

Northern California farm draws on Philippine and Hmong ancestries

“There are lots of ways in which we’ve been severed from our relationship to the land through these histories,” founder Robyn Rodriguez said.

BY AGNES CONSTANTE

While much of the country stocked up on toilet paper during the early days of the coronavirus pandemic, Robyn Rodriguez and her husband, Joshua Vang, invested in vegetable seeds. Having opened Saturday, it will incorporate intergenerational farming techniques that draw from their Philippine and Hmong ancestries, along with local Native American Indigenous land knowledge.

They saw the pandemic as another consequence of the climate crisis and as symptomatic of something deeper than a widespread disease. “Loss just prompts you to want to live more fully, live more aligned with the things you say you want to do,” Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez and Vang also lost their son during the pandemic. The sense of loss prompted them to launch the Reimagination Farm in Lake County in north-central California. Rodriguez and Vang are growing various flowers and vegetables — including lettuce, carrots, beets, cabbage, cucumbers, herbs and bok choy — on the farm.

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Reimagination Farm in Lake County, Calif. Reimagination Lab

De Lima acquitted in 2nd drug case



Former senator Leila de Lima

BY EMMANUEL TUPAS

MANILA, Philippines — A Muntinlupa City court yesterday acquitted De Lima and her former driver, Ronnie Dayan, of the charge of conspiracy to commit illegal drug trading, on the ground of reasonable doubt.

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Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islanders Achievements and Challenges

BY BENJAMIN ABAYA

There was a time when the United States of America had several island territories in the vast Pacific Ocean, either incorporated or not in the American governmental system. The Philippines became a U.S. territory as a result of the Treaty of Paris in 1898 ending the American Spanish war. Immediately thereafter, the Filipino-American war started, and it lasted for three years after the capture of General Emilio Aguinaldo, the head of the insurrection in Palanan, Isabela Philippines.



The Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander communities are a diverse group of people who come from different countries, cultures, and backgrounds.

The other islands in the Pacific Ocean that became territories of the United States were Guam, the Marianas and the American Samoa. Additionally, Hawaii was formally annexed as U.S. territory in 1898 to become a United States Naval Base which later became a staging area for the Spanish Armada anchored in Guam and the Philippines. Eventually, Hawaii became the 50th State of the Union in 1959. Ironically, even before becoming a State of the Union, Hawaii has the largest Filipino-Hawaii American population compared to other Asian nationalities that immigrated into Islands.

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Northern California farm draws on Philippine and Hmong ancestries

From page 1

But it will also provide learning experiences, including programming to increase nature awareness and basic survival skills geared toward Black, indigenous and communities of color that have historically been deprived of the benefits of nature.

Rodriguez also reflected on how Philippine and Hmong communities have been dispossessed of land in their ancestral homelands because of colonization and war — both of which she said are deeply Western projects of domination: economic domination, political domination and military domination.

She added that the history of Filipinos' early migration to the U.S. is deeply tied to industrial agriculture.

“There are lots of ways in

which we've been severed from our relationship to the land through these histories. Then, internal colonization in many ways has also kind of dissuaded us from a connection to lands, along with structures of white supremacy,” she said. “I think that there is this notion in our culture as Filipinos that going back to the land is a backward step, that moving forward in one's life is kind of modernizing and getting further and further away from the land.”

Farming is mostly new to Rodriguez and Vang. Before she lived on the farm, Rodriguez spent decades in academia. Despite her accomplishments — including having become



Robyn Rodriguez and Joshua Vang

the first Filipina American chair of the Asian American studies department at the University of California, Davis, and the founding director of the UC Davis Bulosan Center for Filipino Studies — she left this year because she didn't feel valued in the field. Still, Rodriguez

has remained dedicated to teaching by creating independent online courses in Asian American history. And she and Vang also plan to provide on-site learning opportunities at the Reimagination Farm.

Rodriguez and Vang are learning about the ap-

proach they plan to take on their farm, which has its own unique ecology that is changing because of rising temperatures around the globe. But a central pillar to their approach will be implementing practices rooted in regeneration and non-extraction.

