



P5 Hate is Mankind's Global Adversary

PHILIPPINE Fiesta

A Division of Five D's Arts, LLC

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P8 The American Legion Auxiliary Magellan Unit 604

Marcos refutes China, denies 'agreement' to remove Ayungin ship



BRP Sierra Madre from Ayungin Shoal

BY BEA CUPIN

'If there does exist such an agreement, I rescind that agreement now,' says President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

MANILA, Philippines – President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. refuted China on Wednesday, August 9, and denied any agreement to remove the Philippine ship BRP Sierra Madre from Ayungin Shoal in the West Philippine Sea.

"I'm not aware of any such arrangement or

agreement that the Philippines will remove from its own territory its ship, in this case, the BRP Sierra Madre from the Ayungin Shoal," Marcos said in a video released by Malacañang.

In one of the most stinging statements of a Philippine leader against China in recent years, Marcos added, "If there does exist such an agreement, I rescind that agreement now."

Continued on page 2

FCSV SAP Ceremony 2023 A Scholastic Lane of the Community



The candidates with their families and FCSV SAP Committee and Board members

BY MURRAY NAVARRO
FCSV Secretary

The Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity, Inc. (FCSV) awarded two promising scholars to this year's Scholarship Award Program (SAP). The program was established to support and advance the goals of Filipino

American youth by providing monetary scholarships to deserving high school graduating students. This is an annual promise to the community to search for and award outstanding high school graduates. The application form was given prior to the deadline last July 7, 2023.

Continued on page 7



The candidates - Damen Ramos and Mariano Edralin

ANTI-FILIPINO VIOLENCE HISTORICALLY - A REFLECTION ON THE 1999 MURDER OF JOSEPH ILETO

BY DR. ROBYN MAGALIT RODRIGUEZ

Almost 25 years ago, on August 10, 1999, Joseph Iletto, a Filipino American postal worker based in Southern California went to work and never made it back home. He was gunned down and killed by a self-identified white supremacist, Buford O. Farrow, after Farrow had shot into a playground of the North Valley Jewish Community Center and injured children. At the time, the mainstream news media focused primarily on the anti-Semitic actions of Farrow.



Joseph Iletto

Little coverage of Iletto's murder and Farrow's anti-Asian sentiments took place.



Lillian Iletto weeps over her son Joseph's coffin.

The issue of anti-Asian, including anti-Filipino hate, and the work of telling the stories

of the people victimized by it, especially in ethnic news outlets like this one, has received far more visibility recently since the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, the fact that attention to anti-Filipino hate is being paid is perhaps not simply due to the gravity of the situation but also to the work of the Filipino American community to collectively raise awareness about and mobilize against the systems of white supremacy that perpetuate hate, racism and discrimination.

Continued on page 3

Military aggression

Unlike the coast guards of the Philippines and other countries, which are civilian agencies, the China Coast Guard is under the command of its Central Military Commission.

The CMC, chaired by President Xi Jinping himself, controls all of China's military branches along with the Rocket Force, the Joint Logistic Support Force and the Strategic Support Force that handles cyber and space security. Unlike civilian coast guards, the CCG is authorized to use lethal force against foreign vessels.

Any hostile act of the China Coast Guard against Philippine vessels must therefore be regarded as a military action. And blasting any Philippine Coast Guard vessel with a water cannon within the West Philippine Sea cannot be considered a friendly



Chinese Coast Guard firing a water cannon at a Philippine vessel and blocking it from executing a resupply mission.

action by the CCG. It is Chinese military aggression conducted within Philippine sovereign waters, as defined under the 2016 arbitral ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague – a ruling based on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

On Aug. 5, a CCG ship used a water cannon on PCG vessels escorting civilian boats on a resupply

mission to the BRP Sierra Madre in Ayungin or Second Thomas Shoal. The shoal is one of the features in the South China Sea that was specifically mentioned in the arbitral award, over which the Philippines has sovereign rights and exclusive maritime entitlements. The arbitral ruling also invalidated China's sweeping nine-dash-line claim over nearly the entire South China Sea.

The Philippines has filed multiple protests against illegal Chinese Coast Guard activities in the West Philippine Sea, including swarming of CCG and militia vessels to block Filipino fishing boats, and aiming a powerful laser beam at a PCG ship. So far, Beijing has shrugged off the protests.

The latest incident occurred just days after CMC supreme commander Xi Jinping and his top foreign affairs team wel-

comed former president Rodrigo Duterte to Beijing, with the Marcos administration kept in the dark about the visit. Despite Duterte's meeting with President Marcos days after the trip, details provided to the media about what transpired with Xi remain vague, except for the reiteration of China's message of friendship with the Philippines.

Friends don't train water cannons at the other's ship, especially one on a

resupply mission. Friends don't drive away the other's fishing boats from its own waters. And friends don't prevent freedom of navigation and flight beyond their domains as defined under international rules.

The Philippines needs to recalibrate its responses to the activities of the CCG, including drawing on its alliances with other countries for a more effective response to Chinese military aggression.

The Philippine Star

Marcos refutes China, denies 'agreement' to remove Ayungin ship

From page 1



Philippine Marines raise the Philippine flag

The President was responding to China's claims that the Philippines previously promised to remove the warship, which serves as its outpost in the resource-rich waters.

if an agreement had been made, it could only have been between "lower level" officials. He challenged China to produce proof that such an agreement was made.

National Security Council Assistant Director-General Jonathan Malaya had previously called China's assertion a "figment of their imagination."

Speaking before a new forum earlier on Wednesday, Malaya posited that

China's claims follow an August 5 incident where Chinese Coast Guard and militia vessels harassed and pointed water cannons towards Philippine ships en route to the BRP Sierra Madre for a routine resupply mission.

After the Philippines and its allies – the US, the European Union, Japan, and Australia, among others – criticized China for their actions, the Asian superpower insisted their actions were justified. China claims Ayungin Shoal as its own, despite a 2016 arbitral ruling that that the shoal is within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone and continental shelf.

