



CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES CHICAGO

Press Release 23-2017

The Consulate General of the Philippines in Chicago Celebrates *Araw ng Kagitingan*

The 75th *Araw ng Kagitingan* (Day of Valor) was celebrated on Saturday, 08 April 2017, in Chicago by the Consulate General of the Philippines, members of the Filipino-American Community in Chicagoland, U.S. Officials and several surviving World War II veterans.

The program started with the wreath laying ceremony held at the Bataan-Corregidor Memorial Bridge at 9:00 am, at the corner of State Street and Wacker Drive.

The second part of the program was held at the *Kalayaan* Hall of the Consulate General with the members of the Filipino-American community, World War II veterans, representative from the Illinois National Guard and representatives from the Chicago Mayor's Office and Illinois Governor's Office.

This year's theme, "*Parangal sa mga Beterano, Tungo sa Bayan na Nararapat sa mga Pilipino, mga Pilipino na Nararapat sa Bayan*" remembers those who fought in defending the Philippines during the war and their unwavering contributions in securing the country's sovereignty and independence.

In his opening remarks, Consul General Generoso DG Calonge said: "We shall honor the memories of brave sacrifices of our Filipino and American soldiers in Bataan and we shall ensure that Bataan shall be forever remembered. Many of our veterans have now passed on. But we will always honor them especially on this important day. And we can never thank them enough."

The Illinois National Guard representative, Col. Mark Jackson, extended his "warmest welcome" to the veterans as they gathered in observance of the 75th Commemoration of Bataan Day. He expressed appreciation in participating in the event that offered the perfect opportunity to come together and pay tribute to the courageous veterans and survivors of the infamous Bataan "Death March."

Proclamations from Governor Bruce Rauner and Mayor Rahm Emanuel declaring 09 April 2015 as Bataan Day in Illinois and Chicago, respectively, were also read by their representatives. A letter-greeting from U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky's was also read followed by the awarding of commemorative medals and certificates of recognition to FilAm Veterans, Mr. Emilio Garcera and Mr. Dominador Ramirez, of the Philippine American Legion Post 509.

A reception, hosted by the Consulate General and the Chicago's Filipino-American Community, followed by a fellowship, concluded the day's event. **END**





Wreath laying ceremony at the Bataan-Corregidor Memorial Bridge in Chicago with Consul General Generoso D.G. Calonge (second from left), Deputy Consul General Romulo Victor M. Israel, Jr. (fifth from left) and surviving World War II veterans. (Photo courtesy of Mr. Arneil Torres)



(From left) Consul General Generoso DG Calonge, Col. Mark Jackson, Assistant Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard, Maj. Edwin Walker IV of the Maywood Bataan Day Organization (MBDO), Fil-Am Veterans Messrs. Emilio Garcera and Dominador Ramirez, during the singing of the US National Anthem.



Consul General Generoso DG Calonge with Consulate officers and staff members, World War II veterans, U.S. Officials and members of the Filipino Community.



Mr. Sean Conejos, National Public Relations Officer of the Philippine Scouts Heritage Society, shared memorabilia and uniforms of Bataan Death March survivors, which will be on display at the reception area of the Consulate General until 06 May 2017, marking the day Corregidor Island was captured in 1942.