



# FILIPINO TIES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF CFO [www.cfo.gov.ph](http://www.cfo.gov.ph)



*The 2018 PAFIOO Awardees with President Duterte*

## PRESIDENT DUTERTE CONFERS AWARDS TO OUTSTANDING OVERSEAS FILIPINOS AND ORGANIZATIONS

President Rodrigo Duterte hailed Overseas Filipinos, OFW families and organizations, as he conferred the Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas (PAFIOO) to 25 outstanding OFs and organizations and Model OFW Family of the Year Award (MOFYA) to six families on December 5, 2018 at Malacañang Palace.

In conferring the Awards, the President was assisted by DOLE Secretary Silvestro Bello

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*President Rodrigo Roa Duterte while giving his keynote speech*

III, DSWD Secretary Rolando Bautista, CFO Secretary and Chairperson Justice Francisco “Nick” Acosta, and OWWA Administrator Hans Leo Cacdac.

“OFWs are the lifeblood of the nation. As appreciation for all your hardships, you have my assurance that the protection and promotion of your welfare and well-being will remain as one this administration’s top priorities,” President Duterte said in his speech during the awarding ceremony. “This nation will always recognize your invaluable contribution to nation-building, and this administration will continue to craft policies and implement programs that will respond to your needs and protect your rights,” he added. He also urged the OFWs to remain committed to their families “as we

work towards a more equitable progressive future for our country.”

The recipients of the 2018 PAFIOO have been selected from a total of 96 nominations received by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas from 28 countries through 37 Philippine embassies and consulates. The CFO is led by Secretary Acosta who said in his welcome message “The Filipino nation honors you not only for your wide ranging achievements but more for your advocacy in behalf of the marginalized, distressed, and underprivileged.” He also encouraged the awardees to “become our emissaries abroad”.

PAFIOO is a biennial search for individuals and organizations based abroad who have dedicated their work in the service of Filipinos. This year’s Presidential awardees come from 12 countries and territories and had gone through a 4-stage selection process involving multi-sectoral representation. The Awards have four categories – Banaag, Pamana ng Pilipino, Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino (LINKAPIL), and Kaanib ng Bayan.

The **Banaag Award** is conferred on Filipino individuals or organizations for their contributions that have significantly benefited or advanced the cause of overseas Filipino communities. The Banaag awardees are Corazon A. Francisco (Australia), Agnes Katbeth O. Kreimer (Peru), Dindo B. Malanyaon (Italy),

Juliet Montano (Taiwan), Pilipino Workers Center of Southern California (United States), Maria Cristina F. Sulaik (Sudan), and Wimler Foundation Hong Kong, Ltd. (Hong Kong).

The ***Pamana ng Pilipino Award*** is conferred on Filipino overseas, who, in exemplifying the



*President Duterte with CFO Secretary Nick Acosta, DOLE Secretary Silvestre Bello, DSWD Secretary Rolando Baustista, and OWWA Administrator Hans Caddac.*

talent and industry of the Filipino, have brought the country honor and recognition through excellence and distinction in the pursuit of their work or profession. The Pamana ng Pilipino awardees are Paul C. Balan (United States), Edward M. Brotonel (United States), Nicolas M. Caraquel (United States), Elizabeth L. Engle (United States), Maria Theresa A. Eviota (Switzerland), Pedro A. Jose (United States), Teresita A. Marques (Portugal), C. Joe Sayas, Jr. (United States), Jose Dennis C. Teodosio (Myanmar), Saturnino H. Tiamson, Jr. (Hong Kong), Jhett D. Tolentino (United States).



***The LINKAPIL Award*** is conferred on Filipino individuals or organizations for exceptional or significant contributions to the reconstruction, progress and development of the Philippines. The LINKAPIL awardees are Association of Fil-Am Teachers of America, Inc. (United States), Salvacion G. Cimanex (Netherlands), Filipino-American Law Enforcement Officers Association (United States), Friends Indeed U.S.A., Inc. (United States), and Hilda L. Gigioli (United States).

The ***Kaanib ng Bayan Award*** is conferred to foreign individuals or organizations for their exceptional or significant contribution to Philippine reconstruction, progress and development, or have significantly benefited a sector or community in the Philippines,

or advanced the cause of overseas Filipino communities. The Kaanib ng Bayan awardees are Foreign Domestic Worker Association for Social Support and Training (Singapore), and Stichting LOOP (Netherlands).

After the conferment of PAFIOO, the President also awarded the OFWs with Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) 2018 MOFYA. MOFYA is given to promote success stories of OFWs amid the challenges of

overseas employment and to highlight the role of OFW families as units in achieving socio-civic, education and professional success.