China has been calling on the Philippines to remove the BRP Sierra Madre, which is manned by only a small team of Philippine Marines.

The Philippines has lodged a note verbale or a written protest against China over the incident. The August 5 water cannoning is only the latest in a growing list of China's aggressive moves in the West Philippine Sea. –



Editor's Note

We started working on this issue of PF News late, as we just got back from L.A. to visit our granddaughter, Ollie. We also celebrated our daughter Deidra's 36th Birthday.

We come home and heard of what has happened to Maui, with most of Lahaina area burnt down. We were just exactly in the same area, 2 weeks ago. I can't imagine how the people were able to escape. It's almost similar to when I attended a radiology conference in New Orleans in March of 2005. Hurricane Katrina hit a few months later, and resulted in catastrophe with severe flooding. Both beautiful states and sad now, what just happened in Lahaina. Let's all take a moment to pray for everyone affected and for those who lost their lives.

In this August issue are amazing contributions from our contributing writers. One of them and her first with article on page 1, let's welcome Dr. Robyn Rodriguez as our newest contributor. She's amazing and I'll let you be the judge, as you read her stories about the many issues affecting our community here in Sacramento and vicinity.

It's an honor to be part of the Laban Group, as I proudly announce that we are awarded another year of grant by the California State Library. We are working together to tackle and fight for our rights to Stop Asian Hate, provide resources, and if possible, directly provide assistance to victims of racial hate.

Let's remain cognizant of our surroundings, wherever we are. "The Good News: We can rejoice even in tough times, secure in our faith and in God's unconditional love." James 1:2

With love always,
Dinnah San Pedro

ANTI-FILIPINO VIOLENCE HISTORICALLY -

A REFLECTION ON THE 1999 MURDER OF JOSEPH ILETO

From page 1



BY DR. ROBYN MAGALIT RODRIGUEZ

In my inaugural column for the Philippine Fiesta, I will bring to light the story of Joseph Iletto and the work the broader Filipino community engaged in to draw attention to the impacts of white supremacy on our community, as well as to provide a historical perspective on anti-Filipino hate and Filipino activism against it.

For those not yet familiar with my work, I am a long-time scholar-activist. As a scholar-activist, my research, writing and teaching as a university professor has been deeply shaped by my involvement and commitment to Filipino organizations that advance social justice for our community. My work as a scholar-activist was best exemplified by my leadership in the founding of the Bulosan Center for Filipino Studies at UC Davis, which was able to produce community-responsive research and education. Realizing that there are limits to how I can serve the community, I have decided to retire early from my career so that I can more fully share my skills. In retirement I have more time to devote to sharing the knowledge I've acquired in venues like this one.

Joseph Iletto was 39 at the time of his death. He was the beloved kuya of his family, having assumed more responsibility for his family's well-being with the loss of his father at an early age. Joseph was in the prime of his life, attending college at Cal State Pomona for engineering while also working at the post office. Iletto's family was devastated by his loss. Though there were other highly publicized hate crimes taking place around the

country around the time of Joseph's death, they never expected that their family could be victimized by a crime of hate. Indeed, for many Filipino Americans the idea that white supremacist hate might be directed towards members of our community is often inconceivable. This is due, to the fact that those raised in the Philippines have been educated in a system that has deeply American colonial roots and as such, have been raised to valorize American society. Those raised in the United States may receive education that sheds some light on the white supremacist roots of American society, but are often made to believe that with the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, racism and discrimination are something of the past.

I was still early on in my graduate program in the Sociology Department of the University of California, Berkeley when the Joseph Iletto case hit the news. I had the wonderful privilege of taking courses in Filipino American Studies, and Asian American Studies more broadly while I was an undergraduate at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Through those courses I gained new knowledge about the

history anti-Filipino and anti-Asian violence in the state of California during the early decades of the 20th century, I learned, for example, that though Asians were initially in high demand to fill low-wage, back-breaking work in the state's agricultural industry, they were also reviled as a racial threat. Asian people's distinctive culture, ill-understood and unfamiliar to whites, along with the perception that they were stealing jobs from whites, became the basis for deep animus against them. This hate manifested in vigilante violence as whites would gather together and literally drive Asians out of town, burning down businesses and places of residence in addition to beating and in some cases killing them. This hate also manifested in active political campaigns to pass legislation to ban the immigration of Asians to the United States. These campaigns were successful leading first to the exclusion of the Chinese, then the exclusion of the Japanese and ultimately, the exclusion of Filipinos in 1934. The history of anti-Asian and anti-Filipino violence from the 1930s was completely new to me by the time I entered college in the 1990s. Though I was born and raised in California, though most of my schooling had been done in California public schools, it was not until I got to college, and specifically a college where Ethnic Studies had been established through successful mobilizations of students of color and the community several decades before I got there, that I learned about this history.

By the time I had graduated and then entered my doctoral program in the late 1990s, I knew anti-Asian racism was still alive and well, the killing of Asian American autoworker, Vincent Chin in the 1980s—a point of



Filipino postal worker Joseph Iletto remembered 20 years after killing



Marching Against Hate

discussion in my undergraduate classes—made that perfectly clear. From my studies, I also knew that anti-Filipino racism in particular had a history that preceded the anti-Asian hate experienced by early Filipino migrants once they got to America. The colonization of the Philippines by the United States was not only about America's economic, political and military ambitions in Asia, it was deeply shaped by white supremacist ideas. In my second year of graduate school—1998—which marked the centennial of United States' colonization of the Philippines in 1898, I got involved in organizing community education sessions about it. For many in my generation, it was important to bring this colonial history to light because it continued to be suppressed in the public education system. Iletto's death the following year galvanized many of us into further action.

