



PRESS RELEASE

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Iloilo City Holds First Trade and Investment Mission in New York



(L-R) Commercial Diplomat for Trade Relations Rex Agudao, City Planning Coordinator Jose Roni Peñalosa, Iloilo City Mayor Jose Espinosa III, Deputy Consul General Kerwin Tate, Mrs. Gina Sarabia Espinosa, and other Iloilo City officials during the opening of the Ilonggo Fashion and Jewelry Exhibit at the Philippine Center Gallery Lobby. (Photo by New York PCG)

6 June 2018, New York – Iloilo City Mayor Jose Espinosa III and Mrs. Gina Sarabia Espinosa led a 35-man business delegation to New York, Virginia and Washington D.C. from 1 to 9 June 2018, upon the invitation of the US-based Asian American Chamber of Commerce, the Philippine-American Chamber of Commerce of Washington DC, and the Philippine Independence Day Council Inc. (PIDCI).

The trade and investment mission, which is a cooperative endeavor between the government and the private sector, was comprised of delegation from the government, the business sector, academe, artists, and Dinagyang Festival performers, who performed during activities organized by PIDCI in New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, including participation in the Philippine Independence Day Parade in Manhattan on 3 June.

During the New York leg which ran from 1 to 5 June, an exhibit of fashion made of *hablon* woven fabrics and jewelry, mostly designed by members of the Designers Guild of Iloilo (DGI) were on display at the Philippine Center's Gallery lobby on 1 – 5 June. Mayor Espinosa officially opened the exhibit on 4 June 2018 at 5:30 pm.

A fashion and jewelry show was held at the Philippine Center's Kalayaan Hall on the same day at 7:30 pm. It showcased the creations of Ilonggo fashion designers Djohn Clement, Totong Gellangarin, Bo Parcon, Aisha Peñalosa and Jaki Peñalosa as well as jewelries designed by Regine Sarabia Espinosa. Incoming Consul General to New York Claro S. Cristobal, recalling his experience working and living in Iloilo, said in a brief remarks that “the greatest resource of the city is its wonderful and talented people.”



Fashion creations of Ilonggo designers Bo Parcon and Jaki Peñalosa during the Ilonggo Fashion and Jewelry Show (Photos by New York PCG)

A Trade and Investment Forum was held at the Philippine Center New York's Kalayaan Hall on 4 June from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm. Mayor Espinosa and Dr. Emily Noserale, President of the Philippine Council of Management (Philcoman) Research Institute Inc. presented to the more than 200 guests from the Filipino community in US northeast the viability of Iloilo City as an investment haven, capitalizing on its booming economy and taking advantage of the spotlight on the Philippines as the one of best countries to invest in. They likewise emphasized the city's vibrant market and its strategic location as a gateway to agribusiness opportunities in Western Visayas, taking pride in being the “food basket and rice granary of Western Visayas.”

Dr. Noserale highlighted that agri-business and aquaculture, infrastructure, tourism, and academe are the four key sectors in Iloilo City that has great investment potentials, particularly during this time when “all the bright and good things are happening” under the leadership of President Rodrigo Duterte, Dr. Noserale added.

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Mayor Espinosa invited Ilonggos in the US to invest in Iloilo, saying “Now is the time to be in Iloilo. Business prospects are good. Living, retiring, working, investing in Iloilo City is now!”

A panel discussion on property development, information technology, and infrastructure pipeline featured panelists Mr. Felicito Tiu - Founder and CEO of Eon Group of Companies and Co-Chair of the Iloilo City Trade and Investments Board, Mr. Billy Shung Hei Yuen - Founder & CEO of Stacktrek Enterprises, Inc., Ms. Carla Margarita L. Perez - Sales Director of Iloilo Business Park-Megaworld, and Mr. Jose Roni Peñalosa - Iloilo City Planning Officer.

Another panel discussion about Iloilo City premiere schools with panelists Dr. Carmencita Y. Robles - Dean of College Communications of West Visayas State University, Professor Mary Ann Gumban - Vice Chancellor of University of the Philippines Visayas, and Ms. Junel Ann P. Divinagracia - Iloilo City Tourism Officer provided information and promoted affordable and quality education in Iloilo City.

At the end of the forum, Ms. Tess Salvador, a pioneer in the promotion of heritage Hablon fabric and the craft of Haból, and Tony Award-winning Filipino theatre producer Jhett Tolentino, both from Iloilo, were given recognition for their contributions in elevating the image of Ilonggos abroad. Plaques of appreciation were also presented to the Philippine Consulate General in New York, the Philippine Trade and Investment Center NY (PTIC-NY) and the 2018 PIDCI for partnering with the Iloilo City government in making the trade and investment mission successful.

The Iloilo Trade and Investment Mission continued in Virginia on 6 June and in Washington DC on 7-9 June. END



Mayor Jose Espinosa III and Dr. Emily Noserale invite Filipinos in US Northeast to live, study, work, retire and invest in Iloilo City during the Iloilo Trade and Investment Forum in New York. (Photos by New York PCG)

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(L-R) Iloilo City Planning Coordinator Jose Roni Peñalosa, StackTrek Enterprises CEO Billy Shung Hei Yuen, Eon Group of Companies CEO Felicito Tiu, and Iloilo Business Park-Megaworld Sales Director Carla Maragarita Perez during the Forum's panel discussion on property development, infotech and infrastructure pipeline. (Photo by New York PCG)



(L-R) Iloilo City Tourism Officer Ms. Junel Ann Divinagracia, Prof. Mary Ann Gumban, UP Visayas' Vice Chancellor, and Dr. Carmencita Y. Robles, Dean of West Visayas State University's College of Communications, during the Forum's panel discussion on Iloilo City Premier Schools. (Photo by New York PCG)



Mayor Jose Espinosa III (2nd from left) presents Plaques of Recognition to 2018 PIDCI Representative Maryann Sanagustin, Deputy Consul General Kerwin Orville Tate, Consul Arman Talbo on behalf of PTIC New York, Ms. Tess Salvador, and Mr. Jhett Tolentino (Photo by Iloilo City Trade Mission 2018)

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