“We are trying to do the best we can to learn about regenerative approaches to farm-

ing, thinking about not just what the soil can give, but how we can leave the soil better than what we found it,” Rodriguez said. “In California, so much of the land — including the land here — has just been extracted from. Industrial agriculture has done that.”

Rodriguez and Vang

— both of whom are self-described avid hikers — remembered being struck by how crowded trails were during the pandemic.

“Covid may have forced us as people to be distant from one another, and yet it also invited us to be differently connected and closely connected to nature and Mother Earth in a new way,” she said.

They hope people who visit their farm can be reminded of the types of outdoor moments people may have experienced during lockdown.

“We want this to be a space to get people back to the land, and we're open about what that looks like,” Rodriguez said, “whether it's just completely unstructured or people just come here and enjoy the land and just get in the dirt.”

Photograph by Andi Tambunan

ILAW NG LIPUNAN

AAPI HATE AND VIOLENCE DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTS FILIPINA WOMEN AS THEY ACCOUNT FOR 55% (247) OF THE REPORTS IN CALIFORNIA. But that darkness cannot dim our light. Proudly burn bright to lead our community. If you have experienced or witnessed an incident of anti-Asian hate, bigotry, bias, or discrimination, report it at [STOPHATE.CALCIVILRIGHTS.CA.GOV](https://stophate.calcivilrights.ca.gov) or CALL 833-8-NO-HATE (833-866-4283).

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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.

*Data pulled from the Bulosan Center's report on California Filipinos which gathered data from Stop AAPI Hate

Editor's Note



We celebrate this month of May as the Asian American, Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander Month. As Filipino Americans, we can take pride in the celebration, as we are being recognized for our past and present contributions to the American society. Read about Benjamin Abaya's article on page 5, as he takes us down to its history and what made ours and other Asian Americans and Pacific Islander's contributions worth celebrating.

Sacramento Filipino Fiesta is all set for June 4, to be held at the Jose Rizal Community Center and Park in Sacramento, from 10-5 PM. Vendor applications have been closed, as number of participating vendors have already been filled. I can just imagine how exciting and fun this fiesta is going to be. We invite you all to take part in the celebration!

Enjoy reading this month's issue of Philippine Fiesta News. Our community organization leaders are busy preparing for their own fundraising activities and other events. Read about them here as they happen in our community. We would also like to welcome any family celebrations in our monthly news publication.

Again and again with PF News going on its 21st year in our community, we wish everyone happy celebrations in anything we achieve in life.

Happy Mother's Day to all the amazing and beautiful mothers in our community!

With love always,
Dinnah San Pedro

De Lima acquitted in 2nd drug case

From page 1

De Lima, a fierce critic of former president Rodrigo Duterte, broke down in tears after hearing the verdict, defense lawyer Filibon Tacardon told reporters in an interview.

“Answered prayers. It’s a glorious day, this is the beginning of my vindication,” De Lima said as police escorted her to a coast-guard van that would take her back to her detention cell at the Philippine National Police Custodial Center at Camp Crame.

Justice Secretary Jesus Crispin Remulla, whose office leads in the prosecution of the former senator, said he respected the court ruling.

“The rule of law has prevailed and it just points out to us that the independence of the judiciary is a basic foundation of our democratic system,” Remulla said in a chance interview. “Just means that democracy is working.”

He earlier vowed not to stop prosecutors from pursuing the remaining case against De Lima, who has been detained for more than six years.

“We do not want to upset everything that the prosecutors are doing just because you arrive at the scene. You should allow the institution to continue as it functions because it will continue way beyond our time also,” Remulla said. “I haven’t read the decision, but it could have gone either way.”

Executive Secretary Lucas Bersamin also said De Lima’s acquittal was proof that the justice system was working.

“We have to respect the judge’s decision to acquit because he was the one who studied the evidence... I can’t say anything but praise the judge,” Bersamin said in an interview.

He admitted the court verdict was “another victory” for De Lima.

“I don’t want to congratulate her (De Lima)... that’s the justice system working,” the former chief justice said.

In a separate statement, De Lima said she had no doubt she would be acquitted in all the “fabricated” cases filed against her by the Duterte administration.

“I had no doubt from the very beginning that I will be acquitted in all the cases the Duterte regime has fabricated against me based on the merits and the strength of my innocence,” De Lima said.