Iletto's death occurred in August, just weeks before the annual Pistahan

events in San Francisco, and a group of my peers and I quickly mobilized to ask the organizers of the Pistahan events to give space to offer a moment of silence in honor of the Iletto as well as to open up discussion of the need for our community to come together, not only to respond to white supremacist hate, but to address other injustices suffered by our community both in the United States and in the Philippines. While there were a handful of organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area providing programs and services for the most marginalized Filipinos, my group was concerned that we needed more spaces from which to advocate for the advancement of rights for members of our community both in the United States and in our ancestral homeland. Our organizing efforts around the centennial of U.S. colonization of the Philippines, heightened a more diasporic sense of ourselves. We understood that white supremacy had a transnational dimension

that manifested in colonial (and even neo-colonial) relations between the Philippines and the United States as well as racism and discrimination, including hate violence like that suffered by Joseph Iletto. We proposed the creation of the KARAPATAN - Filipino Center for Human Rights (FCHR). In a statement we shared at the Pistahan event, we asserted, "While some of us have made the United States home, we know that the Filipinos share a common history and remain intimately linked to the Philippines. Thus, while we must fight for our basic rights and welfare as immigrants and children of immigrants, our struggles are connected to the struggles that Filipinos face in their homeland." Though KARAPATAN - FCHR was very short-lived, its attempt to draw connections between issues faced by Filipinos in the Philippines and issues faced by Filipinos in diaspora would prove to be a defining feature of Filipino American activism in the years to come.

Reflecting on the anniversary of Joseph Iletto's murder is an important opportunity for us to re-examine the roots of anti-Filipino violence, its manifestations over more than a century, as well as to surface the various ways our community has valiantly come together to address and combat it.

Survivor's Financial Reminders: Death of a Spouse

Presented BY **MARITES AVILA**

The death of a spouse or life partner is difficult enough without having to make decisions about a host of financial issues. To help minimize stress when this sad time arrives, the following list provides a framework for organizing your financial affairs and those of your partner.

Death certificates. To file for various benefits, you must provide a death certificate. Obtain at least 10 certified copies from the funeral director or from your state's department of health or vital records. An excellent resource for finding the appropriate office in your state is the Where to Write for Vital Records page on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website, www.cdc.gov/nchs.

Insurance policies. Have on hand a list of insurance companies, policy numbers, and social security numbers. Although you don't need to produce the original copy of the policy to file for a death claim, it will speed up the process.

- For coverage written in the past 15 years, you may be able to locate missing policies through MIB Solutions, a company that provides services to the insurance industry. You can access the company's Policy Locator Service, for a \$75 fee, at www.mib.com/lost_life_insurance.html.
- Contact numbers for old policies may no longer be valid. Get in touch with your state's department of insurance to obtain new telephone numbers for filing death claims with carriers that do business in your state.
- Look through your (and your deceased partner's) checkbook registers for records of insurance premium payments and contact the carrier(s) to ask about possible benefits.

- Contact your deceased partner's most recent employer regarding group benefits.
- Check with your credit card, bank, and loan companies regarding eligible death benefits.

Military discharge papers. You may be entitled to veteran benefits if your spouse served in the military. Obtain a copy of his or her military records through the National Archives; start with the Veterans Service Records of the website at www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records.

Marriage certificate. You may need copies of your marriage certificate to apply for certain dependent benefits. Obtain copies through the county or town in which your marriage license was issued. You can also use the CDC's Where to Write for Vital Records page, www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/index.htm, to obtain contact numbers for where to get this information in your state.

Children's birth certificates. Your dependent children may be eligible for benefits. Refer to the CDC's Where to Write for Vital Records page, noted above, to obtain contact information for the state where the child was born.

Last will and testament. Most people keep their will in a safe deposit box, a safe, or an important document file drawer. If you cannot locate your partner's will, you can most likely obtain one from your attorney. If no will was created or you cannot find one, contact your county's probate department to determine whether your partner's estate qualifies for a simplified probate procedure. If necessary, make a formal application to the court to be appointed personal representative of your partner's estate. Please note: It is not recommended to store a will in a safe deposit box if it is to be sealed upon your death.

Bank and brokerage accounts. Jointly owned accounts are not tied up in the probate process. Contact your bank and broker to change the account to your name. Accounts owned individually by your spouse must be transferred to an estate account.

IRAs and employer retirement plans. It may be beneficial to roll over your spouse's IRAs into your own IRA. If you are under age 59 1/2 and intend to use the IRA for living expenses, you may decide to move the account to an inherited IRA to avoid early withdrawal tax penalties. In addition, your spouse's plan may offer a survivor annuity or a lump-sum payout. To avoid unnecessary taxes, discuss the options with your financial advisor.

Contact the Social Security Administration (SSA). You and your dependent children may be eligible to receive a small social security death benefit and survivor income benefits. Contact your local social security office or visit the Survivors Benefits section of the SSA website at <http://www.ssa.gov/pgm/survivors.htm>.

Tax identification numbers (TINs). You, your spouse's executor, or your spouse's trustee will need to obtain TINs for the estate and for any formerly revocable trust. Give these numbers to your bank and brokerage firms.

Taxes: You may incur additional taxes at your spouse's death. Before transferring accounts or distributing estate assets, talk with your attorney and accountant. You will also have to file a final income tax return for your spouse.

Health insurance. If your spouse had health insurance at work, you may qualify for COBRA benefits for up to 36 months. Although the premiums may increase, they are generally considerably less cost-

ly than private insurance. Contact your spouse's employer for more information. Also contact your own employer to find out whether you are eligible for health insurance benefits following your change in status.

Credit cards. Notify your spouse's credit card issuers to cancel the account. If it is a joint account, cancel it or list the account in your name only.

Your personal financial affairs. It is advisable to avoid major changes for at least six months after a partner's death or until you feel that you can make sound financial decisions.

- Take time to consider any proposals from family, friends, and your professional advisors.
- Ask as many questions as necessary and have a trusted advisor look over any financial decision you are considering during this stressful time.
- Review the beneficiaries of your own insurance policies, IRAs, and other retirement accounts and make appropriate changes.
- Beneficiary designations can always be changed later—after you and your attorney have reviewed and updated your estate plan.

This material has been provided for general informational purposes only and does not constitute either tax or legal advice. Although we go to great lengths to make sure our information is accurate and useful, we recommend you consult a tax preparer, professional tax advisor, or lawyer.

