



Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

GMA honors Filipino expats, organizations overseas exemplifying Filipino excellence

MANILA, Dec. 11 (Pinoy Global) - President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo led today the conferment of the 2008 Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas to 31 distinguished Filipino and foreign organizations in recognition of their assistance to national development efforts, advancing the cause of Filipino communities abroad, and for excelling in their fields of expertise or profession. The simple conferment ceremonies were held at the Rizal Hall in Malacanang. The biennial Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas, which was institutionalized in Dec. 1991 through Executive Order 498, is aimed at recognizing dedicated service and efforts for the advancement and improvement of the lives of Filipinos, particularly the marginalized sector, in the Philippines and abroad. The awards are also given to Filipinos who have excelled in their respective professions. The awards marked the opening of the celebration of the Month of Overseas Filipinos and the International Migrants' Day. Since its inception, the awards have been conferred to 283 Filipinos and foreign individuals and private organizations overseas. The presidential awards are divided into four categories: the Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino Award, Kaanib ng Bayan Award, Banaag Award, and Pamana ng Pilipino Award. Four Filipino individuals and organizations joined today 33 earlier recipients of the Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino Award (LKPA) for their exceptional contribution to Philippine progress and development as well as their commitment to serve the Filipino people that reflected not only on themselves but on the indomitable spirit of Bayanihan. The President, assisted by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, presented the LKPA to the Association of Philippine Physicians of America of New York for its efforts in maintaining the quality of the medical profession, especially of Filipino medical practitioners in the US, and extending continuous assistance to the motherland. The other LKPA recipients were Tobias Enverga Jr., for his patriotism and love for fellow

Filipinos through continuous delivery of assistance and support by spearheading fund-raising campaigns for project that benefits his kababayans; The Filipino Women's Association United Kingdom (UK) for uplifting the image of Filipino women in the United Kingdom, at the same time advancing the cause of the underprivileged sectors in the Philippines; and, Stitching Kapatiran of the Netherlands for making more Filipinos self-sufficient through worthwhile income-generating projects. The recipients of the Kaanib ng Bayan Award were three foreign organizations and one individual who have shown exceptional or significant contribution to Philippine reconstruction, progress and development, or have significantly benefited a sector or community in the Philippines, or advanced the cause of overseas Filipino communities. They are the Catholic Medical Mission Board (New York) for its humanitarian efforts for the poorest of the poor of developing countries around the world, especially in the Philippines; The Children's Chance Connecticut for the insight and generosity of the organization and its founder in providing the best medical assistance to children with deformities in the Philippines; Laurence Ligier (France) for her dedication to uplift the lives of neglected and abused children in the Visayas region; and the Heetens Helpgood Center Philippines (The Netherlands) for the altruism and dedication of its members in extending assistance to rural communities in the country. The 16 recipients of the Banaag Awards were Alexander Asuncion (Riyadh), Patricia Bernabe (New York), Angeles Carandang (Chicago), Mary Aida Casambre (Hong Kong), Esperanza Derpo (Abuja), Lamberto Garcia (Seoul), Eleanor Ho (Taipei), Joseph Magdalena (Riyadh), Santiago Muzones Jr. (New York), Dr. Antonio Noblejas (Wellington), Lilian Overs (Toronto), Adelina Philipsen (The Hague), Filipino Korean Spouses Association (Seoul), Philippine Community Council of New South Wales (Sydney), Philippine Nurses Association of America (New York), and the United Filipino Council of Hawaii (Honolulu).

The Banaag Award is given to Filipinos whose contributions have significantly benefited a sector or community in the Philippines, or advanced the cause of overseas Filipino communities. Seven individuals, who gave the best of their lives to their calling, were the recipients of the 'Pamana ng Pilipino' Award. They are Amelita Besa and Romeo Dorotan (New York), for their exceptional abilities and talent which led to the establishment of Cendrillon, a Filipino restaurant icon in the US, and the publication of a world renowned book on Philippine food; Bayani de Leon (New York) for his genius and artistry as a distinguished composer, musician, and educator, who has exerted tremendous

influence in raising awareness and appreciation of traditional and contemporary Philippine music in the US; Carlos Esguerra (New York) for his excellent photographic skills in advancing Filipino artistry and talent worldwide; Federico Hizon (Singapore) for his achievement for being the first Filipino male anchor of the British Broadcasting Corporation World in Singapore; Libertito Pelayo (New York) for his impressive achievements in the field of journalism; Dr. Teresita Ramos (Honolulu) for instituting a bachelor's degree program in Philippine Literature and Language in the University of Hawaii in Manoa; and, Engr. Nilo Villarín (Washington) for his noteworthy inventions in the fields of aviation and computer. #