Reasonable doubt

In a 39-page decision, Judge Abraham Joseph Alcaranta of Regional Trial Court Branch 204 cited the recantation of one of the witnesses against De Lima,



Former Philippine senator and human rights campaigner Leila de Lima (C) reacts as she leaves a court in Muntinlupa city, suburban Manila on May 12, 2023. Jailed Philippine human rights campaigner Leila de Lima was acquitted on May 12, 2023 on one of two remaining drug trafficking charges filed against her under the Rodrigo Duterte administration.

former Bureau of Corrections chief Rafael Ragos, in dismissing the complaints.

“Under the circumstances of this case, the testimony of witness Ragos is necessary to sustain any possible conviction. Without his testimony, the crucial link to establish conspiracy is shrouded with reasonable doubt,” Alcantara said in his ruling.

Ragos previously testified that he personally delivered a total of P10 million to then justice secretary De Lima at her residence. The money, according to Ragos, was proceeds from illegal drug trading by convicts at the New Bilibid Prison. Her accusers claimed the money was intended to bankroll her senatorial bid.

But in 2022, Ragos recanted his testimony, saying then justice secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II coerced him into implicate De Lima in illegal drugs.

While the general rule is that recantations are not given much weight in deciding a case, Alcantara said a rare exception is when there is no evidence to sustain a judgment of conviction other than the testimonies of a witness or witnesses that turn out to be contradictory.

“Hence, this Court is constrained to consider the subsequent retraction of witness Ragos. Ultimately, the retraction created reasonable doubt which warrants the acquittal of both accused,” Alcantara’s ruling read.

As she was being brought out by her police escorts from the court building, De Lima asked her supporters for more prayers for another favorable decision on her petition for bail before the Muntinlupa RTC Branch 256. “Maraming salamat. More prayers for the other case,” she shouted at the crowd.

In February 2021, Muntinlupa Branch 205 dismissed a drug

complaint lodged against De Lima.

But with her bail petition still pending with the other court, De Lima has to remain in detention.

Tacardon said they hope Branch 256 would come out with a resolution on De Lima’s petition for bail before the next scheduled hearing on June 5.

“We’re still hopeful justice and truth will prevail, and she is allowed temporary liberty at least while awaiting decision on her last case filed by the Duterte regime,” Tacardon said.

She thanked her supporters who never abandoned her and vowed to continue fighting until she gets justice.

“After getting justice today, it’s become clear that this will not be the end. My fight continues,” she said.

Adding to the pain of her detention, she said, was the realization that many of her loved ones and friends had died without her seeing them.

‘Full vindication’

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel III praised the court “for being true to its mandate to dispense justice without fear or favor by strictly following the evidence.”

“Though the course is long, justice is finally prevailing,” opposition Sen. Risa Hontiveros said as she expressed confidence in De Lima’s “full vindication and eventual liberty.”

“The false narrative and web of lies that led to her imprisonment is finally being undone. The real crime has always been her arrest,” Hontiveros said.

“Justice for former Sen. Leila will be completed when the sinister plot to put her in jail only for speaking out for the truth and welfare of our fellow Filipinos is fully exposed in daylight,” she

added.

She expressed hope De Lima’s acquittal would pave the road to justice for all victims of the war on drugs and “sound the death knell for this inhuman policy.”

Former Senate president Franklin Drilon said he was elated by news of De Lima’s acquittal and voiced hope the detained senator would be granted bail in her third and last pending case as the principal witness of the prosecution had already recanted.

Since the charges against De Lima turned out to be fabricated, officials of the Duterte administration responsible for filing them should be held accountable, he stressed.

Former senator Antonio Trillanes IV, in a Twitter post, said freedom nears for De Lima and “redemption and vindication are next.”

Another former senator, Francis Pangilinan, said her acquittal was a welcome development even if it had taken the court too long to decide.

“We have from Day 1 called for the dismissal of the charges but, as the saying goes, better late than never,” Pangilinan said.

“Justice is rendered, albeit late. After having been acquitted in two of the three contrived drug cases against her, Sen. De Lima must be freed on bail in the last case still pending trial. She deserves full exoneration and final liberation,” Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman said.