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AY PARA
SA LAHAT**

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BY BENJAMIN ABAYA

Hate is Mankind's Global Adversary

As we all know, hate is a passionate dislike of anything that could touch the ego, conflict with one's personal idea, belief or even persons themselves. Indeed, abomination can be traced since biblical time when Jesus Christ was nailed on a cross by disbelievers. If we are to peruse the pages of our histories, we will find out that men kill one another, stronger nations mercilessly subjugate the weaker ones by tentacles of tyranny and oppression. Man's insatiable greed for power continued for thousands of years and it seems unabated, simply because there are leaders who like to perpetuate themselves into power by eliminating oppositions through all means in their command.

Today, vivid accounts in our newspapers and television news breaks showed us the deaths, destructions and sufferings of the Ukrainian people in a war perpetrated by Russia which could escalate into a thermo-nuclear war. The doomsday occurrence is in the hinge of possibility when all nations with nuclear weapons will be dragged to take sides and could be forced to unleash their nuclear weapons against each other. Such a scenario of possibility could bring us back to human living during the Stone Age when people lived in caves and their survival depended on what nature could provide. Indeed, hatred is really the most dangerous adversary of mankind.

However, just around where we reside and across the United States, hate is so rampant and pervasive that it often resulted in violence and even deaths for no apparent reason except just being Asian. There were elderly Filipinos who were just walking on the sidewalk of the street when they violently pushed them on the pavement and were mauled for just being Filipinos or just Asian looking individuals. A news account of a Filipino elderly who just moved to Las Vegas, Nevada was beaten inside his property by his neighbor for no reason at all. Many other brutal occurrences involving Asians that resulted in injuries and even deaths on the victims in many places which are still being investigated. Some of the perpetrators were arrested and criminally charged but many of them were able to escape and could not be identified.

Since March of 2021, the Stop Asian Hate movement has emerged as a powerful and unifying force for Filipinos in the face of escalating discrimination and violence against Asian communities. Rooted in a rich tapestry of culture and history, Filipinos have long faced adversity and marginalization, making them acutely aware of the importance of solidarity and resilience. With this mentality, Filipinos within the diaspora of America have coalesced and stood side-by-side to topple the

hatred in people's hearts.

It is lamentable to note that part of such circumstances could have emanated from the misconception that Asians are competing strongly for better jobs, housing, personal preferences and even went to the extent of blaming Asians to have spread the COVID-19 pandemic. Bear in mind that China never admitted that the deadly virus started from their laboratories or public markets, instead, the Chinese claimed that the virus was brought to China by virus infected foreigners.

We must bear in mind that Filipinos are hired based on their expertise, profession and skill and they have nothing to do with the spread of any kind of infectious virus. Just like other nationalities, the Filipinos suffered at the height of the pandemic and even today they are still observing necessary protocols to avoid possible spread of the virus again.

As the world continues to witness an alarming surge in anti-Asian sentiments and hate crimes, the Filipino community rallied together, vowing

to put an end to the injustices borne out of prejudice and ignorance. With shared determination to foster understanding, empathy and equality, Filipinos have fervently embraced the Stop Asian Hate movement, demonstrating their unwavering commitment to eradicating discrimination and promoting harmony not only for their own community but for all Asians facing injustice. In this pursuit of justice, equality and compassion, Filipinos have risen as an essential and influential voice in the global fight against hatred and bigotry.

In Sacramento, CA several organizations, led by Asian-American community leaders, have gathered to form the Laban group. Laban is a Tagalog word with many meanings, but in the context of the organization, they use "fight" as the definition, because their mission is to fight against the hatred that is inimical to the Asian community. The group has been educating communities, giving awareness, support, and preparation by providing crucial and reliable data and photos, to help people understand the urgency they are facing in today's America.

The Laban group, which consists of the Philippine Fiesta, Bulosan Center for Filipino Studies, Everyday Impact Consulting, and the Asian American Liberation Network, are continuing the campaign to Stop Asian Hate, while creating spaces for people to speak up on the grievances they are facing. They are active in all fronts of peaceful and legal remedies to minimize or eliminate such discriminatory acts against Filipinos and Asians in general.

Even with more awareness and support, what exactly has changed since the Stop Asian Hate movement began? As 2023 is fast approaching its end, we need to reflect as a community to see what has worked and what has not.



The Stop Asian Hate movement has emerged as a powerful and unifying force for Filipinos in the face of escalating discrimination and violence against Asian communities.

Photograph by Andri Tambunan



YOUR LIGHT YOUR TRUTH

YOU ARE MULTIFACETED, YOU ARE BRIGHT, YOU ARE SEEN AND YOU ARE NEEDED. DON'T BE AFRAID TO SHINE YOUR LIGHT THE WAY ONLY YOU CAN.

"To exist and be visibly queer, it allows the world to know that we exist and always have existed. I wish the Filipino community knew that spirituality can be more than Catholicism or organized religion. It can look like journaling, reflecting, meditating, energy cleansing, or being a steward to the land." **NIKKI ABELEDA**

TO REPORT A HATE ACT, CALL (833)866-4283 OR VISIT CAVSHATE.ORG



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.



FCSV SAP Ceremony 2023 A Scholastic Lane of the Community

BY MURRAY NAVARRO
FCSV Secretary

There are only two applicants who qualified based on the basic criteria set by the organization.

Some basic requirements are the following. Applicant must be a high school graduate for Academic Year (AY) 2022-23 and can provide a certified school transcript with the completed application. The graduate must have a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 or above and provide a brief written biography. This year's essay prompt states that "The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted all our lives, especially causing challenges to schools and their students. What were the challenges you faced and how did you work through them to get to where you are today?"

