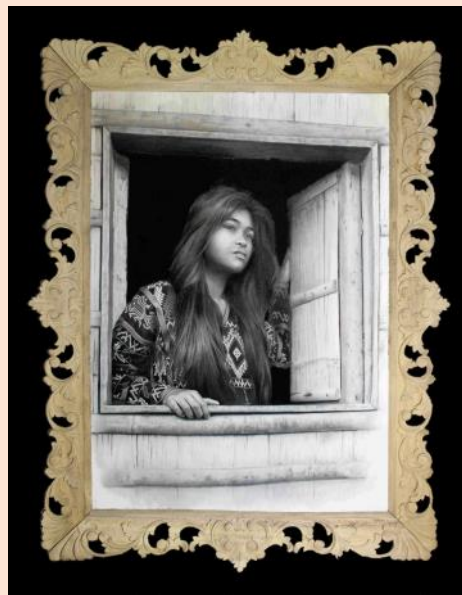
## Philippine Center News

### ***Liwanag* Art Exhibit Opens at the Philippine Center in New York**

*Liwanag*,” an art exhibit by renowned Filipino-Spanish artist Maria Mari Murga, was successfully launched in the evening of 24 September, at the Lobby Gallery of the Philippine Center. The opening night was attended by Secretary of Foreign Affairs Teodoro Locsin Jr., Philippine Ambassador to the US Jose Manuel Romualdez, DFA Undersecretaries Enrique Manalo and Brigido Dulay who are in New York for the UN General Assembly. Mr. Henry B. Howard of the US-Philippines Society, Mr. Luca Parolari of Pintô Museum, art enthusiasts and members of the Filipino-American community in the tristate area likewise attended the opening ceremony.

“*Liwanag*” detailed Mari Murga’s journey to the rural parts of the Philippines, portraying Filipino farmers, fishermen and indigenous peoples going about their daily lives. Murga said that “she used her skills to showcase the daily lives of the people and scenes and put them on spotlight for the rest of the world to discover.” She hopes that her art will serve as a reminder of how vibrant and beautiful the Philippines is. Her artworks used a beautiful selection of hand carved frames from Zamboanga City.

Secretary Locsin congratulated Murga on the success of the exhibit and encouraged her to continue promoting Philippine culture and art through her works.



Murga thanked Secretary Locsin and Ambassador Romualdez for their support and for the collaboration and assistance extended by the Philippine Consulate and the Philippine Center.  
(Continue to page 25)

(Continued from page 23... SPAA)

Mr. Art Zamora, President of the SPAA welcomed the guests, artists, sponsors, and volunteers to the well-attended event. He said that the exhibit is the fruit of the hard work and artistry of the artists and SPAA members.

Twenty-four artists are featured in the show: Christian Ray Blaza, Ysabel Cacho, Aurora Caparas-Corpuz, Cheryl Cranbourne, Ronald Cortez, Dulcie Dee, Tessie Dichupa, Carlos L. Esguerra, Angelito Espiritu, Apolinario Foloso, Joel Francisco, Leonore RS Lim, Greta Lood, Athena Magcase-Lopez, Angelo Maristela, Esmie Gayo McLaren, Chato Morando, Mirinisa H. Myers, Ameurфина H. Nazario, Rene Ner, Godfrey C. Pinder, Carol Tanjutco, Ching Valdes-Aran and Art Zamora. Their works are diverse in medium and artistic content.



Consul Arman R. Talbo during his welcome speech at the Opening Reception of the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual SPAA Art Exhibition.



SPAA President Art Zamora during his welcome remarks at the Opening Reception of the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual SPAA Art Exhibition. (Photo by Philippine Center New York)



(R-L) Artist Carol Tanjutco, Consul Arman R. Talbo, Artist Angelo Maristela, Former Manager of the Philippine Center New York Gavino Abaya and Lawyer Maria Lara Gregory.



Art enthusiasts attended the opening of the exhibit. (Photo by Philippine Center New York)





*(continued from page 24... Liwanag)*

Maria Mari Murga is a Filipino Spanish artist based in London whose origin hails from Zamboanga City. She's the granddaughter of a WWII Bataan Death March survivor. She hails from Zamboanga City with Basque roots. She was trained in Florence, Italy and specialized in Renaissance painting techniques. The East and the West are brought together under Murga's life vision.

Murga's works have been exhibited at the Annigoni Museum in Florence, City Council in Madrid, Petley's Gallery in Mayfair, Mall Galleries in London, Philippine Embassy in London, and School of Oriental and African Studies – University of London to name a few. Her artworks have been awarded by prestigious art institutions such as Royal Society of British Artists, De Laszlo Foundation, London Festival of Architecture, Derwent Art Prize and Pastel Society UK at the Mall Galleries in London.