Lagman is president of the opposition Liberal Party, which counts De Lima as member.

“It is long overdue, given that there was no case in the first place as the witnesses were just forced to lie in court. At any rate this is a good development and we hope that she will be freed soon with the resolution of her last case,” said party-list Bayan Muna chairman Neri Colmenares.

Another Bayan Muna official, Carlos Isagani Zarate, said “justice trumps lies and ex cathedra fakes. We trust that the remaining trumped-up charges against her should also be resolved soon.”

‘Victory for truth’

Former vice president Leni Robredo said the Muntinlupa court’s decision was a victory for the truth.

“Right from the start, I had full confidence in Sen Leila’s innocence. Despite the six years that she was restrained and persecuted, I was sure that the day would come when she would regain her freedom and good name,” she added.

“The dismissal of this case, due to the lack of any evidence against her, is a clear step toward this day,” she added.

Human rights and cause-oriented groups also welcomed the acquittal of De Lima.

“The partial acquittal of prisoner of conscience and human rights defender Leila de Lima was long overdue. While justice has been slow for her, it follows years of arbitrary detention and other human rights violations she has had to endure,” Amnesty International’s interim deputy regional director for research Montse Ferrer said in a statement.

“We urge the authorities to also quash the remaining drug case and to ensure that her application for temporary freedom in this pending case is processed speedily and fairly. The authorities must not delay her release any longer and allow her to be reunited with her family, friends and supporters after six long years,” Ferrer added.

She also called on the Marcos administration to work toward “holding accountable those responsible for her arbitrary detention, which clearly violated her rights to liberty, presumption of innocence and other fair trial guarantees.”

Karapatan, for its part, praised De Lima for remaining firm and steadfast in speaking out against abuses committed by the Duterte administration.

“As we welcome Sen. Leila’s acquittal and call for her release, we likewise call for the release of all political prisoners like her who have been persecuted because of their work and beliefs on human rights and social justice,” Karapatan secretary general Cristina Palabay said.

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas said it hopes De Lima “regains her freedom soon so she can join the people in “our continuing battle for truth, justice and accountability.”

Human Rights Watch (HRW) said De Lima’s acquittal “demonstrates again the bogus, harassing nature of the charges” against her.

“Leila de Lima’s steadfast commitment to human rights and the rule of law are commendable and should be recognized,” said HRW deputy Asia director Phil Robertson.

“Freeing her now is critical so she can return to her family, leaving the injustice of years behind bars in pre-trial detention caused by Duterte’s vengeful cruelty.”

For the Movement Against Disinformation, the court’s decision is a testament to fairness, equity and credibility of the judiciary.

“We look to the day that all the other cases against her are resolved, and so she could walk free and rejoin the ranks of advocates and truth-tellers,” it said.

Photographs by Andri Tambunan



LEGACY OF PRIDE

FILIPINO AMERICAN SERVICE & BRAVERY

ALLEN S. DAWANG enlisted in the 1st Filipino Infantry Regiment “L” Company US Army during WWII. Pictured are his proud wife of 62 years Bienvenida Pedraza-Dawang and his great-grandchild Aleaya Simmons. In 2017, Allen was awarded posthumously his Congressional Gold Medal by U.S. Congress, which honors Filipino soldiers who fought alongside American forces during WWII.

More than 260,000 Filipino and Filipino American soldiers answered President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s call to defend the United States and the Philippines during World War II. Allen was able to get his citizenship after enlistment and after the war he worked as a farm laborer at a pear orchard in California. He retired at age 85 in 1997. His wife describes him as a hard worker and his great-grandchild continues his legacy of service as a Senior-level Girl Scout.

Carry on our ancestors’ bravery and resilience to adversity. If you have experienced or witnessed an incident of anti-Asian hate, bigotry, bias, or discrimination, report it at **STOPHATE.CALCIVILRIGHTS.CA.GOV** or call **833-8-NO-HATE (833-866-4283)**. **YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**

**Data pulled from the Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project.*



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BY BENJAMIN ABAYA

Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islanders Achievements and Challenges

There was a time when the United States of America had several island territories in the vast Pacific Ocean, either incorporated or not in the American governmental system. The Philippines became a U.S. territory as a result of the Treaty of Paris in 1898 ending the American Spanish war. Immediately thereafter, the Filipino-American war started, and it lasted for three years after the capture of General Emilio Aguinaldo, the head of the insurrection in Palanan, Isabela Philippines.