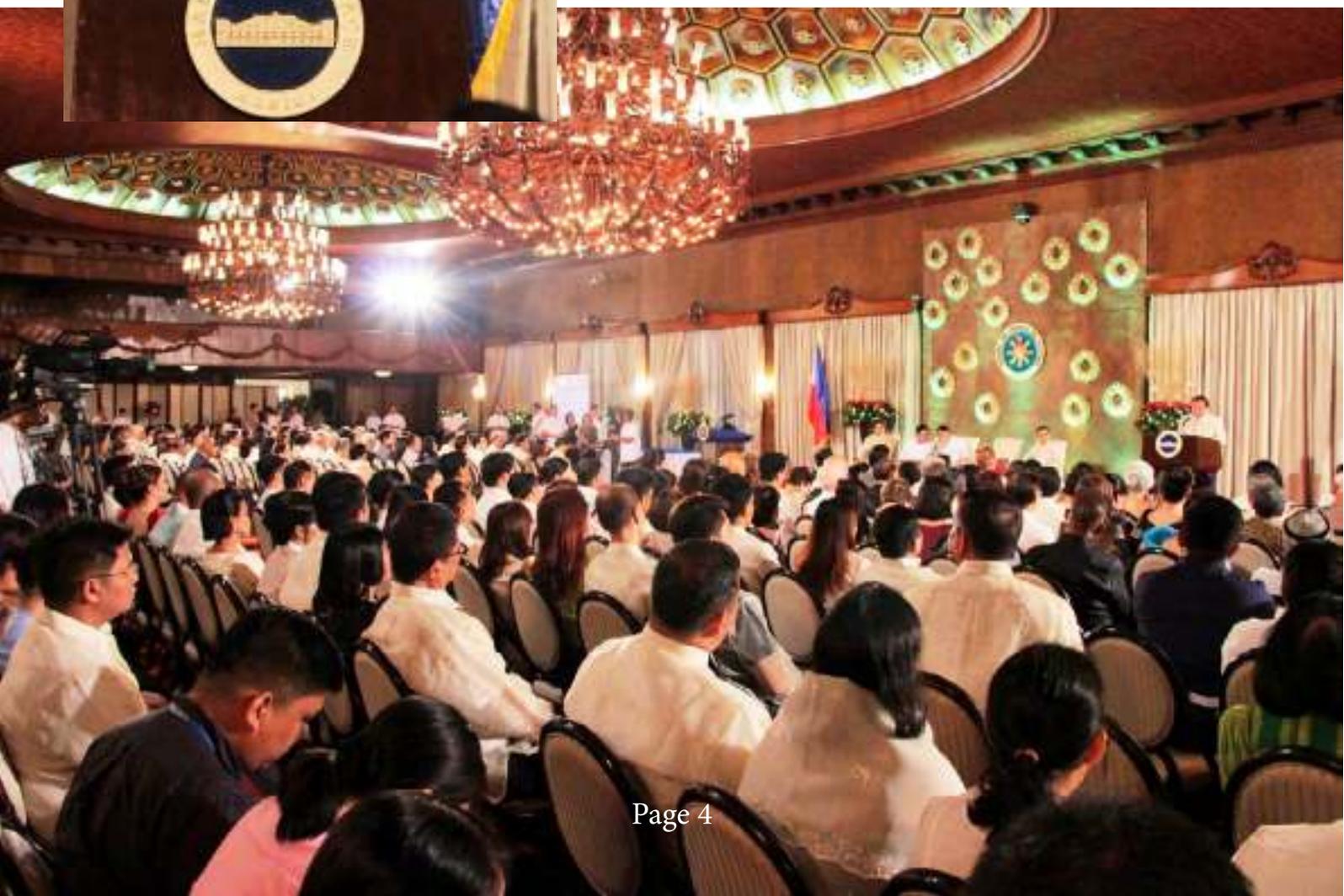
The 2018 MOFYA awardees are engineer Mohammad Ali Sulay Urao and family (outstanding achievement in community projects); engineer Arnulfo Navarro Geganto and family (in entrepreneurship); Josefina dela Chica Villamor and family (Model OFW Family of the Year: land-based); and Domingo Cuanang Jr. and family, Reynaldo Granada Gaitan and family, and Gemelito Geloca and family (sea-based OFW family).

*CFO Secretary Nick Acosta while giving his welcome remarks*



The event was hosted by CFO Usec. Astravel Pimentel-Naik and OWWA Deputy Administrator Arnell Ignacio.

