



**P3 Duterte and Marcos, According to Diokno**

# PHILIPPINE Fiesta

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**P7 The LABAN Group**

## California shootings raise specter of 1930 anti-Pinoy race riots

BY DANNY PETILLA

**MONTEREY PARK, California** — In the foothills of the snowcapped San Gabriel mountains lies this city of 65,000, home to one of the biggest Asian diasporas in the United States.

21, the eve of the Chinese New Year.

The alleged shooter, Vietnamese immigrant Huu Can Tran, had shot himself dead when police found his white van the next morning in the city of Torrance, about 45 kilometers southwest of

in Manila) to mark the 93rd anniversary of the murder of Filipino farm worker Fermin Tobera, who was 22 when he was shot dead by white rioters.

The participants presented for discussion historical parallels and



**'THE TIME OF THEIR LIVES'** A makeshift memorial for victims of a mass shooting on the eve of the Chinese New Year is put up at Star Ballroom Dance Studio in Monterey Park where they were killed. Valentino Marcos Alvero (photo second from right) is the lone Filipino-American fatality.

It is a community now enveloped in grief after losing 11 of its elderly residents to gun violence this week.

The Year of the Rabbit was supposed to usher in a period of luck. Instead, five men and six women, enjoying their twilight years, were felled by a deranged gunman who denied irrevocably their wish to welcome the Lunar New Year.

Meanwhile, relatives and friends are mourning the death of 68-year-old hotel worker Valentino Marcos Alvero, the lone Filipino fatality in the massacre at Star Ballroom Dance Studio here on Jan.

Monterey Park.

Just two days after the tragedy, another mass shooting was reported this time in the city of Half Moon Bay in San Mateo county, where a Chinese immigrant opened fire at two mushroom farms, killing seven, including five Chinese—four of them in their senior years.

Parallels, contradictions California is being traced by a group of Asian-American historians to a murderous race riot in 1930 that targeted Filipinos. They held an online forum on Thursday night (Friday morning

contradictions between that chapter in history and the two mass shootings last week.

About 536 km to the north of Monterey Park lies the city of Watsonville, the scene of the so-called anti-Filipino race riots of 1930 when an angry white mob attacked Filipinos for almost a whole week from Jan. 19 to Jan. 23.

The outcry over Tobera's murder on Jan. 22 that year pressured the United States to consider independence for its only colony in Asia, eventually granting it in 1946.

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## Anti-Asian hate awareness campaign launches in Sacramento

California leads the nation with the most AAPI hate incidents reported, with more than 4,300, according to the nonprofit Stop AAPI Hate.

**KEEP OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE.**

Photograph by Andri Tambunan

**STAND UP TO ANTI-ASIAN HATE.**

**35%** (154) OF INCIDENTS WERE REPORTED TO HAVE OCCURRED IN A PUBLIC SPACE (I.E. STREET, PARK, SIDEWALK, PARKING LOT).

If you have experienced or witnessed an incident of anti-Asian hate, bigotry, bias, or discrimination, report at [STOPHATE.CALCIVILRIGHTS.CA.GOV](https://stopaapihate.org) or call **833-8-NO-HATE (833-866-4283)**.

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**

BY KANDACE REDD

**SACRAMENTO, Calif.** — There's a new campaign to help stop AAPI hate. That, specifically, means taking a stand against racism and violence towards people in Asian American and Pacific Islander communities.

The Laban group, a Filipino ethnic media collaborative, presented the new anti-Asian hate awareness campaign to the public at the California Museum in Sacramento, Friday.

Four community organizations make up the group, including the

Asian American Liberation Network, Bulosan Center for Filipinx Studies, Everyday Impact Consulting and Philippine Fiesta. The group formed in 2022 to help amplify the Filipino American experience and response to racial violence through media in the Greater Sacramento region and surrounding areas.

Together, the Asian-led organizations are using the new awareness and education campaign to support Filipino communities, specifically in Sacramento and Stockton. It includes photos, data, help lines and strong messages tackling AAPI hate,

like 'Stand Up To Anti-Asian Hate' and 'Strongest Together.'

"This is a crucial and significant issue that's impacting our lives," said Vince Sales, CEO of Everday Impact Consulting. "We wanted to make sure that people have the resources that's available to them in case they're victimized by acts of anti-Asian hate and violence."

There's been a significant spike in harassment, verbal abuse and hate speech towards AAPI communities since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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# The day that marked end of Marcos dictatorship

BY RANDY DAVID

**T**hirty-nine years ago, the opposition leader Benigno “Ninoy” Aquino Jr. ended his three-year exile in the United States by coming home. Aware that a death sentence earlier issued against him by a military tribunal could still be enforced, he expected to be arrested upon his arrival in Manila. A dozen government security forces boarded his plane, picked him up from his seat in full view of the other passengers, and, using a side door, escorted him down to the tarmac. There he was killed.

Ninoy had written a speech he was supposed to deliver upon his arrival. In it, he wrote: “Six years ago, I was sentenced to die before a firing squad by a Military Tribunal whose jurisdiction I steadfastly refused to recognize. It is now time for the regime to decide. Order my IMMEDIATE EXECUTION OR SET ME FREE.” (Caps in the original text)

The charges against him hinged on his alleged membership in the communist movement and the supposed plot to overthrow the government. This he staunchly denied in his undelivered speech. “I was sentenced to die for allegedly being the leading communist leader. I am not a communist, never was and never will be.”

No one expected that the death sentence hanging over his head would be carried out so swiftly and so brazenly. Except Ninoy, who had an uncanny premonition of what might happen. It could happen very quickly, he told a group of reporters

before embarking on his final journey.

But, given the situation the country was in, it was for him a small price to pay. “The nation-wide rebellion is escalating and threatens to explode into a bloody revolution. There is a growing cadre of young Filipinos who have finally come to realize that freedom is never granted, it is taken. Must we relive the agonies and the blood-letting of the past that brought forth our Republic or can we sit down as brothers and sisters and discuss our differences with reason and goodwill?”

The last sentence reinforced the suspicion that he was coming home to sit down with Marcos to persuade him to talk to the opposition and jointly find a peaceful way out of the political impasse that was threatening to explode into a bloody civil war. Who is he, I remember some people asking, to speak for the opposition?

But Ninoy had a firm grasp of the political culture, which allowed him to see the political crisis not so much as a danger but as an opportunity. His long years in politics had taught him that even the bitterest of political enemies could defer to each other and talk like friends. He had known Marcos for a long time and this made him confident that, if he could just get a chance to talk to him one-on-one, he would be able to persuade him to loosen his dictatorial grip and accept a transition plan in which he would have to share power.