The SAP committee is composed of the FCSV Secretary Murray Navarro who served as the chairman with members as follows; Margarita Pasalo, Edna delos Reyes, Leila Pereira, Josie Domingo, Mercedes Guerrero, and Zenny Yagen. The committee and the panel of judges met the candidates through an online Zoom meeting for the interview portion of the selection process. The invited judges were Ms. Sharon Council who is the Site Leader of Heritage Peak Charter School of Pacific Charters Institute (PCI) in West Sacramento, California, and Dr. Divina Brown who is the Director of the High School Department of the Aldine Independent School District of Houston, Texas. A candidate was sent to a breakroom on Zoom to meet the judges for some personal questions geared toward his future plans and aspirations.

Who are our qualified candidates? First, Mariano Edralin graduated from Pleasant Grove High School of Elk Grove School District with an unweighted GPA of 3.6226. He is the son of Atty. Angelo Edralin and Mrs. Jasmin Delacruz. He plans to major in biology to become a future ophthalmologist. Second is Damen Ramos who graduated from Cosumnes Oaks High School in Elk Grove School District with an



The candidates with their families and FCSV SAP Committee and Board members



First place winner Damen Ramos with the SAP committee



Damen Ramos and Family with Mina Guerra and Edna Delos Reyes

unweighted GPA of 3.6452. He is the son of Mr. Erikson Ramos who is a tax auditor and Mrs. Marilyn Ramos who is a member service representative. He plans of becoming a nurse in the future and starts college at Cosumnes River College in the said city.

Based on their accumulated points from their respective unweighted GPA, interview points, and essay points, Damen Ramos was declared first place earning the Filipino Children's Literacy Advocate Group Scholarship Award while Mariano Edralin won the second place earning the Crisel

Centeno Scholarship Award. Both winners were given monetary awards of \$1,000 and \$500, respectively.

The former award wants to be anonymous. The group focused on uplifting the quality of education and literacy for young minds in the poorest neighborhoods in the Philippines. The group's effort is by means of donating books, donating money to build classrooms, providing computers, and assisting poor families with the kids' tuition demands.

In return, FCSV showed appreciation for the unwaver-

ing sponsorship donation by awarding a Certificate of Recognition to the anonymous group and Ms. Crisel Centeno for this year's sources of monetary awards. Also, certificates of appreciation were given to Ms. Aurora Ramos and Ms. Rosalinda Delacruz for their untiring effort to find candidates for this year's search.

And the committee appreciates the 2nd Vice President Mina Guerra for welcoming the candidates and their families in lieu of the president and 1st vice president during the awarding ceremony. The event was held at South Villa Chinese

Restaurant at 55th Ave, Sacramento CA last July 22, 2023, from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Other FCSV board members who graced the event were Luz Daclan, Bembet Borrromeo, and Sylvia Fortis.

The FCSV SAP Committee was able to augment some of the funding by selling crystal bracelets to the community during the Spring Brunch last April 2023 and during the Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento at Rizal Community Center last June 2023. The fundraising effort was able to gross a profit of \$972.00 towards the other expenses of the program.



Margarita Pasalo, Mina Guerra and Murray Navarro



Bembet Borrromeo, Murray Navarro, Margie Pasalo and Sylvia Fortis



Filipino American Legion Officers

On 16 Jul 2023, Installation of Officers Ceremonies took place at Magellan Hall, home of the Filipino American veterans of The American Legion Magellan Post 604 and the Auxiliary Unit 604.

BY DALE ESPERANTE

The Ladies ceremony took place first as agreed upon.

The American Legion Auxiliary Magellan Unit 604

Installing Officer: District 6 President Suzanne Winters

OUTGOING

Priscilla Ramos
Penafrancia Williams
Aida Azurin
Mercedes Guerrero
Jocelyn Banag
Florentina Abad
Bella Anderson
Rose Basos
Lilia Rivera
Carol Munar
Remedios Mangosing
Linda Cordero
Natividad Fontillas
Emeliana Mariano
Victoria Peluso

2023 - 2024

President
1st Vice President
2nd Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Chaplain
Historian
Parliamentarian
Jr. Past President
Sgt-at-Arms
Marshall
Director
Director
Director
Director

INCOMING

Priscilla Ramos
Lilia Rivera
Carol Munar
Aida Azurin
Mercedes Guerrero
Jocelyn Banag
Bella Anderson
Rose Basos
Penafrancia Williams
Remedios Mangosing
Emeliana Mariano
Estelita Rivera
Erlinda Cordero
Natividad Fontillas
Victoria Peluso



Photos by Dale Esperante



The newly installed Officers of the Magellan Post 604



The Officers of the American Legion Auxiliary Magellan Unit 604 with District 6 Pres. Suzanne Winters



THE VETERANS:

AMERICAN LEGION MAGELLAN POST 604
8831 GERBER ROAD
SACRAMENTO, CA 95828

MAGELLAN POST 604

Installing Officer: Past Area 1 Commander Lionel "Will" Williams

Outgoing Officers

Alberto Garcia, Sr.
Alfredo Amper
Vacant
Richard Weitzenberg
Lionel "Will" Williams
Fortunato Delacruz
Joe Beitia
Rey Ado
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A Gesture of Bayanihan

BY DALE ESPERANTE

On 16 Jul 2023, when most of the people had gone home after the official ceremonies and reception at Magellan Hall, I decided to leave as well.

As I was about to drive out of the parking lot at around 5:30pm, I noticed Manang Meding Mangosing and her sister standing outside their parked car. I found out that their car would not start. I had to leave but promised to return asap. Bayanihan Clinic members' Anthony Yap, Hannah Ruelos, Miles Garcia, and Althea Leones stayed behind with Manang Meding. When I returned, a young man named Abel Lacandazon was working on the car. Abel is a friend of Bayanihan Clinic member, Althea Leones. Abel worked patiently even though the heat of the sun was beaming down on him. The outside evening temperature was still in the high 80s, and it was probably the hottest day of the year so far in Sacramento.

Honestly, some of us were losing hope and talked about the car being towed away to a shop. To call a towing company might require us to wait another hour or more. We were all hot and tired already. As we were about to make that decision, Abel who kept working tried one more time. The car started!



