



CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES CHICAGO

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PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL TAKES PART IN WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE ON ASIAN AMERICANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Consul General Generoso D.G. Calonge led a team from the Philippine Consulate General in Chicago that participated in a community outreach organized by the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (WHIAAPI) – Great Lakes Regional Network in Elgin, Illinois on Saturday, January 23.

The WHIAAPI has tasked senior officials from twenty-four federal agencies and offices to increase access to federal programs where the AAPI communities may be underserved. Based on statistics, the AAPI as a sector currently comprises 5 percent of the total U.S. population, and it is estimated to grow up to 9 percent by 2050.

The Chicago-based Great Lakes Regional Network of the WHIAAPI, in cooperation with the Lao American Association of Illinois and the Senior Services Associates, Inc., organized the community outreach focusing on the Affordable Care Act considering that, according to figures cited by the WHIAAPI, health insurance enrolment remains a significant issue with 1 in 4 AAPIs being unable to see a doctor in the last year.

Moreover, representatives from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Social Security Administration (SSA), National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Department of Labor – Wage and Hour Division (WHD), Equal Employment and Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Small Business Administration (SBA), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHUD) each made a presentation on their agencies' respective programs and services and were on hand to distribute informational materials and address questions from the participants.

Consul General Calonge lauded the WHIAAPI for conducting such an important community service for the benefit of AAPIs in Illinois. He also took the opportunity to thank federal agencies, such as the SSA, USCIS, NLRB, OSHA and EEOC, that responded to the Philippine Consulate General's invitation to discuss their programs with the Filipino community during its own monthly gatherings and consular outreach outside Illinois the previous year.

In addition, he spoke about the difficulties of immigrants, especially during the early stages of their arrival in the U.S. He urged Asians to unite and seek more opportunities for public service to showcase Asians' commitment to their adopted communities.

The almost day-long event likewise enabled the Consulate team to interface with Filipino-Americans in the assembly and enlarge its network of friendship and cooperation with U.S. federal officials. **END**



PHOTO Releases:



Consul General Generoso D.G. Calonge delivers his remarks at the start of the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (WHIAAPI) - Great Lakes Regional Network Community Outreach in Elgin, Illinois, 23 January 2016. Mr. Doug Nguyen, (left, seated) Regional Communications Director of the Social Security Administration, served as facilitator of the event, (Photo: courtesy of Ms. Anna Liza Alcantara)



Members of the various Asian American and Pacific Islander communities intently listen to Consul General Calonge during the WHIAAPI outreach held at the Senior Services Associates, Inc. facility in the town of Elgin, IL, 35 miles northwest of Chicago (Photo: courtesy of Ms. Anna Liza Alcantara)



***Ms. Roxanne Volkmann**, a Filipino-American Labor Relations Specialist from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, discusses her functions with **DCG Romulo Victor M. Israel Jr.**, **Consul General Generoso D.G. Calonge**, and **Cultural Officer Anna Liza Alcantara** (seated), during a break at the WHIAAPI Great Lakes Regional Network community outreach in Elgin, IL (Photo: courtesy of Ms. Anita F. Saldo)*