The other islands in the Pacific Ocean that became territories of the United States were Guam, the Marianas and the American Samoa. Additionally, Hawaii was formally annexed as U.S. territory in 1898 to become a United States Naval Base which later became a staging Naval Base to drive out the Spanish Armada anchored in Guam and the Philippines. Eventually, Hawaii became the 50th State of the Union in 1959. Ironically, even before becoming a State of the Union, Hawaii has the largest Filipino Hawaii American population compared to other Asian nationalities that immigrated into Islands.

Those were the events in nutshell that the Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month was established, a time to celebrate the diversity, culture, and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States way of life. This month-long celebration, observed every May, provides an opportunity to recognize, honor and remember the achievements and challenges of these communities in shaping the history, culture, and values of the United States.

To remember, the struggle for civil rights and recognition of the contributions of these com-

munities to American society, began in 1978 when a group of Asian-American activists in California proposed the idea of a week-long celebration to commemorate the first Japanese immigrants to the United States. This week-long celebration was eventually recognized by the federal government and became known as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week.

In 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed a bill that expanded the week-long celebration to a month-long observance, and it was officially designated as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. This month-long celebration is an opportunity to recognize and honor the contributions and achievements of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, as well as to raise awareness of the challenges and issues facing these communities.

The Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander communities are a diverse group of people who come from different countries, cultures, and backgrounds. They have made significant contributions to various fields, including science, technology, business, politics, and the arts. For example, Indian American scientist Dr. Chandra Bose discovered the radio wave and Japanese American artist Isamu Noguchi designed iconic sculptures and public spaces across the United States.

Furthermore, Filipino-American labor leader Larry Itliong co-founded the United Farm Workers union with mixed memberships such as Filipinos, Mexicans, Arabs and White. Larry Itliong was a Filipino-American labor leader who played a significant role in the



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American labor movement, particularly in the fight for better working conditions and workers' rights. Itliong was born on October 25, 1913, in San Nicolas, Pangasinan, Philippines. He immigrated to the United States in 1929 when he was only 15 years old and worked various jobs, including as a farm laborer in California and canary worker in Alaska. Larry Itliong, who desired to become a lawyer has no college degree in his resume, as he reached only 6th grade in educational attainment, yet he was not an ordinary unschooled person, he was self-educated and a born leader with blessed good speaking ability in many languages such as English, Filipino, Chinese, Nihongo, and Spanish. Additionally, he can also speak several Filipino dialects such as Tagalog, Ilocano, Pangasinan, and some few others.

Itliong became a labor leader in the 1930s and worked with the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) in the 1950s and 1960s. In 1965, he played a critical role in organizing the Delano grape strike, which was a major event in the American labor movement. Itliong brought together a coalition of Filipino and Mexican farmworkers, who went on strike to demand higher wages and better working conditions.

The Delano grape strike lasted for five years, and it eventually

led to the creation of the United Farm Workers (UFW) union, which represented farmworkers across the United States. Itliong co-founded the UFW along with Cesar Chavez and other labor leaders, and he served as the Assistant Director of the UFW until he resigned in 1971.

Itliong's leadership and advocacy for workers' rights have had a lasting impact on the American labor movement. He fought tirelessly for the rights of Filipino and other immigrant workers, and his legacy has inspired generations of labor leaders and activists. In recognition of his contributions, Larry Itliong Day was established in California on October 25, his birthday, to honor his legacy and contributions to the labor movement. He was also known as one of the fathers of the west coast labor movements. Likewise, His birthday was also designated as Larry Itliong Day to remember his journey as a labor leader, his struggles, accomplishments and challenges during his time.

Despite their contributions, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have faced significant challenges and discrimination throughout history. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, for example, was the first major law that restricted immigration to the United States based on race. During World War II, over 120,000 Japanese Americans were forced into internment

camps, and many lost their homes, businesses, and possessions.