Hannah and Miles Garcia standing outside Magellan Hall when the temperature was still in the 90s, to keep company for Manang Meding

This is another outstanding example of the support and devotion to the community by the Bayanihan Clinic of The University of California, Davis. Thank you to all those who stayed behind until the problem got fixed: Anthony Yap, Hannah Ruelos, Miles Garcia, Althea Leones, Comrade Bill Bostock, and of course Abel Lacandazon. Seniors in their 80s, Manang Meding and her sister were both relieved, grateful, and impressed by the help they received, especially from the Bayanihan Clinic's young adults. Manang Meding told me later that she will never forget the as-



Manang Meding thanking Abel Lacandazon, the mechanic friend of Althea. Abel got her car started and she drove herself and her sister home safely that evening.



Althea Leones who stayed behind with her fellow Bayanihan Clinic until Manang Meding got to drive safely home hours later.



Members of the Bayanihan Clinic of The University of California, Davis.

sistance of those who did not leave her, and her sister stranded behind. The Bayanihan Spirit is still with us, and will not abandon us!

Jose P. Abaya, Jr Birthday Celebration



Former writer contributor Jose P. Abaya, Jr. of the Philippine Fiesta newspaper both hardcopies and Online news celebrated his 82 years birthday on July 28 at the social hall of Season 52 along Arden way, Sacramento. The occasion was arranged by his family members led by his wife Faina with his six children and their respective spouses. The celebration took the occasion to be together after almost 4 years of not seeing each other in one place.

The celebration was attended by the parents-in-laws of the celebrant children's families with some relatives. For



Jun Abaya Jr. and wife Faina

more than 12 years, the owners/publishers of the Philippine Fiesta allowed the celebrant in collaboration with his wife to write in their publication about articles of the many Filipino American organizations in Sacramento and beyond. The more than 120 articles written, most of them were about the different towns, cities, provinces as well as the whole country in general showing the beauty, elegance and grace of their great traditions, cultures and customs. The gregariousness shown by the Filipino American members of the different organizations in Sacramento and outlying areas easily blended with other nationalities to join and enjoy the celebratory spirit of the occasion held.

Among those who attended the celebration were; Johnny and Luz Balneg, Emma Jones, Jack and Judy Schneider, Pinky and Mike Valentine, Romy and Olga Samaniego, Elizabeth Belvis and Bessie Samaniego, Josie and George Sy, Elizabeth Jones with children Everly and Tristan, Jong and Sheryl Abaya with son Antonio, Fredante and Mita Mabalot, Gemma Dayag, Jojo and Michelle Abaya with son Christopher, Jumpy and Heiu Ngo, John and Audrey Abaya with children Lennox and Korben, Ben and Kristina Abaya and some others.

Filipinas Won First World Cup

BY GABRIEL ORTIGOZA

The Philippines women national soccer team “Filipinas” won its first FIFA’s Women World Cup competition against host country New Zealand, Tuesday, July 25, 2023.

It was a historic win because it was the first time for Filipinas to qualify for the world cup.

One of the footballers is Reina Gabriela Villafañe Bonta, 24, daughter of California Attorney General Rob Bonta.

One special day, it was a Valentines Day, I met Rob at his office at the capitol in Sacramento to talk about his life.

Rob was born in the Philippines and came to the United States when he was two months old. Rob’s mother, Cynthia, migrated to the United States from the Philippines at the age of 28 years old. Cynthia was a student activist and a graduate of University of the Philippines.

Rob’s parents went back to the Philippines to serve as missionaries and after the mission they returned back to the United States and settled in California.

Rob grew up in Sacramento and completed his elementary, middle and high school in the same city. He finished his Bachelor of Arts Degree in History from Yale University in 1993. He went to University of Oxford in England in 1994 to pursue his graduate work in Politics, Philosophy and Economics. Rob came back to Connecticut



The Philippine women's football team at the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup.

to finished his law degree (Juris Doctorate) in 1998 at Yale College of Law. He was awarded Roosevelt L. Thompson Prize, a prestigious award given by Yale to its graduate.

He met his wife, Melisa, when he was 17 years old. The couple has three beautiful children.

Rob loves soccer. He played with the national team and became an MVP. He went to the different parts of the world where this endurance sport is played. He went with his team to Brazil to compete with the Brazilian team. He went to the Philippines to play soccer with the national team. He was recruited to join the Philippine national team but because of his American citizenship he was not qualified to join the team.

His chief of staff and his senior staffer at California State Assembly were both Filipinos. Rob has been working for Fili-



Rob Bonta in his office in Sacramento Capitol.

pino empowerment and proud of Filipino community’s ascending to power.

He was first sworn into office on December 3, 2012 wearing his Barong Tagalog in that formal ceremony covered by a sea of dark suits and ties and a bright Barong in the middle of it; while the ceremony was



Reina Gabriela Villafane Bonta

going on Rob glanced at his smart phone and noticed a tweet saying, “There was a Barong in the Assembly floor!”

Rob is very proud to have accomplished something historical, something enormous that he said we have broken the bamboo ceiling and we must be proud of it.

Similarly, Rob encourages Filipino-Americans to look forward as he found out that Filipino-Americans have been contributed to the success of the state for over 160 years.

California is the most diverse state of the country and as commonly believed that as

California goes so goes the rest of the country; when California sneezes the world get the colds.

“I will be the first Filipino-American member of the California State Assembly I promised I won’t be the last. That is something we can do together. We have to mentor great young leaders, give them support and confidence that they need.” Rob said.

He emphasized that we should do all those things that aren’t so always exciting or sexy but absolutely necessary. Public service is one of the noble professions that his parents and a lot of Filipino-Americans are involved in.

He decorated his office at the capitol by placing a poster that shows a Stockton Hotel in the 1920s which says, “Positively No Filipinos Allowed”.

Assemblyman Rob Bonta said the poster is a symbol of struggle that has been wage to get us where we are today and the struggle that needs to continue to be fought as we continue to move toward to increase Filipino political empowerment, progress, and justice in this country; we are all part of that struggle as a community.

