



CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES CHICAGO

PRESS RELEASE No. 01- 2020

FYLPRO 2019 IMMERSION PROGRAM STRENGTHENS FILIPINO-AMERICAN TIES TO THE PHILIPPINES

Chicago, 02 January 2020 – For seven days at the end of November, 14 Filipino Americans from across the U.S. and Guam – including Chicago-based Mr. Everett Icao – embraced their roots, enriched their identities and strengthened their ties to the land of their ancestors.

In its eighth year, the 2019 Filipino Young Leaders Program (FYLPRO) included a diverse and talented cohort of leaders who have excelled in their respective industries from medicine, law, technology, business, finance, government, and media. In cooperation with the Ayala Foundation and Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs, FYLPRO and its alumni have gone on to build and strengthen ties between the U.S. and the Philippines via various businesses and civic engagement projects.

This year, Mr. Icao represented the Midwest region. Mr. Icao is a graduate of Loyola University Chicago. An active member in numerous organizations in the Filipino-American Community that include, but not limited to the Philippine-American Cultural Foundation, Filipino-American National Historical Society Chicago, and Knights of Rizal. Mr. Icao strongly believes and advocates for change in issues of social and economic injustice, encourages community collaboration, and the cultivation of youth leadership. He is currently employed at Cooney & Conway, a plaintiff's personal injury firm and one day aspires to complete his legal education so that he may represent those who need an advocate.

Icao's legacy project is the progressive sustainability and expansion of the U.S. Midwest Youth Leaders in Diaspora (YouLeadD) Immersion program. In partnership with the Philippine Consul General of Chicago, Dr. Gina Jamoralin and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, the program seeks to help participants answer long-standing questions about themselves and their identities as half- or part-Filipinos that they may have had growing up. Joining the program would aid them in the journey of understanding a significant part of their identities, which would move them toward a more meaningful relationship with their Filipino families and the nation itself.

During the FYLPRO immersion week in Manila, Mr. Icao along with his fellow delegates met with representatives and leaders from government, business, community, and culture. Mr. Icao expressed appreciation to the Philippine Embassy in Washington, D.C., led by Philippine Ambassador to the U.S., Jose Manuel "Babe" Romauldez, and the Philippine Consulate General in Chicago for the opportunity to be part of FYLPRO 2019.

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DFA Undersecretary Ernesto Abella (left), FYLPRO Chicago delegate Mr. Everett Icao (2nd from left), Chairman & CEO of Ayala Corporation Mr. Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II (3rd from left), and FYLPRO 2019 President Mr. JR Calanoc (right). (Photo by Ayala Foundation, Inc.)



Fourteen (14) delegates posing in traditional Filipiniana dresses and barongs in celebration of completing their Immersion Program during the Closing Ceremonies. (Photo by Ayala Foundation, Inc.)



FYLPRO 2019 delegates pose with Mayor Francisco “Isko” Moreno Domagoso (center) after a courtesy call in his office at City Hall of Manila.