

Duterte to confer Presidential Awards to 25 outstanding overseas Filipinos, organizations

Written by Commission on Filipinos Overseas
Wednesday, 28 November 2018 15:29



On Oct. 24, 2018, some members of Friends Indeed USA, Inc. (FIUSA) had a meeting with Consul General Claro Cristobal at the Philippine Consulate General in New York. In photo are (from left) Ethel Hayes, Cora Reyes, Elsa Bautista, Angie Cruz, Betty Buenviaje, Nena Smith (President), Dr. Linda Pelayo, Marieta Lamar, Charity Reyes, Helen Kwong and Cely Deauna. Standing, l.-r.: Raymond Smith, Mr. Cristobal, Shiran Ybanez, Gilbert De Laat and Joanne De Laat.

Friends Indeed USA,

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Inc. an awardee

MANILA — The Office of the President has approved the list of 25 distinguished and outstanding overseas Filipinos and foreign-based organizations submitted by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) as recipients of the 2018 Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas.

The awardees, who come from 12 countries and territories and had gone through a four-stage selection process involving multi-sectoral representation, will be honored by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte in ceremonial rites at Malacañang Palace on Dec. 5, 2018.

Institutionalized in 1991 through Executive Order No. 498, the Presidential Awards is a biennial search for individuals and organizations based abroad who have dedicated their work in the service of Filipinos either by selflessly supporting relief, rehabilitation and development programs in the home country, or by having excelled in their profession or field of expertise overseas.

This year's awardees were selected from a total of 96 nominations received by the CFO from 28 countries through 37 Philippine Embassies and Consulates across Asia, North and South America, Africa, Europe and Australia.

The awardees were thoroughly screened by four different committees from the Philippine Foreign Service Posts, an inter-agency Technical Committee, a multi-sectoral Executive Committee and, finally, by the Office of the President.

The Presidential Awards have four categories — Banaag, Pamana ng Pilipino, Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino (LINKAPIL), and Kaanib ng Bayan.

BANAAG AWARDEES

The Banaag Award is conferred on Filipino individuals or organizations for their contributions that have significantly benefited or advanced the cause of overseas Filipino communities.

The Banaag awardees are:

1. Corazon A. Francisco (Australia) — A medical doctor and community leader in Sydney who assists Filipino doctors to practice their profession in Australia by linking them with the Australian medical systems and procedures, and by providing free tutorials and review classes in preparation for medical licensure exams.

2. Agnes Katbeth O. Kreimer (Peru) — A Filipina based in Lima who serves as a Filipino community coordinator in the absence of a Philippine Post in Peru, helping Filipino prisoners and human trafficking victims receive the necessary advice and assistance. A theater actress by profession, she has likewise promoted the cultural exchange between Filipinos and Peruvians.

3. Dindo B. Malanyaon (Italy) — Founded the iPARAMEDICi association in Rome that provides first aid and emergency transport to sick and wounded overseas Filipinos, as well as educating the Filipino community in Rome about the fundamental laws of Italy and how to avail of its health, education and social services.

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4. Juliet Montano (Taiwan) — A medical doctor based in Taipei who provides accessible and affordable quality medical care service to overseas Filipino workers and overseas Filipino-Chinese in Taiwan. She has likewise raised awareness on the importance of migrants' health through various platforms.

5. Pilipino Workers Center of Southern California (United States) — A Southern California-based organization which serves as an integral part in the statewide and national movement to uplift the dignity of caregivers, fights for labor protection, and advocates for fair wages and suitable working conditions of Filipino caregivers and domestic workers in Southern California.

6. Maria Cristina F. Sulaik (Sudan) — A hotel manager based in Khartoum who assisted the Embassy of the Philippines in Cairo in its repatriation of overseas Filipino workers, assisting those in detention centers, and providing advice on consular and labor concerns while promoting Philippine culture and cuisine to the Sudanese community.

7. Wimler Foundation Hong Kong, Ltd. (Hong Kong) — A non-profit and charitable organization which promotes the development and empowerment of Filipino migrants in Hong Kong and other ethnic communities.

The organization supports development-oriented projects in partnership with the public and private sectors by mobilizing resources for the education of underprivileged children and economic empowerment of local communities in the Philippines.

PAMANA NG PILIPINO AWARDEES

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The Pamana ng Pilipino Award is conferred on Filipino overseas, who, in exemplifying the talent and industry of the Filipino, have brought the country honor and recognition through excellence and distinction in the pursuit of their work or profession.