Like father, like daughter. Just like Rob, Reina is also a graduate of Yale and a professional soccer player. She can be a politician someday like her father Rob who is California Attorney General and mother Melisa who is the incumbent assemblywoman of California’s 18th District (Alameda). (gabbyortigo@yahoo.com).

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Dinnah S. San Pedro

Editorial Assistant
Dane San Pedro

Layout and Design
Dave San Pedro

Photographer
Dave San Pedro

CONTRIBUTORS

Ben Abaya
Murray Navarro

Lorrie Williams
Chris Mateo

Dale Esperante
Madeline Go

Gabriel Ortigoza
Dr. Robyn M. Rodriguez

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Finding the 'Filipino-ness' of the Filipinas

BY JASMINE W. PAYO

How do we know if one is Filipino enough?

There's an old sports joke on Britain's tennis great Andy Murray – he's British when he wins, but Scottish when he loses.

I've always found this funny since, in quite a similar vein, it holds true for us Filipinos.

It happens quite often. Foreign athletes with Philippine roots – many of them from families of US immigrants, Filipino-Americans or Fil-Ams, as we've long called them – getting questioned on their "Filipino-ness."

Yet as soon as these supposed foreigners carry our flag to golden heights, we celebrate their glory and embrace them as ours. The "Fil" in the Fil-Am now carrying more weight than the "Am."

'I am always a little embarrassed when I see that we are not supporting our athletes and our coaches and our trainers and all the support groups, even the families,' says President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

It's amusing, really, because how do we know if one is Filipino enough?

Recently, the "Filipino-ness" of our national athletes turned into a hot topic again when the Philippine women's football team, nicknamed the Filipinas, made history as the first squad from our country, male or female, to reach the FIFA World Cup.

It's a mixed-race roster, so quite expectedly, they got grilled on their legitimacy to represent the Philippines.

"US Team B," one commented on social media on the mere basis of their looks and last names – Bolden, Long, Beard, McDaniel, Eggesvik, Guillou, and the rest of the 23 who were mostly born and raised in Europe or America.

In Rappler, we've always thought athletes should be more than just names in our game stories, hence, our staple Fast Facts features.

So in this case, we thought it's



The Philippine women's football team at the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup.

important to see glimpses of the Filipinas' "Filipino-ness," if that's what it would take to appreciate these ladies who pulled off an unprecedented feat of bringing the Philippines to football's biggest showcase.

More than career nuggets

We ran a quick profile on all 23 of them, just to show how they're "Filipinas by blood, by flag, by heart," proudly representing the country no matter if they were born in different parts of the world.

Initially, we thought of just career nuggets, but our ladies proved to be more than that off the pitch.

Filipinas defender Reina Bonta, for instance, is an award-winning filmmaker who graduated from Yale and also plays for a top Brazilian football club. She's the daughter of California attorney-general Robert Bonta, who was born in Queens City.

Sara Eggesvik, whose mother hails from Davao, can actually speak a bit of Bisaya (just check her TikTok videos). But this Fil-Norwegian midfielder is also studying to become a doctor, like her Fil-Am teammate Ryley Bugay.

Alicia Barker works as a cell line development scientist, while fellow Fil-Am Kaiya Jota looks set to study and play for Stanford University.

In interviews, these young ladies actually don't mind proving their "Filipino-ness" as



Filipinas co-captain Hali Long celebrates as the team wraps up its World Cup journey.

they share stories about their lolos and lolas, drop Filipino phrases beyond mabuhay, and during pre-match, even sing the national anthem with all their hearts (which we can't say for some locals, in fact).

The mere courage, though, to battle it out on the field for flag and country, despite great odds, should be enough reason to celebrate these Filipinas – not only in times of glory – much like how we did for our home-grown superstars Hidilyn Diaz, EJ Obiena, and Carlos Yulo.

This, for sure, begs the question: Why can't we produce more world-class athletes from our own backyard?

There's the ongoing Palarong Pambansa, returning after four years of getting shelved due to the pandemic.

It's the country's biggest grassroots sporting event, and some of our legends were Palaro discoveries, like track stars Lydia de Vega and Elma Muros, and swimmers Eric Buhain and Akiko Thomson.

Third-world woes

Unfortunately over the years, a lot of promising talents also fell through the cracks. It's a sad reality among third-world countries as sports isn't a priority for them.

Mainly, it's the lack of funding – for training, equipment,

nutrition, and everything else needed to whip a world-caliber athlete – that pulls the Philippines farther and farther away from the podium.

Since few local talents can really match with first-world foes, we sometimes end up tapping Fil-foreigners to give us a fighting chance on the international stage.

In some teams, like Gilas Pilipinas in basketball, we even naturalized Ginebra's American import Justin Brownlee, since realistically, most Filipinos will never be gifted with the same height and heft of the Caucasians and Africans.

The gap will again be glaring in a few weeks' time when basketball's best fly to Manila as the Philippines hosts the FIBA World Cup late this month.

Although we're bound to see the disparity in talent live, it's also one of those opportunities where our local athletes and coaches can learn, because even if we're a basketball-crazy nation, we know we're still far behind.

Since we're also nowhere near being a football country, a mixed-race squad, coaches included, may just be what the Philippines need to grow.

Not only do we need a boost from their advanced skills and knowledge, but they're also the ones who can plant grassroots inspiration on how far we could go. And perhaps, by then, we can easily see the "Filipino-ness" of all the brave warriors fighting for the country's glory. – Rappler.com



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Is Filipino Music Going International?

