



PRESS RELEASE

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PRESIDENT DUTERTE CONFERS PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS TO 23 OUTSTANDING OVERSEAS FILIPINOS AND ORGANIZATIONS



President Rodrigo Roa Duterte together with the 23 distinguished and outstanding overseas Filipinos and foreign-based organizations

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte honored 23 distinguished and outstanding overseas Filipinos and foreign-based organizations from 11 countries during the Awarding Ceremonies for the 2016 Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas (PAFIOO) on Monday, December 19 at the Malacañan Palace.

In offering his snappiest salute to the awardees for their accomplishments and assistance to their fellow Filipinos and to the Filipino community, the President echoed one of his favorite quotes by Stephen Grellet in appreciation of the collective accomplishments by the Presidential Awardees, "I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

Institutionalized in 1991 through Executive Order No. 498, the Presidential Awards is a biennial



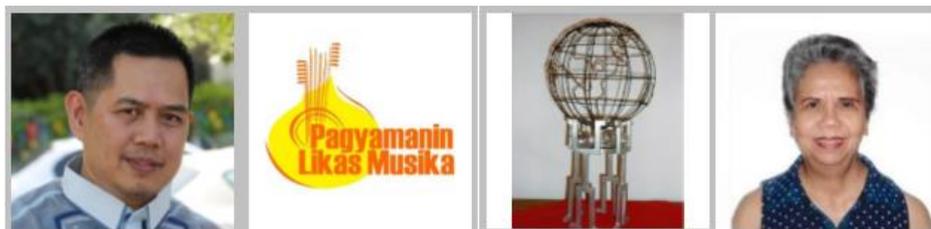
search for overseas-based individuals and organizations which have dedicated their work in the service of Filipinos, selflessly supported relief, rehabilitation and development programs in the home country, or who have excelled in their field or profession.

The awardees were thoroughly screened from a total of 103 nominations from 22 countries by four different committees from the Philippine Diplomatic Posts, inter-agency technical committee, multi-sectoral executive committee, to the Office of the President.

The Presidential Awards have four categories – *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino* (LINKAPIL), *Kaanib ng Bayan* Award, *Banaag* Award, and *Pamana ng Pilipino* Award.

Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino (LINKAPIL) Awardees

The LINKAPIL Award is conferred on Filipino associations or individuals for their exceptional or significant contribution to reconstruction, progress and development in the Philippines. The LINKAPIL awardees are:



(L-R) Edgar E. Aragon, Pagyamanin Likas Musika, Reunion e.V. Cloppenburg, Marina R. Sulse

1. **Edgar E. Aragon (Israel)** – A Filipino caregiver who co-founded the OFW Israel Foundation, an organization which mainly assists Filipinos-in-distress in Israel
2. **Pagyamanin Likas Musika (United States)** – A non-profit organization based in San Jose, California, which preserves and promotes the playing and appreciation of the Philippines’ native Rondalla instruments, and at the same time provides scholarship programs and livelihood assistance to communities in the Philippines.
3. **Reunion e.V. Cloppenburg (Germany)** – An association of Cloppenburg-based Filipinos and Germans which extends humanitarian assistance to the sick and less fortunate in the provinces of Iloilo and Romblon.
4. **Marina R. Sulse (United States)** – A Filipina accountant and philanthropist who established a scholarship and summer camp program for less privileged students and residents of Taft, Eastern Samar.

Kaanib ng Bayan Awardees

The *Kaanib ng Bayan* Award is conferred on foreign individuals or organizations for their 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. The *Kaanib ng Bayan* awardees are:



(L-R) Erlend E. Johannesen, Sabine Korth, Fahdel Sheikh, Tzu Chi Foundation, Katharina Weiss

1. **Erlend E. Johannesen (Norway)** – The Norwegian founder of Streetlight Philippines, a non-profit organization based in Tacloban City dedicated to helping the city’s young vagrants reunite with their loved ones, and have decent life.
2. **Sabine Korth (Germany)** – A German nurse who established the Mabuhay-St. Francis of Assisi Primary Health Care Program, which contributes to the welfare of the local residents of Bugko, Northern Samar.
3. **Sheikh Fahdel (Pakistan)** – A Pakistani hospital administrator who regularly offers free medical and mortuary services to Filipinos and their families in Lahore, Pakistan.
4. **Tzu Chi Foundation (Taiwan)** – A Taiwan-based international non-governmental organization conducting volunteer work, relief aid, medical missions, and other community services in different parts of the world, including the Philippines.
5. **Sabine Katharina Weiss (Germany)** – A German lawyer and current member of the National Parliament of Germany who provided legal and integration services to 10 Filipino human trafficking survivors in Germany,

and established Pangasinan e.V., which delivers basic social services to local residents of Malasiqui, Pangasinan.

