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Philippine Consulate General Holds Historic *Kalayaan 2019* Reception in Chicago

18 June 2019, Chicago – The Philippine Consulate General in Chicago hosted for the first time a mid-morning reception to commemorate the 121st Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence at the famed Union League Club of Chicago.

Together with officials from the Chicago Consular Corps, US federal, state and local government institutions and business community, Filipino community leaders from Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin, as well as participants in the first US Midwest Youth Leaders in the Diaspora (YouLeaD) Immersion Program and former Filipino Young Leaders Program (FYLPRO) delegates graced the occasion in their colorful Filipino attire.

Consul General Gina A. Jamoralin led the officers and staff of the Philippine Consulate General in receiving the guests. As host of the event, she accepted congratulatory messages and proclamations from US Representative Janice Schakowsky, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker, State Attorney General Kwame Raoul, State Comptroller Susana Mendoza, Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas, Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot, and Kankakee Mayor Chastity-Wells Armstrong.

The Consul General called to mind the courage and heroism of Filipinos who fought for the country's independence. As she noted in her welcome remarks, *"It is only fitting that we commemorate their sacrifices which allowed us the present generation of Filipinos to be where we are today – free, prosperous and one nation."*

She likewise lauded the enduring bond between the Philippines and the United States. She hailed the close people-to-people relations and increased two-way trade particularly with Midwest states and flow of investments from Midwest-based companies. Milestones in the two countries' longstanding relations that promote not only mutual economic benefits, but also strengthen their common democratic foundations.

Consul General Jamoralin thanked the US officials for their presence and special messages and her fellow Consuls General in Chicago for their support. She also expressed appreciation for the members of her team, Filipino community leaders, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts for helping realize the visit and lecture of Professor Ambeth Ocampo in Chicago, and all the guests.

A special musical number was performed by Rodell Rosel, Grammy-nominated Filipino tenor and a guest of major musical organizations in the US, featuring a Basil Valdez hit. It was followed by a presentation on the relaunch of the Midwest YouLeaD Immersion Program on 3-9 January 2020, Philippine tourism and investment video materials, and generous serving of traditional Filipino food. **END**



Consul General Gina Jamoralin and DCG Romulo Victor Israel Jr. receiving Chicago Consular Corps officials (left) and Filipino community leaders from Indiana (right).



Ms. Christiana J. Santiago (left) singing the Philippine National Anthem a cappella. Consul General Jamoralin (right) delivering her welcome remarks.



Mr. Rodell Rosel, Filipino Tenor, (left) belts out a Basil Valdez song, "Nais Ko". Filipino community leaders from NaFFAA Illinois and Missouri (left) showcase their Filipino attire with 2018 CFO Presidential Awardee Mr. Edward Brotonel wearing his medal.



Kankakee City Mayor Chastity Wells-Armstrong congratulating Consul General Jamoralin (above left); and Cook County Appellate Court Justice Jesse Reyes with Consul General Jamoralin and Czech Consul General Jaroslav Kanturek and his wife (above right)



FYLPRO delegates from Chicago strike a dramatic pose with Consul General Jamoralin (left) while two of the participants in the first Midwest YouLeaD Immersion Program (right) have their own photo op.



Members of the staff of the Philippine Consulate General in Chicago and their families with Consul Melchor Lalunio, Jr. (far right)



Consul General Jamoralin, flanked by DCG Romulo Victor Israel Jr. (seated right), Consul Ryan Gener (seated left) and staff members of the Philippine Consulate General take a minute to pose for posterity. (Photos courtesy of Chicago PCG)