TWELVE (12) FILIPINO-AMERICAN MILLENNIALS COMPLETE THE MIDWEST YOUTH LEADERS IN DIASPORA (YOULEAD) IMMERSION PROGRAM

Chicago, 14 January 2019 – In line with the Consulate General’s vision and mission of engaging second and third generations of Filipino-Americans to help them reconnect with their Filipino identity, twelve (12) delegates sent by the Philippine Consulate General in Chicago wrapped up the first-ever Midwest Youth Leaders in Diaspora (YouLead) Immersion Program to the Philippines covering Manila, Corregidor, Cavite and Tagaytay on 03-09 January 2019.

Conducted by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), the first half of the seven (7) day module includes a workshop on basic conversational Filipino; interactive discussion on Filipino culture facilitated by Dr. Felipe De Leon, former Chair of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA); lecture on Philippine governance and migration; and a tour of the beauty and history of the Corregidor Island to give the millennials a better understanding of our history. Participants were also given a chance to visit the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) in Manila and call on the Acting Secretary of Foreign Affairs followed by a briefing on the functions of the DFA especially in assisting Filipinos around the world.

From Manila, the Midwest YouLead team traveled to a Gawad Kalinga (GK) community in Dasmarinas, Cavite. Led by GK volunteer Mr. Jonathan Sulit, the group toured around the GK village facilities, participated in the house build activity and were accommodated by the host families’ overnight. GK is a Philippine-based organization that aims to provide a sustainable community to end poverty for five (5) million families in the country.

After a tiring yet fulfilling two (2) days stay at GK, the participants went to Tagaytay and explored the wonders of Taal Volcano. In the evening of Day 6, a culminating activity to draw insights and feedback of the Midwest delegates about the program before going back to Manila the next day for the closing ceremony.

Given the successful launch of the program, Consul General Gina A. Jamoralin says she plans to undertake the Midwest YouLead Immersion Program as an annual project of the Philippine Consulate. She encourages the parents and FilCom organizations in the Midwest to have their children, 16-25 years old, to join the next batch of the Midwest YouLead to know and appreciate their Filipino heritage.

The Midwest YouLead Immersion Program is a joint project of the Philippine Consulate General in Chicago and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), in cooperation with Ayala/Avida Land Inc., Philippine Medical Association in Chicago (PMAC) and the Honorary Consulate General in Michigan.
Midwest YouLead participants during the courtesy call on Undersecretary for Strategic Communications and Research Ernesto C. Abella (center) at the Carlos P. Garcia Conference Room at the Department of Foreign Affairs, Manila on 04 January 2019.

Presentation of Ayala Land, one of the major sponsor of the Midwest YouLead Immersion Program, led by Mr. Manuel U. Arbues II titled, "Moving with every Step" at the CFO Office in Manila.
Participants were able to explore various historical facts and Presidential memorabilia displayed during the Malacañang Museum Tour.

Daylong activity of the Midwest YouLead participants exploring the history and beauty of the Corregidor Island.
Top: At Gawad Kalinga's (GK) house build activity and gift giving with the schoolchildren at the village.
Bottom: The group explored the wonders of Taal Volcano in Tagaytay.
Midwest YouLead’s group photo with Hon. Francisco P. Acosta, Chairperson of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), during the closing ceremony held at the CFO Office in Manila on 09 January 2019.