Today, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders continue to face discrimination and prejudice, including hate crimes and violence. The COVID-19 pandemic has also led to a rise in anti-Asian hate crimes, discrimination, and harassment.

This month-long celebration is a time to not only honor the contributions of these communities but also to raise awareness of the challenges and issues they face.

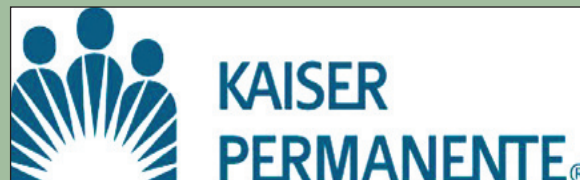
To celebrate Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander Heritage Month, communities across the United States hold various events and activities, such as cultural festivals, art exhibitions, educational programs, and community gatherings. Those events provided an opportunity to learn about the cultures, traditions, and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and to promote greater understanding and appreciation of their rich heritage.

Remembering, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Heritage Month is an important time to celebrate the diversity and richness of the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities and to honor their contributions to American society.

It is also a time to raise awareness of the challenges and issues these communities will face and to promote greater understanding and appreciation of their cultures and traditions. Through education, advocacy, and celebration, we can work together to create a more inclusive and equitable society for all.

FILIPINO FIESTA OF SACRAMENTO 2023

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21-Gun Salute



Salute by cannon or artillery is a military tradition that originated in the 14th century. The 21-gun salute, commonly recognized by many nations, is the highest honor rendered. The custom stems from naval tradition, when a warship would signify its lack of hostile intent by firing its cannons out to sea until all ammunition was spent.

The British navy developed the custom of a seven-gun salute because naval vessels typically had seven guns (and possibly also due to the number seven's Biblical and mystical significance). Because greater quantities of gunpowder could be stored on dry land, forts could fire three rounds for every one fired at sea — hence the number 21. With the improvement of naval gunpowder, honors rendered at sea increased to

21, as well. The 21-gun salute eventually became the international standard.

In the United States, the custom has changed over time. In 1810, the War Department defined the “national salute” as equal to the number of states in the Union (at the time, 17). This salute was fired by all U.S. military installations on Independence Day and whenever the president visited a military installation. In 1842, the 21-gun salute was designated as the “presidential salute,” and in 1875 the United States followed Britain in adopting the 21-gun salute as its international salute.

Today, the U.S. military fires a 21-gun salute in honor of a national flag, the sovereign or chief of state of a foreign nation, a member of a reign-

ing royal family, and the president, ex-presidents and president-elect of the United States. The 21-gun salute is also fired at noon on George Washington’s birthday, President’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, and the day of the funeral of a president, ex-president or president-elect.

Gun salutes for other U.S. and foreign military and civilian leaders vary in number, based on protocol and the honoree’s rank. These salutes are always in odd numbers.

The 21-gun salute is not to be confused with the three-volley salute (or three-rifle volley) rendered at military honors funerals, which you might see or hear at Arlington National Cemetery. *Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.*

Military funerals in the United States

In the United States, the United States Army Military District of Washington (MDW) is responsible for providing military funerals. “Honoring Those Who Served” is the title of the program for instituting a dignified military funeral with full honors to the nation’s veterans.

detail for the burial of an eligible veteran shall consist of no fewer than two members of the Armed Forces. One member of the detail shall be a representative of the parent armed service of the deceased veteran. The honor guard detail will, at a minimum, perform a ceremony that includes the folding and presenting of the flag of the United States to the next of kin and the playing of “Taps”, which will be played by a lone bugler, if available, or by audio recording.

As of January 1, 2000, Section 578 of Public Law 106-65 of the National Defense Authorization Act mandates that the United States Armed Forces shall provide the rendering of honors in a military funeral for any eligible veteran if requested by his or her family. As mandated by federal law, an honor guard

Today, there are so few buglers available that the United States Armed Forces often cannot provide one. However, federal law allows Reserve and National Guard units to assist with funeral honors duty when necessary. On the day of the burial or interment, the U.S. Flag is lowered to half-staff.