Banaag Awardees

The *Banaag* Award is conferred on Filipino individuals or associations for their contributions which have significantly benefited a sector or advanced the cause of overseas Filipino communities. The *Banaag* awardees are:



(L-R) Marilou Chin, Fidel Escurel, Kapit-Bahayan Co-Operative Ltd., Rodrigo Maristela, Philippine Nurses Association of Metropolitan D.C. Inc., Philippine Society of Mechanical Engineers - Central Region Saudi Arabia

1. **Marilou S. Chin** – Founder of Stairway to Hope Learning Center, an alternative learning center which provides educational services to stateless children in Sabah.
2. **Fidel M. Escurel (Qatar)** – One of the founders of the Middle East and Africa Network of Filipino Diaspora (MEANFID), known for his invaluable service in advancing the interests of Filipinos in Qatar and the Middle East.
3. **Kapit-Bahayan Co-Operative Ltd. (Australia)** – a registered housing cooperative which leases and maintains rental accommodations to low-to-medium income Filipino-Australian families and individuals, and assists in the integration of newly-arrived Filipino migrants in New South Wales, Australia
4. **Rodrigo B. Maristela (Germany)** – A strong advocate for Philippine culture, tradition, and arts in Germany, and the former president of the Association Lending Assistance in Exigencies at Home (ALA EH), an organization which provides charitable services for the less fortunate in the Philippines.
5. **Philippine Nurses Association of Metropolitan D.C. Inc. (United States)** – The oldest organization of Filipino nurses in Washington D.C., which primarily provides assistance to Filipino nurses so they could be integrated in Metropolitan DC, and conducts medical missions and other volunteer work in the Philippines.
6. **Philippine Society of Mechanical Engineers - Central Region Saudi Arabia (Saudi Arabia)** – An organization of Filipino mechanical engineers in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, dedicated in the professional advancement of OFW mechanical engineers, as well as providing outreach activities to fellow migrant workers.

Pamana ng Pilipino Awardees

The *Pamana ng Pilipino* Award is conferred on Filipinos overseas, who, in exemplifying the talent and industry of the Filipino, have brought the country honor and recognition through excellence and distinction in the pursuit of their work or profession. The *Pamana ng Pilipino* awardees are:



(L-R) Eduardo Araral Jr., Manuel Asuncion, Danilo Buan, Guillermo Capati



(L-R) Emmanuel Liban, Paulino Lim Jr., Hernan Reyes, Rommel Sergio

1. **Eduardo K. Araral Jr. (Singapore)** – The Vice Dean of Research and Director of the Institute of Water Policy of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy of the National University of Singapore, one of the leading schools of public policy in the world.

2. **Manuel G. Asuncion (Australia)** – A playwright, writer, newspaper columnist, Filipino teacher, translator, and co-founder of Dulaang Bayan Melbourne in Australia.
3. **Danilo P. Buan (United States)** – An inventor, educator, and mechanical engineer, who registered 28 US patents for designs on bookbinding and paper punch machines.
4. **Guillermo B. Capati (Australia)** – A professional civil and environmental engineer in Queensland with over 40 years of experience in waterworks and sewerage systems.
5. **Emmanuel B. Liban (United States)** – Spearheads the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Agency’s efforts on environmental compliance, environmental remediation, energy and renewable energy, climate change, and water and resources management.
6. **Paulino M. Lim Jr. (United States)** – A critically-acclaimed novelist based in California whose fictions and literary works are mainly constructive criticisms of the political, social, and religious ills and situations in the Philippines.
7. **Hernan M. Reyes (United States)** – An internationally recognized surgeon, who led the establishment of the Society of Philippine Surgeons in America, which has consistently served poor communities in the Philippines through its annual medical missions.
8. **Rommel P. Sergio (United Arab Emirates)** – An educator at the Canadian University of Dubai, who has published scholarly works in the field of human resource management and organizational psychology.

A first in the 25-year history of the awards system since its inception, one of the Kaanib ng Bayan awardees, Mr. Erlend Johannesen delivered the response speech on behalf of this year’s PAFIOO awardees. According to Mr. Johannesen, “the Filipino culture is truly the most remarkable, beautiful culture there is. The world has so much to learn from it.” “Where the Filipino spirit prevails, so will hope,” Johannesen added.



The Presidential Awards is organized by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (www.cfo.gov.ph), an agency under the Office of the President tasked to promote and uphold the interests, rights and welfare of overseas Filipinos, as well as to maintain strong and mutually beneficial ties between overseas Filipinos throughout the world and the motherland.

For more information about the Presidential Awards, please contact Mr. Rodrigo Garcia or Mr. Michael Apattad of the Awards Secretariat, Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Citigold Center, 1345 Pres. Quirino Ave. cor. South Superhighway, Manila at tel. nos.: (632) 552-4762 / 65, fax no.: (632) 561-8160 or emails: rgarcia@cfo.gov.ph / mapattad@cfo.gov.ph.

Visit the Presidential Awards website at www.presidentialawards.cfo.gov.ph.