The Pamana ng Pilipino awardees are:

- 1. Paul C. Balan (United States)** — An esteemed coinage and medal designer based in Chicago. He is the first Filipino and first Asian whose designs have been selected for commemorative coins and congressional medals of the United States.
- 2. Edward M. Brotonel (United States)** — A well-respected special agent in the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division who received various meritorious recognitions for uncovering major theft and felony crimes and fraud in the U.S. Army, the Pentagon and during the 9-11 Iraq reconstruction.
- 3. Nicolas M. Caraquel (United States)** — A sought-after immigration lawyer based in New York who broke out of poverty through his determination and hard work. He assists in facilitating the family reunification process among Filipinos in the United States.
- 4. Elizabeth L. Engle (United States)** — A pioneering woman engineer in the state of Alaska who served in various leadership roles and managed major pipeline projects. Apart from her exemplary professional career, she is also involved in various charitable, cultural and political organizations.
- 5. Maria Theresa A. Eviota (Switzerland)** — A housekeeper based in Berne, Switzerland who has served excellently in numerous foreign embassies and diplomatic residences and flourished as a community leader of the Samahang Pilipina Bern, an organization of Filipinos in Switzerland that advocates for migrant women's rights.
- 6. Pedro A. Jose (United States)** — A scientist, physician and academician all rolled into one,

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he is known for his breakthrough research and practice on hypertension which benefited not only in the United States and the Philippines but also other countries across the globe.

7. Teresita A. Marques (Portugal) — A professor of music and renowned musician, composer and director who founded award-winning choir groups in Lisbon and enhanced the cultural relationship between Portugal and the Philippines through music.

8. C. Joe Sayas, Jr. (United States) — A litigation attorney straight out of a John Grisham novel and based in Los Angeles who champions the rights of the underprivileged and the minorities, and served as the voice of Filipinos in U.S. courtrooms, resulting in the recovery of multi-million dollar settlements.

9. Jose Dennis C. Teodosio (Myanmar) — A highly respected and multi-awarded writer for TV, cinema, advertising and the stage who supported Myanmar's media transition and promoted the positive image of overseas Filipinos in his award-winning multimedia works.

10. Saturnino H. Tiamson, Jr. (Hong Kong) — A versatile musician who did not just go around playing music for a living but also brought pride, honor and service to the country with his exemplary achievements, leadership and civic engagements.

11. Jhett D. Tolentino (United States) — A Broadway producer based in New York who produces award-winning live theater and musical shows. He is the first Filipino who garnered both Tony and Grammy Awards.

LINGKOD SA KAPWA PILIPINO (LINKAPIL) AWARDEES

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The LINKAPIL Award is conferred on Filipino individuals or organizations for exceptional or significant contributions to the reconstruction, progress and development of the Philippines.

The LINKAPIL awardees are:

1. Association of Fil-Am Teachers of America, Inc. (United States) — A non-profit organization of Filipino educators in New York who foster unity and collaboration among teachers towards the advancement of the teaching profession and rendering education, charitable and civic services in the Philippines and the U.S.

2. Salvacion G. Cimanez (Netherlands) — An educator based in the Hague who established a foundation for deaf and blind children and helped in the setting up of schools and centers for children with special needs in the Philippines.

3. Filipino-American Law Enforcement Officers Association (United States) — A San Francisco-based organization comprised of active and retired Filipino-American law enforcement personnel who foster fraternal relationships and cultural awareness among its members while exchanging best practices with the Philippine National Police and other institutions and helping underprivileged communities in the Philippines.

4. Friends Indeed USA, Inc. (United States) — A non-profit organization in New York that provided substantial support to calamity-stricken communities, assisted Filipinos suffering from serious physical ailments, and developed potable water sources and other small-scale infrastructures in the Philippines.

5. Hilda L. Gigioli (United States) — A New York-based engineer, a defense contractor and community leader who has mobilized support for the victims of calamities and for the construction of classrooms and water systems of several communities in the Philippines.

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KAANIB NG BAYAN AWARDEES

The Kaanib ng Bayan is conferred to foreign individuals or organizations for their exceptional or significant contributions to Philippine reconstruction, progress and development, or have significantly benefited a sector or community in the Philippines, or advanced the cause of overseas Filipino communities.

The Kaanib ng Bayan awardees are:

1. Foreign Domestic Worker Association for Social Support and Training (Singapore) — An organization that advocates for the rights and welfare of migrant domestic workers, especially of Filipinos working in Singapore.

2. Stichting LOOP (Netherlands) — An organization run by Dutch volunteers which supports organic and fair trade with farmer cooperatives, communities and small enterprises in the Philippines while promoting Philippine products to the Netherlands and the international market.

For the past 27 years, the awards have been bestowed upon 460 Filipino individuals and organizations overseas from 51 countries and territories.

The Presidential Award is organized by the CFO (www.cfo.gov.ph), an agency under the Office of the President tasked to promote and uphold the interests, rights and welfare of overseas Filipinos, as well as to maintain strong and mutually beneficial ties between overseas Filipinos throughout the world and the motherland.