*The 2018 PAFIOO and MOFYA Awarding Ceremony*





*Some of the 2018 Presidential Awardees, their guests, and the 2018 Presidential Awards secretariat*



## Banaag Awardees



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



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



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



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

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



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

7. Wimler Foundation Hong Kong, Ltd. (Hong Kong) - A non-profit and charitable organization which promotes the development and empowerment of Filipino migrants in Hong Kong and other ethnic communities. The organization supports development-oriented projects in partnership with the public and private sectors by mobilizing resources for the education of underprivileged children and economic empowerment of local communities in the Philippines.



## Pamana ng Pilipino Awardees

1. Paul C. Balan (United States) – An esteemed coinage and medal designer based in Chicago. He is the first Filipino and first Asian whose designs have been selected for commemorative coins and congressional medals of the United States.

2. Edward M. Brotonel (United States) – A well-respected special agent in the US Army Criminal Investigation Division who received various meritorious recognitions for uncovering major theft and felony crimes and fraud in the US Army, the Pentagon and during the post 9-11 Iraq reconstruction.

3. Nicolas M. Caraquel (United States) – A sought-after immigration lawyer based in New York who broke out of poverty through his determination and hard work. He assists in facilitating the family reunification process among Filipinos in the United States.

4. Elizabeth Lajato Merto-Engle (United States) – A pioneering woman engineer in the state of Alaska who served in various leadership roles and managed major pipeline projects. Apart from her exemplary professional career, she is also involved in various charitable, cultural and political organizations.



5. Maria Theresa A. Eviota (Switzerland) – A housekeeper based in Berne, Switzerland who has served excellently in numerous foreign embassies and diplomatic residences and flourished as a community leader of the Samahang Pilipina Bern, an organization of Filipinos in Switzerland that advocates for migrant women’s rights .

6. Pedro A. Jose (United States) – A scientist, physician and academician all rolled into one, he is known for his breakthrough research and practice on hypertension which benefitted not only the United States and the Philippines but also other countries across the globe.

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

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



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

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

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

## Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino (LINKAPIL) Awardees

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





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

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

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

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



## Kaanib ng Bayan Awardees

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



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



The 2018 Presidential awardees with CFO Secretary Nick Acosta and Usec. Astravel Pimentel-Naik

## CFO HOSTS PRE-AWARDS TESTIMONIAL DINNER FOR 2018 PAFIOO AWARDEES

12/04/2018. The Commission on Filipinos Overseas hosted a Pre-Awards Testimonial Dinner in honor of the 2018 Presidential Awardees on December 3, 2018 at the Manila Hotel. CFO Secretary Justice Francisco “Nick” Acosta and Usec. Astravel Pimentel-Naik

welcomed and gave “plaque of commendation” to all the awardees who are based overseas.

In his inspirational message, Secretary Acosta recognized the valuable contributions of the awardees - “We have with us a diverse set of awardees from Asia, Australia, the Middle East, Latin America, and Northern America across different fields of expertise who inspire the next generation of Filipino professionals. Our overseas Filipinos have evolved from being just senders of cash or personal remittances to becoming investors and entrepreneurs, achievers, good Samaritans, and humanitarians. They have learned to pay forward the blessings they have gained and achieved. For both the Philippines and their host countries, they have become models of industry, sacrifice, and love.” He also conveyed that under

CFO Secretary Nick Acosta while giving his inspirational message



CFO Secretary Nick Acosta, CFO Usec. Astra Pimentel-Naik, and PAGCOR President Alfredo Lim

Launching of the LINKAPIL website



and important role in nation-building. They said that the Presidential medallion they will be receiving from President Duterte will serve as an inspiration for them to continue their good deeds in contributing to Philippine progress and development and assisting overseas Filipino communities.

the present administration, President Rodrigo Duterte gives utmost priority to overseas Filipinos. He also happily announced that for the first time since the conferment of the Presidential Awards, the CFO in partnership with PAGCOR and its President Atty. Alfredo Lim, will be sponsoring the roundtrip airfare and hotel accommodation of all the awardees. Atty. Lim praised the awardees for their hard work and for upholding the honor and pride of the Philippines.

The awardees expressed gratitude for the Awards, saying it was an early Christmas gift and truly a humbling experience that the Philippine government noticed their sacrifices, benevolence, extraordinary talent

Acknowledging the immense philanthropic contributions of overseas Filipinos and for transparency in government transactions, Usec. Pimentel-Naik led the launching of the new *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* (LINKAPIL) online payment system. The LINKAPIL Program, a pioneering diaspora philanthropy service of the government, provides a system for overseas Filipinos who desire to do their share in serving fellow Filipinos by supporting developmental projects in the Philippines.

Aside from the sumptuous buffet dinner and incentives, awardees were also treated to a night full of merriment and original Filipino songs rendered by Philippine music icon Joey Ayala, Dawn Bande, and Tales of Music Strings.



*Some photos during the pre-awards testimonial dinner*