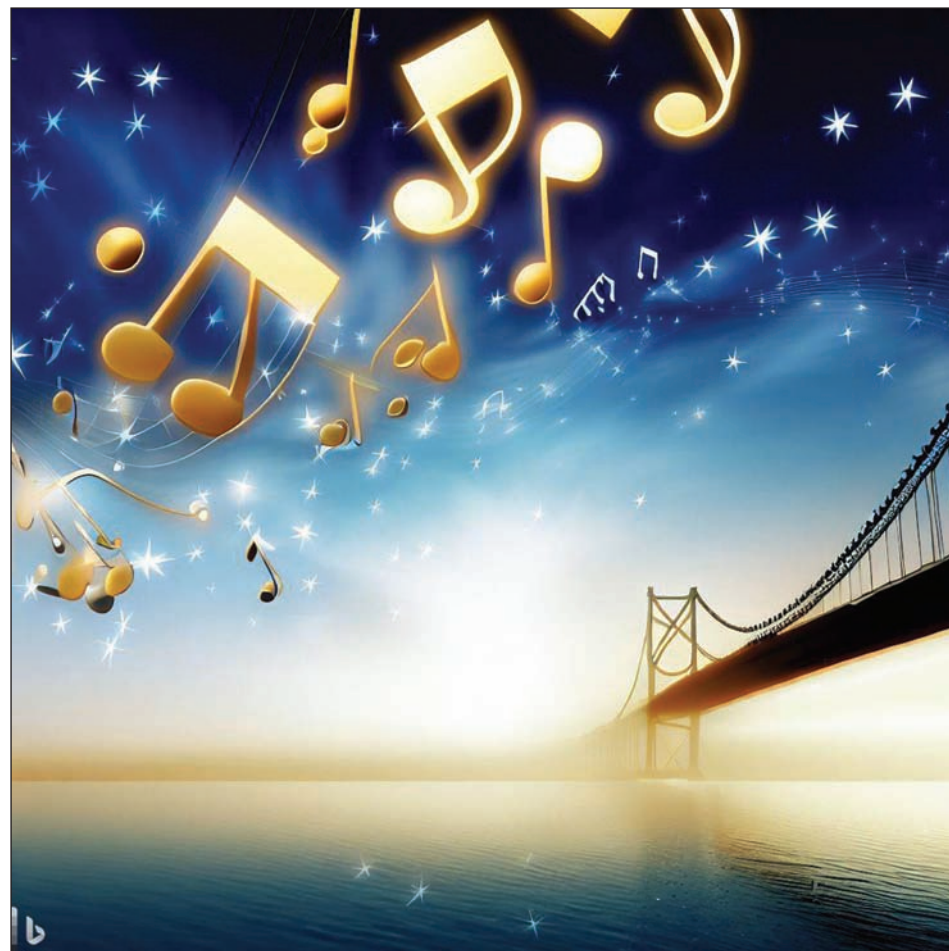
BY GIANCARLOANGULO

Filipinos have performed as musicians internationally at least since the 19th century. Soledad's Sister, the novel, has the KTV bar singer Rory hoping to perform in Saipan. There are by now regular concerts by Filipino groups for Filipino communities abroad, with the 1MX Music Festival recently in London and soon to be in Sydney and Toronto. Still just one Filipino group – SB19 – have built a truly international fan base as of now, including people who found out about them without the usual Pinoy friends or relatives.

#PPopRise

Of course SB19 are partly riding on the coattails of KPop, which first reached the West in the noughties and was known everywhere by the time Gangnam Style came out. KPop itself has its roots in American influence especially due to post-WW2 US troops. What has changed since the '50s is that global culture has become extremely diverse, with genres such as reggaeton or Afropop achieving international influence as well – which makes me ask: why not PPop also, given Filipino talent and global presence?

Post-WW2 Philippines also started by imitating American stars, for instance with Eddie Mesa as the Filipino Elvis. The



1970s brought OPM on one side and Filipino rock on the other, with names such as Hotdog and Pepe Smith respectively. The 1990s brought a further boom in Filipino rock bands. I tend to see imitation, adaptation and innovation as the stages of assimilating foreign influence into one's own culture, including music. PPop as a product of more recent Korean influence I think has gone through similar stages.

#SB19

Trained since 2016 under a Korean firm, SB19 made its debut five years ago with a video showing only Koreans, though the music was in Filipino. Their music video "Go Up" in a Korean-inspired style wasn't successful either at first. It took a dance practice video with the five young men going viral to make it a hit. SB19 eventually left their Korean management and have gradually developed a unique style going from typical Filipino ballads to rap, house and R&B – with all as strong vocalists and performers.

Their at times rocky route to fame involved critics

and haters, but also their very loyal fan base, known as A'tin, pronounced eighteen as that comes before nineteen, but also has the connotation of atin, ours. WYAT, meaning Where You At, a retro number about reconnecting to friends and family after the pandemic, kicked off their 2022 global tour. Fans from Canada travelled to US concert venues to see them. Regine Velasquez sang their song "Hanggang Sa Huli" with them at the homecoming concert of the WYAT tour.

Bing Image Creator: golden musical notes, stars and a huge suspension bridge against a blue sky at dawn in 2010s record cover style

A new era?

The almost cinematic trailer for their recent #Pagtatag EP made me finally notice SB19. Some years ago Giancarlo had mentioned PPop to me but I wasn't really interested yet. Another group, Alamat

were the ones I first noticed, with their catchy

number Aswang. Some weeks after the Pagtatag trailer, SB19 came out with Gento, a word play on ganito (like this) and ginto (gold) – a word play typical for their leader Pablo, who composes the group's music. Dance videos of Gento went up worldwide on Tiktok and elsewhere.

With their their originality and creativity fully unleashed, they were noticed by influencers just before their present tour to the USA and Canada, which starts July 21st in Chicago. Even the start of their world tour with two concerts at the Araneta Coliseum in June put them on the map of many Filipinos, who wondered what was going on and who is SB19.

Nowadays their music is the background for many a graduation dance in the

Philippines. Recently, a collaboration with US songwriter JVKE called Golden Hour was released.

What is key I think to international appeal is to have something both universal and unique, something human that all can relate to, but with an own distinct flavor. This isn't just about commercial success. It's also about soft power via cultural influence, about the Philippines as a brand. And about Filipinos succeeding through perseverance and determination as positive role models.

With 1Z which is SB19 managing itself wanting to help Filipino talents, it is also about new opportunities. Let us see where this all leads.



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