He sensed that Marcos was facing the classic problem of all dictators: how to end the emergency that legalized the imposition of martial law and gradually move toward



President Ferdinand Marcos and his wife Imelda stand on the balcony of the presidential palace in Manila after the elections on February 24, 1986 and celebrate his alleged election victory. Only a few hours later he resigns and flees into exile in the United States.

political normalization—without signaling weakness or vulnerability. In other words, how does he who rides a tiger dismount without ending up in the beast’s belly?

Marcos might have planned for an eventual transition as methodically as he had plotted the imposition of martial law in 1972. But, at 66, which was how old he was in 1983, he most likely didn’t expect to be as physically debilitated as he felt after undergoing a kidney transplant procedure. Ninoy saw that Marcos had run out of time and that his options were closing one by one.

It would be fascinating to ask what would have happened if Ninoy had not been assassinated, and got his wish to have a long discussion with the ailing dictator, his fraternity “brod.” The meeting would have been cordial, perhaps even warm. There might not have been an easy agreement on what to do next. But the political and economic crisis that put the country on the brink of civil war could have been averted.

But people do things without thinking of the larger consequences. Whoever planned the killing of Ninoy — and to this day, we are still not certain

who they were — did something either stupid or masterful. Stupid as in rashly acting out of panic, and masterful as in creating the precise conditions to bring a situation to a head. In any event, no one would have anticipated

rising at Edsa that led to the ignominious fall from power of the Marcoses. Ninoy’s tragic death exposed the fragility of the economy, the cracks in the seat of power, the fault lines in the ranks of the opposition, and dissensions within the military. The assassination of a prominent political figure focused global attention on the human rights violations and atrocities committed by the regime. Ironically, despite his protestations about

being tagged a communist, Ninoy’s death gave the communist movement an influential seat at the table of middle-class protest.

Instead of paving the smooth transition to a constitutional govern-

ment, the scheduled May 1984 Batasang Pambansa election became a fierce battleground between the Marcos regime and the boycott movement that took to the streets in growing numbers. The call to boycott the 1984 election created a fusion between the middle-class-led parliament of the streets and the underground movement’s peasant organizations that emerged from the countryside. It was the highest point in the life of the Maoist CPP-NPA-NDF. They, however, misread what was going on at Edsa in late February and made the fatal mistake of staying away.

Without Ninoy’s supreme sacrifice of his own life, the Edsa revolt might not have happened, and the Marcoses might not have left at all.

*Inquirer.net*



## Editor’s Note

This day in February, marks my 46th year since immigrating to the the U.S. from the Philippines. Young and naive at barely 18, I couldn’t help now but to reflect and be grateful of what those years have made me become. Besides my personal accomplishments, the very one thing that I’m most proud of, is the continues love and support of my family. We’ve withstood the test of time together with love for one another, which allowed us to face many challenges living our life away from home. As they say, “Love Conquers All”.

As shocked as we all have been with the recent mass shooting at a dance studio in Monterey Park, killing eleven people, where they are supposed to be having fun celebrating the Lunar New Year. It makes us wonder what was going through the lone gunman’s mind when he committed the crime. As we’ve heard, however accurate that is, he’s gone through tough times in a recent divorce. He probably felt isolated, losing the love of his life. It makes us realize that love can also ruin everything. It make us feel deserted, turn love into hate, and make our life not worth living anymore. May those who lost their lives Rest in Peace.

These last few months of Philippine Fiesta News publication is devoted to Stop Asian Hate Awareness, in association with the California State Library and the Laban Group, which includes the EIC, ALN, Bulosan Center, and the PF News. Let’s remain cognizant of this movement. Read on the following pages to see what we are doing to fight this ongoing problem, affecting us all in the Asian community.

On a good note, cheers to R’ Bonney Gabriel as the first Filipino-American to represent Texas and win the Miss Universe crown. With heartfelt gratitude to our dear friend Elton Lugay, for sharing his article, of his New Orleans coverage of the Miss Universe Beauty Pageant.

Love above all. Happy Valentine’s Month everyone!

With love always,  
Dinnah San Pedro

# Duterte and Marcos, according to Diokno

BY RALF RIVAS

'President Duterte is not as engaging as President Bongbong [Marcos] with the rest of the world,' says Finance Secretary Benjamin Diokno



Rodrigo Duterte and Pres. Bongbong Marcos

From managing the government's budget, collecting money, and calibrating monetary policy, Benjamin Diokno has done it all.

Diokno has served four presidents. Before becoming President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s finance chief, he was former president Rodrigo Duterte's budget secretary and central bank governor.

Diokno also initiated reforms during the presidency of Joseph Estrada, including the simplified system of fund release for the General Appropriations Act. During the presidency of the late Cory Aquino, Diokno provided technical assistance to reform programs, including the 1986 tax reform.

## Person, Human, Hand

Having shaped Philippine economic policies unlike any other official, Diokno probably has a lot of anecdotes about the leadership styles of his former bosses.

In a forum organized by the Makati Business Club on Friday, February 3, Diokno said that there's

a "big contrast between Duterte and Marcos.

"There's a big contrast between president Duterte and President Bongbong [Marcos]. President Duterte, he is more focused on peace and order and he assigned the economic affairs to his economic team. He doesn't want to travel abroad," Diokno told business leaders who attended the forum.

Diokno also highlighted that Marcos, so far, has traveled eight times to meet world leaders.

Unlike Marcos, Diokno said that Duterte did not care about Europe.

"[Duterte] didn't care about Europe, because Europe was putting pressure on us on human rights. He didn't even go to the US, not once," Diokno said.

While Duterte visited Russia in 2017 and met with President Vladimir Putin, Diokno said that his stay didn't last for 24 hours, as Duterte had to attend to concerns about the Marawi siege.

"President Duterte is not as engaging as President Bongbong [Marcos] with the rest of the

world," Diokno said.

He clarified that not one is more efficient or effective than the other. Diokno said that even though Duterte did not travel often, he still had the highest approval ratings compared to predecessors when he stepped down.

Where will Marcos travel to next? He is set to go to Japan for a working visit and is set to sign several bilateral deals. This being his ninth trip overseas, Marcos is on track to beat Duterte for trips undertaken during their first year in office. Duterte made 19 trips from September 5 to May 24, 2017.

