

N.Y. Delegates set for Democratic National Convention

Written by marilyn abalos
Thursday, 21 July 2016 11:38



LOIDA NICOLAS LEWIS

Special to the Filipino Reporter

Filipino-American Delegates from New York, Maria Castaneda, Senior Executive of the powerful union 1199 Service Employees International Union (SEIU); and Loida Nicolas Lewis, Fil-Am

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community leader, businesswoman and philanthropist, are set to attend the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia on July 25-28.

Ms. Lewis is Chair of Filipino Americans for Hillary East Coast.

Born and raised in Sorsogon City, Philippines, she is Chair and CEO of TLC Beatrice, LLC, a family investment firm.

She was Chair and CEO of TLC Beatrice International, a \$2 billion multinational food company with operations all across Europe.

She assumed leadership of the company after the death of her husband, African-American Wall Street financier Reginald F. Lewis.

Lewis earned a law degree from the University of the Philippines College of Law in 1960 and was admitted to the Philippine Bar in 1968.

She was the first Asian-American to pass the American Bar (1974) without having been educated in the United States.

She is national chair of US Pinoys for Good Governance, and is also one of the founders and the Chair Emeritus of the National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA) and Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF).

Furthermore, she is chair of the Reginald F. Lewis Foundation.

Lewis currently resides in New York City.

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MARIA CASTANEDA

Castaneda has served as Secretary Treasurer of 1199 SEIU since 2007.

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Among U.S. labor leaders, she is the highest-ranking woman of Asian descent.

She is also a Vice President of the 2.1 million-member SEIU.

Castaneda was born in the Philippines and immigrated to the U.S. in 1984.

She became a volunteer community organizer in New York City where she assisted Filipino nurses with immigration issues and promoted Filipino culture.

During that time, she also lobbied for the Nursing Relief Act, which gave permanent resident status to thousands of Filipino nurses employed in the U.S.

She began working for 1199 SEIU in 1985, starting as an organizer in the union's RN Division, and later serving as a vice president and executive vice president.