(L-R) Exhibit curator Mr. Leif Miguel Martinez, Secretary of Foreign Affairs Teodoro Locsin Jr. and featured artist Maria Mari Murga during the opening reception of Liwanag. (Photo by Maria Murga)



DFA Undersecretary for Policy Enrique Manalo (L) with Maria Mari Murga(R) during



(L-R) Exhibit curator Mr. Leif Miguel Martinez, Maria Mari Murga, Philippine Ambassador to the US Jose Manuel Romualdez, & US-Philippines



(L-R) Exhibit curator Mr. Leif Miguel Martinez, Vice Consul Tanya O. Ramiro, Maria Mari Murga, and Potri Ranka Manis during the opening reception of Liwanag.



### East-West Fusion: A Celebration of Filipino Culture in Colors

New York based Fil-Am artist Marie Fe B. Conde-Acera's first solo art exhibit "East-West Fusion: A Celebration of Filipino Culture in Colors" will open on 28 October 2019 at the Lobby Gallery of the of the Philippine Center.

The exhibit will showcase twenty-five artworks featuring Sayaw Mindanao, Buwak, Sarimanok, Bayho and Colors of Diaspora. The evident use of various and distinct colors manifests the rich cultural heritage of Butuan City and Marawi City where the artist spent her growing up years.

Marie Fe B. Conde-Acera is a self-taught artist who started painting as a hobby. Her mother noticed her artistic skill at an early age when she showed interest in cartooning and designing greeting cards. But her artistic side had to take the back seat when she pursued her bachelor's degree and eventually worked as a social worker and educator. Her passion for arts was rekindled after she and her husband moved to New York City.

Marie Fe had a Preview Exhibit showcasing six of her twenty-five pieces during the Gala Night of the Tapok Agusanon Ngani Amerika (TANA) 2019 held in New York.





## Philippine Center News

### An Exhibit Celebrating Filipino Culture in Colors Opens at the Philippine Center



Consul General Claro S. Cristobal (second from left) and the artist, Ms. Marie Fe Conde-Acera (to the right of the Consul General) cut the ribbon, together Vice Consul Tanya Faye O. Ramiro, the artist's husband, and a couple of the artists' supporters (Photo by PCMB).

"East-West Fusion: A Celebration of Filipino Culture in Colors", an exhibit featuring mainly the vibrant and bold colors characteristic of Mindanao art, was unveiled on 28 October 2019 at the lobby of the Philippine Center in New York by the artist, Ms. Marie Fe Conde-Acera, together with Consul General Claro S. Cristobal.

Family, friends, and supporters of the artist, including those from her alma mater, Mindanao State University, graced the occasion.

Ms. Conde-Acera's first solo exhibit features twenty-five (25) paintings with the following five themes: Sayaw Mindanao, Buwak (Flower), Sarimanok, Bayho (Portrait) and Colors of Diaspora. The artist, in her message, spoke proudly about Mindanao's cultural and artistic legacy, which is evident in her paintings of the *Sarimanok*, a mythical bird that has figured in a number of legends of Mindanao, and the use of *okir* (an art motif distinctive for its use of geometric and flowing designs).

Vice Consul Tanya Faye O. Ramiro, in her welcome remarks, congratulated Ms. Conde-Acera for renewing her passion for painting, and for bringing to the fore the rich and distinctive culture of Mindanao through the exhibit.



Guests (above and below) are seen admiring the paintings of Ms. Marie Fe Conde-Acera at the Philippine Center (Photos by PCMB).

### Manuel Baldemor's Luzviminda, an Art Exhibit at the Philippine Center



Renowned Filipino artist Manuel Baldemor at work. (Photo by PCGNY)

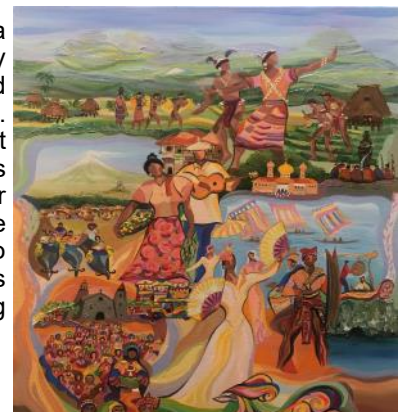
An art exhibit organized by the Philippine Center entitled "Luzviminda" featuring the works of world-renowned artist Manuel Baldemor will have its opening at the Lobby Gallery of the Philippine Center New York on 15 November 2019. Ambassador Jose Manuel G. Romualdez and Consul General Claro S. Cristobal will lead the cutting of the ribbon.

"Luzviminda" is a spectacular display of over twenty of Baldemor's acrylic and watercolor paintings. The exhibit showcases the people, their everyday activities and celebrations from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao in bright colors. Luzviminda is a portmanteau of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, the names of the three major Philippine island groups.

Manuel Baldemor is a Filipino painter, sculptor, printmaker, writer and book illustrator who hails from Paete, Laguna. He studied at the University of Santo Tomas where he further honed his skills and worked for Mabini Artist to support his financial needs as a student. Manny is best known for his paintings on various media that depict scenes in simplified geometric forms.