U.S Department of Veterans Affairs



FILIPINO AMERICAN VETERANS ASSOCIATION

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 2023

OBJECTIVE: To recognize high school graduates who had outstanding academic performance in school as well as in extra-curricular activities.

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Applicant must be a natural or legally-adopted child or grandchild of a FAVA member, who has been a member for not less than one year by application submission deadline, unless the new member applied for lifetime membership.
2. Applicant must be a graduating high school senior with a 3.7 GPA or higher.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Applicant must provide a transcript of record (bearing the school seal) in a sealed envelope. The transcript must include the record from 9th to 12th grade.
2. Applicant must submit a resume stating school extra-curricular activities, leadership experience and community involvement.
3. Applicant must participate in the selection process through oral interview via zoom or facetime, if necessary.
4. Applicant must submit an essay of not less than 250 words on the subject of “My Goals and Objectives in Completing a Program of Higher Education”.

5. Applicant must be present (unless already out of town for college) during the award ceremony to accept the award.

AWARDS CRITERIA:

1. Academics
2. Leadership Experience
3. Extra-curricular Activities
4. Community Involvement & Participation
5. Essay
6. Interview (if necessary)

NOTE: The decision of the FAVA Scholarship Committee is final and non-appealable.
DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION: Postmarked or emailed by June 30, 2023.

Submit questions to:
 Sonia Delizo, 916-230-8472, email address: sorudelizo@gmail.com or
 Beth Velasco, 916-502-2752, email address: bcvelasco@aol.com

Apo Whang-Od documentary trailer about Filipino tattoo culture

BY KRISTOFER PURNELL

MANILA, Philippines — A documentary about 106-year-old Indigenous tattoo artist Apo Whang-Od and Philippine tattoo culture, including the traditional batok that Whang-od is known for, is in production following the release of an extensive trailer.

The documentary “Treasure of the Rice Terraces” is directed and written by Filipino-Canadian Kent Donguines, who features heavily in the five-minute trailer as he explores the local tattooing culture.

“The question of one’s identity and its permanence has always been a complex conversation,” begins Donguines’ voice in the trailer over clips of the Philippines.

The Vancouver-based filmmaker then said he began feeling less like a Filipino as he got older, mostly because there were many aspects of Filipino culture that he never got to explore, experience, and understand, including that of tattooing.

Clips of modern tattooing are then shown, with voiceovers explaining the negative connotation attached to tattoos such as prison time, being part of a crime syndicate, and gang affiliations.

Quick cuts of familiar tattoos then shift to the traditional batok of Kalinga, the home province of Whang-od who becomes the primary subject of the trailer.

Whang-od shared how she began as a mambabatok, like her late father, when she was still young so she could earn money.

The tattoo artist’s grand-niece Grace Palicas then talked about life in their village and the growing recognition of tattoos as symbols for beauty and bravery due to the influx of tourists.

“[Whang-od] holds a lot of knowledge that cannot be directly passed on... The stature of Whang-od, the materials she uses, the designs she makes, that’s the epitome of cultural practice,” goes a voiceover.

Donguines’ previous statement about Filipino identity and permanence, especially for Filipinos based abroad, thus finds a solution in getting tattooed this way.

“Kung babalikan natin, malaking tulong si Whang-od, sa totoo lang,” said Joe Musngi, a tattoo artist in Manila. “Malaking tulong si Whang-od, binabalik niya yung pagiging maka-Pilipino natin.”

Grace said over clips of tattooing Donguines that she wants to continue the Batok tradition of her people and eventually pass them on to younger generations.

“One of the important things about our culture is when we die, that’s the only thing we can keep as treasure,” Whang-od said in Kalinga. “If you’re rich, when you die, they will take all your jewelery and it’s only your tattoos left on your body and it can’t be taken away from you.”

Donguines ends the trailer by saying “Treasure of the Rice Terraces” will also explore stolen mummified bodies, cultural appropriation, and the “ongoing fight for cultural sovereignty.”

“The current Philippine administration is poised to let China take over the country. Never has the time been riper to interrogate our national identity,” said one of the documentary’s producers Patti Lopus in a statement. “At this juncture in our history, [the rediscovery of cultural identity and national pride] has become more than a mere personal exploration, but an overt and proactive political act.”