In all these trips so far, Marcos has been accompanied by family members who are elected officials.

Are these trips for the Philippines' economic gain or meant to rehabilitate the Marcos name for the international community? Diokno said: "I've been with four presidents. I've seen the ups and downs. I keep on telling this: This is our moment." — Rappler.

# PH, US reaffirm Mutual Defense Treaty commitments

BY JOHN ERIC MENDOZA

MANILA, Philippines — US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin III on Thursday said the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) between the United States and the Philippines has been reaffirmed, highlighting the importance of the pact as China "continues to advance its illegitimate claims" in the West Philippine Sea.

Austin made the pronouncement during a press conference after meeting with Department of National Defense Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City.

"Today, Secretary Carlito Galvez and I also reaffirmed our Mutual Defense Treaty commitments," Austin said.

"This is especially important as the People's Republic of China continues to advance its illegitimate claims in the West Philippine Sea," he added.

Austin said the two countries discussed "concrete actions" to address "stabilizing activities" within the Philippine waters.

"And we note that the MDT applies to armed attacks on either of our armed forces, public vessels, or aircraft anywhere in the South China Sea or



Philippine Defense Secretary Carlito Galvez Jr. welcomes US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin III in Camp Aguinaldo on Thursday. (Photo from the Department of National Defense)

the West Philippine Sea. We discussed concrete actions to address these destabilizing activities in the water surrounding the Philippines including the West Philippine Sea and we remain committed to strengthening our mutual capacities to resist armed attacks..." Austin said.

Galvez, for his part, said Austin's visit "is very meaningful to us."

"It is symbolic to all of us that the US will remain a reliable partner to the Filipino people," Galvez said.

"These efforts, which we hope to jointly undertake are in line with the guidance of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., and that is for the Defense department to make sure that not an inch of our nation's territory will be lost and our people's safety and security will be ensured," he added.

In 2016, the United Na-

tions-backed Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague invalidated China's claim to almost the entire South China Sea but Beijing has not recognized the ruling.

The tribunal ruled that China's claim had no basis in international law and that it had violated the Philippines' sovereign right to fish and explore resources in the West Philippine Sea, the waters within the country's 370-km EEZ in the South China Sea.

The Philippines, under the administration of then President Benigno Aquino III in 2013, challenged before the Hague court China's claim to more than 80 percent of the South China Sea, which included waters in the exclusive economic zones of Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam.

# California shootings raise specter of 1930 anti-Pinoy race riots

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"The similarities are there, and they are not so hidden," historian Oscar Peñaranda of San Francisco State University said about the past and recent events.

Acclaimed author Karen Tei Yamashita said: "Historically, the dance halls were the only form of entertainment for single, young and lonely Filipino men."

Affirming that point, poet Shirley Ancheta read a poem by her late husband Jeff Tagami that was inspired by Tobera's death and that contained the line: "Yes, a man gets lonely, but he has to do something to stop from going crazy."

According to Ancheta, her husband, who died in 2012, was also referring to the "manongs," the first wave of Filipino migrant workers who toiled in California's agricultural fields by day and looked forward to a night of fun at the dance halls, often flirting with the white women.

Jealousy triggered the white mob's orgy of violence, beating up Filipinos they encountered in Watsonville to as far as San Francisco.

## Happier times

As for the Monterey Park shooting, investigators hint at a more personal jealousy in the case of the alleged

gunman: The 72-year-old Tran, in despair after his wife had left him, was driven into a murderous spree in the same dance hall where he enjoyed happier times.

"Then, a white mob was going after Filipinos. Now, it was a single Asian going after his own kind," Peñaranda observed.

"The Filipinos could not own guns then, only white people could. How would the riots [in 1930] look like if the Filipinos had access to guns?" he added.

Tran allegedly used a MAC-10 submachine gun to mow down his victims. Some of the 42 bullets that burst out of its lethal barrel

struck Alvero dead.

Edwin Estrada, a co-worker of Alvero for 35 years, said he was "going to miss his kindness and ability to listen, to teach and to help."

An elderly Filipina described the slain hotel worker as "a good friend of mine and a fantastic dancing partner."

On Wednesday night, she placed a single red rose below a huge photograph of Alvero in front of Star Ballroom Dance Studio, which has been closed for now because of the tragedy.

Leo Sendejas, a dance instructor in that ballroom, observed that "most

ballroom enthusiasts in America right now are not Americans, they are Asians and Europeans, mostly retirees."

"The dance hall then was for young folks involved in physical riots. The dance hall now is for the mature and the retirees," Peñaranda noted.

"It is here where we socialize and exercise. It is here where we feel young again," said Becky Opina Streatly, 72, a retired civil engineer from Simi Valley and another Star Studio regular.

## Tribute

On Tuesday night, a sea of candles shone outside the

dance hall as more than a thousand residents gathered to pay tribute to the fallen.

"They were having the time of their lives after working so hard, building a future for themselves and their families. It is just heartbreaking," said Amy Lee, city treasurer of Monterey Park.

Several friendships were forged and strengthened in this ballroom on 122 Garvey Avenue.

But the human desire to belong, the need to be part of a larger community was once again repelled by gunfire and terror.

/ Philippine Daily Inquirer

# Mayor Darrell Steinberg is piloting a reparations program for Black Sacramento residents

BY SABRINA SANCHEZ

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Last week, the California Reparations Task Force held meetings in San Diego. During the hearings, Sacramento's mayoral team discussed their reparations pilot project.

Sacramento is following suit as cities across the country are starting to push for reparations at a local level including San Francisco, Oakland and Los Angeles.

Ahead of the hearing, ABC10 spoke with Kelly Fong Rivas — a senior advisor for mayor Darrell Steinberg whose primary focus is racial equity, public health and safety — to learn more about the mayoral initiative.

"I think it's really important for any city to have a reparations program," said Rivas. "I think for Sacramento, it is also a little more important because we are the capital city of California, a state that is taking this on statewide and it's important for us to show our community that we are so proud of, that we always talk about being so diverse, that we do take seriously our history and the importance of reconciling those harms that have happened."

In June of 2021, Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg was invited to join the newly formed MORE Coalition [Mayors organized for Reparations and Equity]. That same month, the

Sacramento city council adopted a resolution supporting Assembly Bill 3121, a statewide task force to study and develop reparation proposals for African Americans.

The MORE Coalition is committed to racial and economic justice and is comprised of mayors from across the country who are working towards reparations for Black Americans at the city level. Rivas said the coalition has helped Steinberg's office inform their efforts to compensate Black residents affected by local systematic racism.