Baldemor is a recipient of many national and international awards. His works is known not only in the Philippines but also in other countries because UNICEF has chosen to feature his artworks design in their greeting cards.

The exhibit ran until 29 November 2019.



Luzviminda by Manuel Baldemor (Photo by PCGNY)





## Philippine Center News

### World-renowned Artist Manuel Baldemor's *Luzviminda* Launched at the Philippine Center

The solo exhibit of the world-renowned artist Manuel Baldemor is on display from 15 to 29 November 2019 at the Lobby Gallery of the Philippine Center New York.

Inspired by the rich heritage of the Philippines, *Luzviminda* illustrates the daily lives and celebrations from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao: from the life and rituals of the highland people, rice terraces and thanksgiving rituals of good harvest of Luzon, the vibrant Sinulog Festival honoring the Sto. Nino of Cebu of the Visayas region, to the legendary bird Sarimanok, famous dance called "Singkil," vintas, and mosques in Mindanao.

Ambassador Jose Manuel Romualdez led the ribbon cutting at the opening reception on 15 November 2019 where he congratulated Baldemor for a successful exhibit as well as the Philippine Center for celebrating its 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Ambassador was joined by Consul General Claro S. Cristobal, Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Kira Christianne Azucena, Consul and Manager Arman Talbo and Mr. Baldemor in cutting the ribbon.



(L-R) Consul Arman Talbo, Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Kira Christianne Azucena, Philippine Ambassador to the US Jose Manuel Romualdez, world-renowned artist Manuel Baldemor and Consul General Claro S. Cristobal cut the ribbon during the opening reception of *Luzviminda*. (Photo by PCGNY)

Manny thanked the Philippine Center Management Board headed by Ambassador Romualdez, and the Philippine Consulate General for organizing the exhibit. *Luzviminda* follows Baldemor's last exhibit at the Center in May 2016.

Manuel Baldemor hopes that through his works, our kababayans living and working abroad would remember the beauty of the Philippines.

## NYPCG Consular Outreaches & Consulate Saturdays

### Philippine Consulate General Conducts a Consular Outreach in Manchester, New Hampshire



The Philippine Consulate General in New York held a consular outreach in Manchester, New Hampshire last 20 July 2019, Saturday, in partnership with the Filipino-American Friendship Society of New Hampshire.

The consular outreach, led by Vice Consul Tanya Faye O. Ramiro, provided one hundred thirty-three (133) consular services.

### Philippine Consulate General Conducts A Consular Outreach In Lancaster, Pennsylvania



The Philippine Consulate General in New York held a consular outreach in Lancaster, Pennsylvania last 07 September 2019, in partnership with the Philippine American Association of Central Pennsylvania and the Kapitbayan Filipino-American Association, Incorporated.

The consular outreach, led by Vice Consul Tanya Faye O. Ramiro, provided one hundred seven (107) consular services.



**New York PCG Conducts Consular Outreach in Rhode Island and Connecticut**



The Consular Outreach Team with the local partners, the Filipino-American Association of Newport, Rhode Island.



The Consular Outreach Team with KIDS Philippines, Inc., the local partners at Groton, Connecticut

**Philippine Consulate General in New York Begins Registration for Overseas Voters**

The Philippine Consulate General in New York commenced overseas voter registration yesterday for the 2022 Philippine National elections.

A total of twenty (20) overseas voters registered yesterday at the Consulate General: 14 were first time registrants, 4 were transfers, 2 were reactivations. Of these registrants, five (5) were from those who newly reacquired their Philippine citizenship.

The Consulate opened overseas registration to the public yesterday and will continue to do so until end of registration in 2021. The Consulate will also include OV registration during its weekend consular outreach missions, to cater to the needs of *kababayans* who cannot go to the Consulate on weekdays.



**Till we meet again..**



**Olivia Osias-Magpile, Cultural Officer**

After successfully completing her 6-year tour of duty in the Big Apple, the Consulate bid farewell to the ever energetic Cultural Officer, Ms. Olive Osias-Magpile last August 2019.

During her time as Cultural Officer, she was able to introduce innovative projects to promote Philippine culture to Fil-Am community specially to the second generation Fil-Am. In all her projects, she personified the Filipino values of hospitality, courtesy, ingenuity, and creativity.

Olive graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service from the Lyceum of the Philippines and a candidate for a Master's Degree in Public Administration. She was previously assigned at the Philippine Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia and the Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations. She is now back in the home office assigned at the Office of the Secretary as Administrative Officer.



**Lito Cabangon**

The Consulate bid farewell to Mr. Lito in July 2019 after his hort stint here in New York. Although assigned as driver, Lito is always ready to assist in the Consular Section.

He was transferred to the Philippine Embassy in Brasilia as driver and protocol officer.

Before his assignment in New York, he was assigned at the Office of the Secretary and the Philippine Embassy in Rome, Italy.