Whang-Od recently featured on the April 2023 cover of Vogue Philippines, making her the oldest person ever to appear on the cover of any Vogue magazine.



Tattoo artist Apo Whang-Od

Tyra Banks mesmerized by Apo Whang-Od

Centenarian and mambabatok (hand-tapped tattoo artist) Apo Whang-Od is on the cover of the April issue of Vogue Philippines.

BY JAN MILO SEVERO

MANILA, Philippines — TV personality Tyra Banks is the latest international celebrity who was mesmerized by Apo Whang-Od’s beauty.

In her Instagram account, Tyra posted the Vogue Magazine cover featuring Whang-Od.

“Some magazine covers pull you in and take your breath away,” she wrote.

“This was one of them for me. @artunepo, your stunning work stopped me in my tracks. Bravo. Standing ovation. TyTy,” she added.

The magazine cover featuring Whang-Od trended last month after international celebrities praised the cover.

Fil-Am stand-up comedian Jokoy shared the cover on his Instagram.

“At 106 years old this Filipino icon is finally getting her flowers! This is the best Vogue cover ever. Mahal



kita APO WHANG-OD,” he wrote.

Actress Halle Berry also posted the same photo saying “Now THIS is real beauty.”

Other celebrities who posted Whang-Od in their Instagram stories were Cara Delevingne, Gigi Hadid, Kourtney Kardashian and Naomi Campbell.

Lea Salonga named top Filipino singer of 2023

BY NEIL RAMOS

Internationally-acclaimed singer-actress Lea Salonga topped Singersroom.com’s Top 20 Filipino singers list this year.

The award-winning R&B and urban-pop site praised Lea for her staying power.

“Salonga’s music career spans over three decades, during which she has released several successful albums, including the chart-topping ‘Lea Salonga’ and ‘By Heart.’

They also cited her “ability to sing in multiple languages, including English, Tagalog, and Japanese.”

“She is also known for her philanthropic work, particularly in the areas of education and children’s rights,” it added.

“Salonga’s talent and impact on the entertainment industry continue to be felt, and she remains a beloved and influential artist around the world.”

Second in the list is Regine Velasquez.

Said singersroom.com, “She is known for her vocal range, which spans four octaves, and



Lea Salonga

her ability to sing in various genres, including pop, R&B, and rock.”

Making it to the number three spot in the list is Gary V.

“He is known for his energetic performances and powerful vocals, which have earned him numerous awards and accolades,” it stated.

“In addition to his music career, Valenciano is also a successful ac-



Gary V.

tor, television host, and motivational speaker. He is known for his work as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and his philanthropic efforts, particularly in the areas of health and education.”

Others who made it to the list: Jed Madela, Apl.de.ap, Sarah Geronimo, Arnel Pineda, Aiza Seguerra, KZ Tandingan and Moira dela Torre.

Also in the Top 20 are Kyla, Kuh Ledesma, Jona Viray, Bella Poarch, Freddie Aguilar, Rachell Anne Go, Sharon Cuneta, Francis Magalona, Bamboo Manalac, and Angeline Quinto.



Regine Velasquez

“Surogpon Kita” (We are Connected)



FOR A BETTER WORLD. The Bicol-based Kintab group starts assembling the “Surogpon Kita” (We are Connected) art installation exhibit at the Cultural Center of the Philippines front lawn in Pasay City on Monday (April 17, 2023). It will run from April 20 to May 28 as part of the Earth Day celebration and a reminder that if nature is revered and technology is utilized responsibly, there will be positive impacts on the environment. (Philippine News Agency photo by Joan Bondoc)

Philippine Fiesta

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Photograph by Andri Tambunan



AAPI HATE AND VIOLENCE DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTS FILIPINA WOMEN AS THEY ACCOUNT FOR 55% (247) OF THE REPORTS IN CALIFORNIA.* But that darkness cannot dim our light. Proudly burn bright to lead our community. If you have experienced or witnessed an incident of anti-Asian hate, bigotry, bias, or discrimination, report it 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.

*Data pulled from the Bulosan Center's report on California Filipinos which gathered data from Stop AAPI Hate