"Reparations can be a really complex topic, especially when you're talking about it at the federal level, or at the state level here in California, or like for us, what does that look like at a local city government or municipal level," said Rivas.

She said that for reparations to work at any level there must be a specific argument and point of harm.

This is demonstrated by places like, Evanston, Illinois, the first city in the country to fund reparations for Black residents. Their local reparations program provided grants to African American families who experienced housing discrimination at its peak. The funds support home ownership, improvement and mortgage assistance.

"In Sacramento, we are looking



Photo by Pablo Unzueta for CalMatters

at those specific points of harm that our government has either by policy, design, various decisions done that has specifically impacted [the Black] community," said Rivas.

She said that could look like addressing the longstanding impacts of redlining, the redevelopment in the West End that pushed out communities of color, or eminent domain.

An important aspect of Sacramento's reparation efforts is ensuring that the community is at the center of this process to help guide any recommendations, as well as offering trauma informed and culturally sensitive resources to help people who are re-exploring these

"very painful histories."

Currently, the reparation efforts are just a mayoral initiative so while the mayor is in support of the program, it has not gone to the Sacramento city council beyond a resolution supporting the work of the statewide commission. Rivas said they plan to gain more support so this becomes a city priority.

Their focus right now is making sure that they are providing a strong foundation for the community to come together and be part of this reparative process.

If you would like to get involved there are a few ways. The city is currently leading

the African American Experience Project, they are looking for oral histories from Black Sacramento residents.

"[We're] collecting stories of people who actually lived through various points of time where there have been things that have displaced residents, to be able to tell the stories about what happened, who may not be captured in the census data or the newspaper stories," said Rivas. "It's essential for us to really fill in those gaps to understand how we can work together to help repair harm." You can visit their website [HERE](https://www.aae.cityofsacramento.org) or contact them directly at [AAE@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:AAE@cityofsacramento.org).

## Social Justice Art Walk Addresses Anti-Asian Hate and Injustice

### Local groups transform hate into compassion through education and activism

Press Contact:  
**Jason Jong**  
jasonmjong@gmail.com, (510) 282-5664

(Sacramento, CA) - Inspired by the Movement for Black Lives and agitated by the surge of hate crimes experienced by Asians across the country in 2020, Sacramento and conceptual artist Angie Eng developed Right On! Social Justice Art Walk, a civil rights art project highlighting landmark Supreme court cases which evidence systemic and institutional discrimination based on class, race, ethnicity, gender, and ability.

Fueled by a commission from Stop Asian Hate, an initiative of the Center of Humanities at the University of Colorado, Boulder, Eng previously mounted a silent art procession in Boulder, Colorado in October 2022.

On March 25, 2023, a growing ensemble of Sacramento organizers, participants and supporters will recreate and expand on this effort in the artist's hometown.

Community members are invited to share in this powerful action, combining civic engagement with purposeful cultural

representation, and having an ultimate goal of transforming hate into compassion through education, awareness, and activism.

For the Sacramento project, Eng has partnered with Jason Jong, Sacramento community advocate and recent recipient of the Sacramento Bee AAPI Change Makers award, to punctuate the art walk with a cadre of musicians who will add traditional Asian percussion and wind instruments to the social justice art performance piece. Musicians will be interspersed with 125 art walk participants — community members and

representatives from over forty local AAPI (Asian American Pacific Islander) organizations.

The procession will assemble at 12:00 p.m. in front of the Robert T. Matsui United States Courthouse at the corner of 5th Street and I Street. With a slow and intentional pace, the group will weave through Downtown streets and head towards Capital Mall. The cast will pose in silence at each block, forming a living billboard with their bodies, then returning to the Courthouse, where walkers, musicians, and observers will congregate for a culminating moment of solidarity and unity

through sound.

WHO: Right On! Sacramento Organizing Committee

WHAT: Right On! Social Justice Art Walk

WHERE: Robert T. Matsui United States Courthouse 501 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

WHEN: March 25th, 2023 12:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

For more information, visit the project web page: <https://angi-eng.com/right-on-political-art-action-to-stop-asian-hate/> Event Contact: [info@angi-eng.com](mailto:info@angi-eng.com)

# STRONGEST



# TOGETHER

**KEEP OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE.** If you have experienced or witnessed an incident of anti-Asian hate, bigotry, bias, or discrimination, report at [STOPHATE.CALCIVILRIGHTS.CA.GOV](https://stophate.calcivilrights.ca.gov) or call **833-8-NO-HATE (833-866-4283)**. **YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**



The following ad campaign is brought to you by the Laban Group: Filipino Ethnic Media Collaborative. This group aims to promote awareness in our beloved Filipino American community and the broader public about anti-Asian hate incidents and crimes; reduce stigma surrounding the reporting of hate incidents and hate crimes; enhance understanding of resources for victims and survivors; and, to promote community healing and cross-racial collaboration. This collaborative is funded by the "Stop The Hate" campaign from the California State Library in partnership with the California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs. Learn more at [linktr.ee/labangroup](https://linktr.ee/labangroup).

# Anti-Asian hate awareness campaign launches in Sacramento

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According to the latest data from the non-profit Stop AAPI Hate, more than 11,000 hate incidents against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have been reported in the U.S. between March 2020 and March 2022. California accounted for the most incidents, with more than 4,300.

As a Filipina, Megan Sapigao is taking a stand against anti-Asian hate, too. She co-founded the Asian American Liberation Network in 2020 “to address existing inequities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, address root causes to mounting racism and build a sustainable community-centered movement.”

Sapigao, who lives in Elk Grove, worries about loved ones being targeted because of their race and ethnicity. She says change does not happen without the community and without speaking out against racism and hate.

**“I have witnessed it in my own family,” said Sapigao. “I’ve told elders in my community and family to be careful when they go out to places. We’ve also taken different routes and avoided certain areas.”**

California Attorney General Rob Bonta is the first Filipino American to serve in the position. He acted as one of the guest speakers at the event. He says the state is tackling the growing anti-Asian hate problem. That includes launching a Racial Justice Bureau within the California Department of Justice in 2021.

