



CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES CHICAGO

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U.S. MIDWEST DELEGATION VISITS AWESOME PALAWAN AFTER A TOUR OF CLARK CITY AND HISTORICAL SITES IN THE PHILIPPINES

July 20, 2019, El Nido, Palawan - A delegation of Filipinos and Americans from the U.S. Midwest are currently traveling to El Nido, Palawan as part of the US-wide participants to the 2019 VIP (Very Important *Pinoy*) Tour (formerly Ambassadors Tour) being held in the Philippines from 14 to 21 July 2019.

Led by Philippine Consul General to Chicago Gina A. Jamoralin, the thirty-four delegates from the Midwest comprised of participants from Chicago, Illinois and other cities such as Minneapolis, Minnesota and St. Louis, Missouri. The size of this year's delegation from the US Midwest is the largest to date since the tour began thirteen years ago.

This year's tour brought the entire delegation from the U.S. West and East Coasts, Midwest, Hawaii, and Guam to Manila, Clark City in Pampanga, Mt. Samat Shrine in Pilar City, Bataan as well as the route of the infamous WW II Death March and surrender site of Filipino and American defenders of Bataan in Balanga, Bataan, and finally to El Nido, Palawan. The highlight of the weeklong tour was the wreath-laying ceremony at the Rizal Park Monument on July 15 with Manila Mayor Isko Moreno leading the ceremonies.

The delegates, many of whom are visiting the Philippines for the first time, are excited about the trip and awed by the warmth and hospitality of the host communities visited as well as the richness and diversity of Philippine culture. Many of the Midwest delegates promised to join next year's VIP Tour, attracted by its exciting itinerary, excellent arrangements, VIP treatment and reasonable and competitive tour costs.

The VIP Tour is a joint project of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Tourism in cooperation with all the Philippine Consulates in the U.S. (Agana, Chicago, Honolulu, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco) and the Philippine Embassy in Washington DC and Rajah Tours. This year's tour coordinator is the Philippine Consulate General in San Francisco. **END**





Consul General Jamoralin (front row, fourth from left) with the US Midwest delegation at the foot of the Memorial Cross of the Mt. Samat National Shrine or “Dambana ng Kagitingan” in honor of the heroism of Filipino and American soldiers who fought shoulder to shoulder during WWII.



Manila Mayor Isko Moreno (front row, sixth from left) poses with Consul General Jamoralin and members of the Midwest delegation to the 2019 VIP Tour in front of the Rizal Monument



***Above:** Consul General Jamoralin (center) with Midwest delegates at the dinner hosted by the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) in Clark, Pampanga. **Below:** Delegates to the VIP Tour from Missouri pose with Consul General Jamoralin and Atty. Alejandra Clemente of Rajah Tours (standing, second from right)*





Members of the US Midwest delegation visiting the Bataan WWII Museum in Balanga City, Bataan