



CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES CHICAGO

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CONSULATE GENERAL IN OMAHA FOR FHF SPRING GALA AND CONSULAR OUTREACH SERVICE

Chicago, 21 May 2019 – A team from the Philippine Consulate General in Chicago graced the First Annual Spring Gala of the Filipino Heritage Foundation and delivered consular services to the Filipino community in Omaha, Nebraska over the weekend.

Prior to the outreach service, the team attended a dinner program on Friday evening organized by FHF where Republican Congressman Don Bacon of the 2nd District of Nebraska was the guest speaker. Emceed by Ms. Jennifer Zeppelin, Weather News Anchor of KMTV Channel 3, the program also featured cultural presentations and a special number by Ms. Phoenix Stanford, the reigning Ms. Nebraska's Outstanding Teen, who will soon be competing for the title of Ms. America's Outstanding Teen 2020.

Along with his memories of Clark, Baguio City and San Fernando, La Union when he was stationed in the Philippines as USAF officer, Congressman Bacon recalled the return of Balangiga Bells as one of the special connections with the Philippines that he holds. First elected in 2016, he has joined the US-PH Friendship Caucus and currently serves on the US House Agriculture and Armed Services Committees.

Led by Deputy Consul General Romulo Victor Israel Jr., the team rendered a total of 189 consular services, including 149 passport applications and 13 dual citizenship petitions, during the outreach held on Saturday at the Omaha Marriott. Applicants came not only from Nebraska, but also from the neighboring states of Iowa and South Dakota.

DCG Israel expressed gratitude to Congressman Bacon for his support to the Philippines and the Filipino community. He thanked the FHF for collaborating with the Consulate General and highlighting Filipino cultural heritage through their Spring Gala. Recognizing the potentials of the community, he acknowledged the special and continuing contributions of young Fil-Ams like Ms. Stanford as well as Ms. Makayla Leiting, a budding fashion designer who promotes Philippine indigenous materials.

He also gave a presentation on the second Midwest YouLeaD Immersion Program slated for 3-9 January 2020. A joint project of the Consulate General with the Commission on Filipinos Overseas, it provides millennial Filipino-Americans a special opportunity to discover their roots and heritage towards becoming active participants and future leaders in their respective communities.

The Consulate General conducted its first outreach service in Omaha in May 2017, and has worked with Filipino community leaders in both instances to ensure the success of said activity. Nebraska is home to around five thousand Filipinos and Filipino-Americans. **END**

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The team from the Philippine Consulate General led by Deputy Consul General Romulo Victor Israel Jr. (4th from left) is joined by Congressman Don Bacon (4th from right), Ms. Jennifer Zeppelin of KMTV Channel 3 (3rd from right) and Ms. Ana Marie Peery, FHF President (2nd from right).



Congressman Bacon delivering his remarks at the Filipino Heritage Foundation's First Annual Spring Gala at the Sheraton Hotel in Omaha, May 17



The consular team shown processing passport applications during the outreach service held at the Omaha Marriott on May 18



Approved dual citizenship petitioners are all smiles after the oath-taking administered by DCG Israel. Ms. Phoenix Stanford, Filipino-American winner of the Miss Nebraska's Outstanding Teen 2019 (front row in yellow) gladly joins them.



The Consular Team with FHF officers and volunteers pose for a photo at the end of the consular outreach service. Standing (l-r): Emmanuel Milante, Leila Imperial, Tess Leiting, Dan Sabeniano, Fritz de Jesus and Ragan Maning; Seated (l-r): Bebina Freeman, Ana Marie Peery, DCG Israel, Cheryl Lindemann, Vice-President of FHF, and Regina Korcek.