Specifically, the Bureau will support DOJ’s broader mandate to advance the civil rights of all Californians and, among other things, assist with new and ongoing efforts on:

Hate crimes and organizations, taking on the insidious effects of white supremacy and hate



Asian Pacific Islander organizations in Sacramento in a rally at the former Sears parking lot at Florin and 65th Street

organizations on our society and stepping up outreach with community organizations and law enforcement on hate crime prevention, information sharing, and reporting;

Implicit and explicit bias in policing, launching and supporting investigations as appropriate and recognizing the urgent need to strengthen trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve;

Law enforcement best practices, issuing guidance to local law enforcement, prosecutors, and other public entities regarding shared challenges in providing for public safety;

Campus climate issues, including conducting and supporting investigations into overly punitive, discriminatory policies where they arise and working to find innovative ways to strengthen diverse, equitable, and inclusive school environments; and

Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans, assisting with the implementation of the new task force as authorized under Assembly Bill 3121.

The Department is also standing against hate by working directly with district attorneys in California to help identify and investigate hate crimes, along with encouraging district attorney offices to have hate crime units, among other actions.

Bonta goes on to explain how the DOJ also has a hate crime and hate incident statewide coordinator who works with government entities and other community based organizations, internally, to address hate. The Attorney General’s office is also working with mayors in big cities to help bring about change and solutions statewide.

“People are getting hurt and it’s been happening for too long,” Attorney General said Bonta.

“As we continue to face this challenge in the rise of hate against all communities, I want

the people of California to know that their Attorney General stands with them. I have you back. I support you. I see you. I value you, and I’m doing everything in my power to push back against the forces of hate.”

If you believe you’re the victim of a hate crime or witnessed a hate crime, report it by calling your local police department. You can also send a tip to the FBI. There are also other ways to report hate incidents, like reaching out to trusted community-based organizations or non-profits like Stop AAPI Hate.-ABC10

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United Way California Capital Region and Asian Resources, Inc. are happy to tell you about the Free Tax Prep program and CalEITC thanks to support from SMUD and Citi.

# The LABAN Group Hosted Their Anti-Asian Hate Media Event

BY ANGELA ALEJANDRO

As of 2020, the Filipino American community is the largest Asian population in the Sacramento region and second largest in California. While our growth is clear, the impacts of anti-Asian hate are under-discussed issues in the Filipino community. Power collaborative, the Laban Group, aims to highlight with the launch of their new awareness and education campaign.

The Laban Group hosted their anti-Asian hate media event on January 20, 2023, the 93rd anniversary of the anti-Filipino fueled Watsonville riots. The event took place at the California Museum, where the popular and timely Filipino-American-centered exhibit, California Is in the Heart is housed.

The day started with a press conference, as poster boards of the four ad campaigns lined the stage. Megan Sapigao, co-founder and co-Executive Director of the Asian American Liberation Network, welcomed the room of journalists and community members and introduced the speakers.

California Attorney General Rob Bonta took the podium to speak about the CA Statewide Hate Crimes report and the current statewide information on anti-Asian hate crimes, policy, and interventions. Sacramento Mayor Pro Tem, Mai Vang, followed to detail city policy, interventions, and investments to address anti-Asian violence.

Dr. Robyn Magalit Rodriguez, Founding Director of the Buloan Center then gave a historical overview of anti-Asian hate, as well as regional data points on the Filipino American community, access, and racial violence.

Vince A. Sales, Everyday Impact Consulting Chief Executive Officer, officially launched the public awareness and education campaign by highlighting data collected through community conversations that



L to R - Megan Sapigao, Dr. Robyn Magalit Rodriguez, CA Atty. General Rob Bonta, Mai Vang, Lilia Rivera and Everyday Impact Consulting CEO Vince Sales.



L to R - Megan Sapigao, Cynthia Bonta, Vince Sales and Dr. Robyn Magalit Rodriguez.

served as a framework for the campaign. The ads promote community empowerment and points to the CA vs. Hate Resource Line and Network as a resource for those who experienced hate incidents. The campaign was also featured in Philippine Fiesta News. Furthermore, Lilia Rivera, a prominent figure in the Sacramento Filipino community, who was also featured in the



campaign spoke of the importance of community building. The last speaker of the event, Dr. Angelica Cortez from the Filipinx Igniting Engagement for Reimagining Collective Empowerment (FIERCE) Coalition, provided closing remarks and the call to action on policy engagement and mobilization and invited folks to join the upcoming FIERCE Policy Symposium on March 4, 2023.

A press Q&A followed. Recordings of the press conference can be found on the Buloan Center's Instagram page, as well as AALN's Facebook. To view the press packet as well as the media advisory and toolkit, visit [tinyurl.com/labantoolkit](http://tinyurl.com/labantoolkit).

**“Sacramento Filipino Community Center: More than a Building.”**

At the conclusion of the press conference, attendees were invited to view the California Is in the Heart exhibition in the museum. The auditorium was then set up for AALN's panel discussion, entitled, “Sacramento Filipino Community Center: More than a Building.” Moderated by Megan Sapigao, this discussion centered on the history of Filipino Americans in Sacramento and their journey to build the first Filipino Community Center.

The panelists included Cynthia Bonta, Vince A. Sales, and Dr. Robyn Magalit Rodriguez, who shared their stories of their activism and spoke on how a community center is a catalyst in the larger fight for social justice and liberation. Recordings of the talk will be uploaded to AALN's website and social media accounts at a later date.

A reception of Filipino appetizers, catered by Rosalie's Best Bibingka awaited all guests. The Laban Group sends their appreciation to the California Museum, Jason Jong, and the volunteers who helped out at the event.

L to R - Vince Sales, Dr. Robyn Rodriguez, Cynthia Bonta, Megan Sapigao and CA Attorney General Rob Bonta.

Photograph by Andri Tambunan

# STRONGEST



# TOGETHER

**KEEP OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE.** If you have experienced or witnessed an incident of anti-Asian hate, bigotry, bias, or discrimination, report at [STOPHATE.CALCIVILRIGHTS.CA.GOV](https://stophate.calcivilrights.ca.gov) or call **833-8-NO-HATE (833-866-4283)**. **YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**



The following public awareness campaign is brought to you by the Laban Group: Filipino Ethnic Media Collaborative. Led by Everyday Impact Consulting, Laban Group aims to promote awareness in our beloved Filipino American community and the broader public about anti-Asian hate incidents and crimes; reduce stigma surrounding the reporting of incidents and crimes; enhance understanding of resources; and foster community healing and cross-racial collaboration. This collaborative is funded by the "Stop The Hate" initiative from the California State Library in partnership with the California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs. Learn more at [linktr.ee/labangroup](https://linktr.ee/labangroup).





BY BENJAMIN ABAYA

# How Black History Intertwined with Filipino History

The inception of Black History Month is not well known for most Americans. In the month of February, most schools across America will celebrate and understand the importance of prolific African Americans, from Harriet Tubman to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and their contribution when it comes to the progress of American's ideologies and beliefs.

However, when it comes to Black History Month, very few people know the name of Carter G. Woodson, who was born on December 19, 1875, in New Canton, Virginia and a son of former slaves. At an early age, he showed signs of being studious, compassionate and empathetic, especially, those who needed help. As young man he also helped in the farm of the family to become productive and later became a miner at the coal mines in West Virginia.

Eventually, Woodson would later attend a secondary school for African Americans, Douglas High School, to earn his high school diploma. By the age of 25, in 1900, he would become a teacher and school administrator after attending Berea College in Kentucky, where he earned a bachelor's degree in Literature. In 1908, he attended the University of Chicago, where he was awarded a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts. By 1912, he would earn his PhD in history at Harvard University, only the second African American to earn such high degree of educational attainment after W.E.B Du Bois. Woodson also became dean at the Howard University



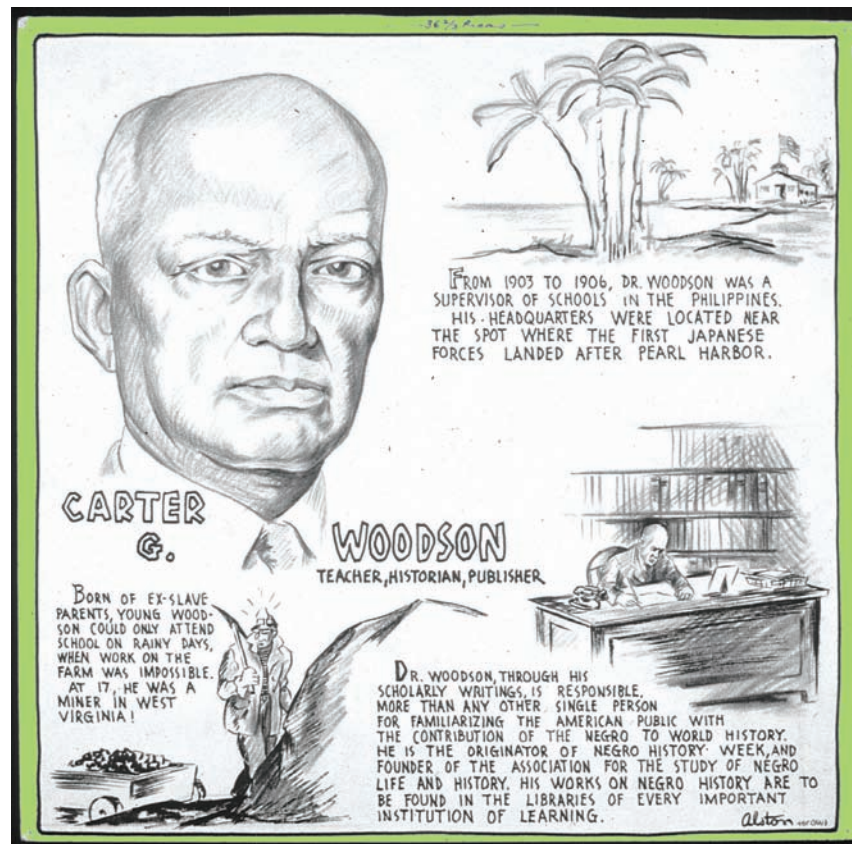
CARTER G. WOODSON

and State University of West Virginia.

With such high degree of educational background and personal resume, Woodson would live a successful life when it comes to the advancement and the acknowledgment of African Americans in United States during his time. As a scholar, he dedicated his time to celebrate historic Black figures, which would lead to the establishment of Black History Month in 1976. But did you know that Carter G. Woodson also helped established what we know now as the Philippine educational system?

Later, Woodson became known as the Father of Black History Month, and before he earned his PhD at Harvard University, Woodson and hundreds of U.S teachers traveled to the Philippines between 1903 and 1907.

The country was part of United States territory in 1898 af-



ter the Spanish-American War, Spain ceded its longstanding colony of the Philippines to the United States in the Treaty of Paris. Shortly after, the U.S government wanted to establish an education system that reflected America's values and beliefs, as well as its history, this includes American patriotic songs, heroes, and the teaching of the English language. The Filipino's landscape and lives were excluded from their education and was replaced, designed, and written by mostly white educators and scholars.

Although the curriculum was dictated by the U.S. government, Woodson would instead challenge this, allowing the people of the Philippines to be taught with their own history, their own value and language. During this profound experience, some suggest the idea of Black History Month which was conceived by Woodson. He would later become the supervisor in the Philippine public schools. This allowed him to be more immerse into the traditions and culture of the

the Philippines into believing they were not capable for self-government and the Americans, specifically white Americans, were there to civilize them but Woodson's teachings and belief allowed the people of the Philippines to believe otherwise.

In 1982, Filipino historian, Renato Constantino, wrote *The Miseducation of the Filipino*, which was directly inspired by Woodson's work. Constantino would expand Woodson's beliefs by stating in the book, "The most effective means of subjugating a people is to capture their minds. Military victory

does not necessarily signify conquest. If feelings of resistance remain in the hearts of the vanquished, no conqueror is secure.... Education, therefore, serves as a weapon in wars of colonial conquest." Is it not a question whether Black history and Filipino history are intertwined, but how and why two differently groups of people, separated by thousands of miles of water, were being oppressed and exploited by colonization and imperialism.

The curriculum he helped create in the Philippines, has helped to bring out black American and Filipino values into the Philippine education system which was dictated by the white American educators. In 1933, Woodson wrote *The Mis-Education of the Negro*. The entire thesis of the book pointed that African Americans of his day were being culturally indoctrinated, rather than taught, in American school. In the book, he states "When you control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his actions. You do not have to tell him not to stand here or go yonder. He will find his 'proper place' and will stay in it. You do not need to send him to the back door. He will go without being told. In fact, if there is no back door, he will cut one for his special benefit. His education makes it necessary."

During United States occupation in the Philippines, some may argue that it cultivated or conditioned the people of

Woodson connected black Americans and Filipinos their shared experiences and allowed them to reclaim their cultures by exhibiting their love and passion for their people. Black History Month is a proclamation of not only Woodson's work and Martin Luther King legacy but to all African Americans, the African and Black diaspora, and their allies as well as marginalized groups who have fought for freedom from oppressive regimes and those who refused to accept that we are all Americans.



BY BENJAMIN ABAYA

# Red Roses, Love Letters and Sweet Chocolates on Valentine's Day

The passing of time has given us some moments to revisit nostalgically the happy days of our young emotionally restless lives. This is the personal narration of two persons whose love story has been told on several occasions especially when Valentine's Day is being celebrated by mostly young and those still young at hearts.

The love affair has been chronicled repeatedly during family social gatherings with relatives and closest of friends. Both lovers alternately supplied meticulously proper words to describe the beginning and the inner most feelings permanently embedded in them which become stronger over the years that they are together.

It was just two years over his teenage years when he saw a smiling beautiful lady in ponytail conspicuously tied at her back with red ribbon. She was simply wearing a one-piece purple colored dress to complement her impeccable fair complexion.

The smiling face lady was setting on the campus bench with friends, but she was unmindful of her surrounding as she was staring at blooming red roses plants with its thorny stems just a few feet from her. Indeed, a picture-perfect sight which surely without any iota of doubt could easily embedded into the mind for its artistic posed angle.

He was lying on his bed with hands at the back of his head, he could have closed his eyes to induce sleeping, but he could not because the lovely image of the lady he had a glimpse at the University campus kept on coming back into his mind. Her piercing tantalizing eyes simply melt my cold heart. He

was thinking, if he could see her again, perhaps, in such event he will have to muster every inch of his nerve to have that courage to introduce himself or maybe some other else to do it for him.

As expected in the morning just the following day on the same spot near the Arts and Sciences building of the campus ground where he saw her, the lady of his dream was again there, this time she was wearing a light green sleeveless dress specked of fauna and flora designs with golden like string around her waistline. Her dress simply complements her well proportion physique to indicate that she is aware and care of her feminine figure, health and wellbeing. He was practically immobilized and mesmerized as he was slightly bewildered whether to approach her or not.

He was undecided of any plan in mind when a friend classmate topped his shoulder and said, "I know what you are looking as he pointed the lady setting on the bench". He was nervous and literally dragged by his friend to reach the lady of his dream and just immediately thereafter, his friend introduced her. At this juncture, her limpid eyes trustfully looked on him as she extended her right hand which he immediately took hold and just like his hand hers was also cold, indicating that she too was excited to meet him.

That was the beginning of a seemingly endless courtship between two persons who were eager to know more about themselves. Eventually, on Valentine's Day celebration at the social hall of the University where it was held, the couple met as partners. As expected,

each couple has their own personal choice of gift to their partner but majority of them have preferences on Love Letters, Flowers and assorted Belgian sweet Chocolates. Of course, most of the music played were the usual classic waltzed when both partners danced their way cheek to cheek throughout the night. The angelic Cupid with his bow and arrow as always hit again the exact spot of the couple in love to last for the rest of their lives. The blessed and seemingly undying relationship of the young couple becomes a long-time commitment that ended in marriage as said, "they will be together in health and sickness, till death do us part". For love of family, let us celebrate Valentine's Day and make that feeling every day of your life.

Conversely, this love story in nutshell could be your parents or friend's story. I could take it as the story of my parents even with just mild variation. Repeatedly, everyone has his or her own love story, perhaps, this is one for you but for the meantime let us focus to another



ILLUSTRATION BY DAVE SAN PEDRO

kind of personal feeling, the urge of hurting another without any justifiable ground. As I write this article, there were already three incidents in California of mass killing by senior citizens of the same race.

The lamentable incidents were the complete reversal of what we were writing about, the feeling of being in love. Accordingly, this kind of mass killings could be attributed to financial, marital and health problems. To sum up the root of this malady is the failure of the

perpetrator to attain a degree of success in life. Let it be said that not all of us have reached the pinnacle of success that we like to achieve, however, if we have attained a bit of success, we should not push further to affect our mental thinking that we are still a failure. In the end, we should think the beauty of being in love and be loved just like the days when you were young when your only desire was to be with the woman you loved.

Love transcends the desire to live in one place where you can find peace and enjoyment with your family and loved ones. When the Filipino immigrants were able to establish and fully integrated themselves in the United States, their presence became ubiquitous in both economic and social American endeavors.

A bit of immigration history of Filipinos to the United States started in the early part of the 1900 when the Philippines became a colony of the United States. Our benevolent American colonizers gave us our democratic way of life, educa-

tional system and some provisions of our Civil and Labor laws that have referenced to American legal jurisprudence. Eventually, the Filipino migrant workers were brought to Hawaii to work on sugarcane plantations, subsequently, to California and other western States to farm idle lands which became productive in the hands of hardworking Filipino migrant workers.

Historically, today Filipino Americans and immigrants are fully integrated into the American way of life, their skill and professional expertise are well placed into the American labor force contributing to the strong economy of the United States. Likewise, we have also Filipino Americans or immigrants in the United States Military Services ready to defend the country of any outside or inside intruders into our democratic peaceful way of living. After their meritorious military services most of our heroes in time of peace and war, some of them joined their retired comrades in their veteran's organization to enjoy life with their families.

The Filipino American community of Sacramento and outlying areas are in the forefront of bringing out our great tradition and culture as shown in the beauty, elegance and grace of our dances, songs and costumes. They are usually shown during town fiestas, religious festivities and historical commemorations. Just lately, there was a renewed call for our own building to become the repository of our culture, artifacts and reading materials to let everyone knows regardless of racial and national identities about the Philippines and whatever contributions we made in the country where we are now residing. It will also become the place where we will hold our social and other important activities. Likewise, we need the helping hands of everyone, the movers and shakers especially our community leaders to put into action and reality this commendable undertaking.

# Fil-Am R'Bonney Gabriel's path to Miss Universe title wasn't easy

BY ELTON LUGAY

NEW ORLEANS— Sustainable fashion designer R'Bonney Gabriel, 28, made history as the first ever Filipino American to win the 71st Miss Universe title last weekend in Louisiana, but her journey to the global competition did not come easy.

"I won Miss USA in October so I had three months to prepare," she told INQUIRER.net at the press con following the 3-hour-long pageant in NOLA. "It was very challenging, there were ups and downs and times where I doubted myself, but I always felt like I had a purpose and I would always go back to my purpose. Why am I doing this? And I realize that your purpose is something people can't take away from you. No one can take away a strong foundation or a core that you have. So I'd always go back to that."

The Texas-born Filipina beauty made headlines last October following allegations of a rigged victory after winning the Miss USA contest. Gabriel refuted the allegations, saying she "would never want to enter a competition that was rigged." She was permitted to compete in the Miss Universe race pending investigations against Miss USA and its director Crystle Stewart.

"It's an amazing feeling to be standing here now as Miss Universe. I hope it just shows the world that even if you have negative comments about you



Pandemonium breaks out inside the arena as Miss Philippines Celeste Cortesi makes a grand entrance. INQUIRER/Elton Lugay



R'Bonney Gabriel



Gabriel's parents are Remigio Bonzon "R. Bon" Gabriel, who hails from Manila, and mother, Dana Walker of Beaumont, Texas. DION TRINIDAD

or people don't believe in you, that you just keep going and you show everyone that no matter what, if you stand strong and who you are, you can be victorious," Gabriel said.

"Her clever and sincere answer during the Q&A catapulted her to the crown," said Alex Santos, a businessman from New York. "What a fitting tribute to the first Fil-Am Miss Universe!"

Gabriel's parents are Remigio

Bonzon "R. Bon" Gabriel, who hails from Manila, and mother, Dana Walker of Beaumont, Texas. Remigio immigrated to Washington state when he was 25 years old and earned a doctorate in psychology at the University of Southern California.

Gabriel told The Houston Chronicle that her father came to the US on "a college scholarship with about \$20 in his pocket. He wanted to pave a new life for himself. He met my mom in Texas, who is a country woman from Beaumont."

Meanwhile, some Filipino spectators last Saturday walked out from the pageant after learning that their bet, Miss Philippines Celeste Cortesi, failed to reach the Top 16 semifinals. This is the first time in 12 years that the country did not advance in the semifinal round of the Miss U competition.

And this news did not sit well with many of the pageant's diehard fans.

"This is absurd, Celeste was a crowd favorite and her performance was far better compared to some of those called in the top 16," said Karl de Guzman who flew all the way from Manila to

watch the pageant in person.

"No Philippines in Top 16 — who is to blame? To whom it may concern: You had one job!," L.A. pageant critic Bradford Adkins wrote on his FB wall.

"We don't know why she [Celeste] was not picked," said another critic who requested anonymity. "Perhaps the judges were not convinced with her platform. You see, with Miss Universe, you need to have very strong credentials. Beauty and brains are no longer enough in this day and age."

Filipinos are front and center at this year's global event. Apart from contestants Gabriel and Cortesi, other Filipinos who took part in the 71st Miss Universe: Olivia Quido, a popular esthetician from Los Angeles, was among the telecast judges; former Miss Universe Catriona Gray played co-host during the live show; shoemaker Jose Bragais provided shoes to more than 80 contestants; fashion designers Michael Cinco, Oliver Tolentino, Rian Fernandez, Patrick Isorena, Albert Andrada, Felizo Francisco, to name a few; and dozens of pageant coaches who taught candidates from other countries.

This edition of the Miss Universe pageant ushers a new era in ownership. IMG sold the organization for \$20 million to JKN, a global media company based in Thailand. Its transwoman CEO Anne Jakrajutatip said she wanted to use the pageant as a platform to inspire women and the LGBTQ community.

NOW ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS!

## Sister Cities International Announces the 2023 Young Artists and Authors Showcase!

Theme:  
Peace By Piece  
Food Security in my Community

The Annual Young Authors and Artists Showcase is now open for submissions!

Consistent with the United Nations' 2030 Agenda, Sister Cities International will continue to embrace climate change as the overarching theme for its 2023 Young Artists and Authors Showcase. For this competition, SCI is proud to invite youth from member communities to submit innovative, thoughtful, and impactful creations that emphasize various aspects of food security, including the impact of climate change on food production and food consumption, in their own communities.



As a leading nonprofit, citizen diplomacy organization, Sister Cities International has been promoting peace through mutual understanding since its origins in 1956. Food has been one of the core pillars of sister cities' cultural understanding - food is a universal language that

unites us. As food unites us, the unrelenting struggle of food security, or a lack thereof is an issue that all communities face. The ongoing environmental changes continue to impact locals and their access to nutrition. This makes the importance of raising awareness more essential every day and youth leadership is a necessary tool to help tackle these circumstances felt around the globe. To participate, please review the eligibility requirements before submitting your application here.

Eligibility  
-Students must be between 13 and 18 years of age at the time of the May 1, 2022 deadline.  
-The student must be affiliated with

a dues-paying member of Sister Cities International or an international community partnered with a dues-paying member. (If you have any questions regarding your affiliation with a dues-paying member of Sister Cities International, please visit our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page or contact youth@sistercities.org.)  
-No more than five (5) submissions per category will be accepted from each member community. International community partners are also eligible to submit no more than five (5) submissions per category. [Note for Sister City Contact Persons: Please provide a list of your (up to) five (5) participating students and their submissions organized by category to youth@sistercities.org.]  
-Member communities are encouraged to form their own local compe-

titions and submit the top five (5) in each category to Sister Cities International.  
-No student may enter submissions into more than one category.  
-All entries must meet the criteria listed below.  
-All entries must conform to Sister Cities International's policy on plagiarism found here.  
-All entries must be submitted and received with a completed application by May 1, 2022, 11:59 PM ET.  
-For any other questions, please contact youth@sistercities.org. Awards will be given out to the YAAS winners who place 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.  
1st Place: \$1,000  
2nd Place: \$250  
3rd Place: \$100



# THINGS TO KNOW

SCAN FOR MORE INFO

The **Young Child Tax Credit** provides a credit up to \$1,083 per tax return for Californians who qualify for CalEITC and have a child under 6 years old.



To qualify for **California Earned Income Tax Credit** (CalEITC), you must be at least 18 years old or have a qualifying child and have earned income of at least \$1 and not more than \$30,000.



The **Foster Youth Tax Credit** (FYTC) provides up to \$1,083 per eligible individual or up to \$2,166 if both primary taxpayer and spouse. Current and former foster youth must qualify for CalEITC and were ages 18 to 25 at the end of the tax year.



**Questions? Call 2-1-1 or (800) 500-4931**



**YourFreeTaxPrep.org**

## WHAT YOU NEED

- All 2022 W-2s, SSA, 1099, Retirement, etc.
- Valid Driver's License or State ID
- Social Security Card(s) for you/spouse and any dependents
- 2022 Health Coverage Form
- Last year's tax return
- Your spouse, if filing a married-joint tax return