



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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PCG New York Marks Fil-Am History Month with Film Screening of Manila 1945 and a Panel Discussion on Filipino Americans Across Generations

New York, 25 October 2019 – In celebration of Filipino American History Month, about 110 guests mostly Filipinos, Filipino Americans, and Americans, showed up at the Philippine Center New York on 24 October 2019 for the film screening of Spyron-AV Manila’s documentary film, “Manila 1945: The Rest of the Story” and a panel discussion featuring five distinguished Filipino-Americans of diverse background coming from different generations to share their experiences growing up as Filipino Americans.

Next Day Better’s animated short video entitled “The Filipino American Story” was also played after the film screening.

In his welcome remarks, Consul Arman Talbo said that “as we remember the achievements of those who arrived in America before you, let us not forget that the Filipino American History Month is also about you; it is about the story of success and struggle of each one in this room. Let us continue the great story of the Filipino Americans.”

The guests and the members of the panel all appreciated that the documentary film Manila 1945 was shown as they were able to learn more about the Battle for Manila from the perspective of World War II survivors, veterans, historians and experts. Some have expressed that they now understood the war’s effects on the Filipinos’ psyche and the Philippine culture and society today. Spyron-AV Manila’s New York representative Janette Andrada who introduced the film said that the film was shown not to open wounds but as a way for Filipinos, Americans, and Japanese alike to heal and forgive. She encouraged the audience, particularly the younger generations not forget the sacrifices of these unsung heroes and do everything in their power to avoid war and history repeating itself.

Philippine Consul General Claro Cristobal said that “after looking back, learning our history, the next thing to do is to look around, see where we are as a people and as a community. And hopefully after looking around, we can look ahead, to see the future and define what we have to do as a community so that our presence in this country will be felt even more.”

The panel discussion themed “Filipino Americans Across Generations: Challenges and Opportunities” featured Anthropology Professor Cherubim Quizon of Seton Hall University as moderator, and retired US diplomat and army officer Santiago Busa, Jr., New York City Mayor’s Office of Media Entertainment Commissioner Anne del Castillo,

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New York State Assembly Chief of Staff Steven Raga, and Huff Post's journalist and media consultant Leezel Tanglao as members of the panel.

Noting each of the panels' diverse background, upbringing and age difference, Professor Quizon asked the panel to share their narratives, including the challenges they faced as Filipino-Americans. She also asked them if they believe there is a gap between the first, second and third generations of Fil-Ams and if that is the case, how can we unite and harmonize efforts across generations to find synergy and common voice.

Sonny Busa, who is the only Filipino to teach both in the US Military Academy and the Philippine Military Academy, said that although he considered himself a Southern Californian, he decided later in life to use his being a Filipino as an advantage - not to the advantage of victimization - but as a source of strength. He encouraged parents raising Fil-Am kids to always make sure that Philippine culture comes to the fore and not to be suppressed. Speaking about bridging the gap between generations, he said that the only way for the older generations of Fil-Ams to empower and engage the young ones in community involvement is to trust and give them control over planning and implementation.

MOME Commissioner Anne del Castillo, whose mother hails from Isabela, Negros Occidental, related how she has struggled to find her identity as an American and Filipino. She acknowledged that Fil-Ams who were born and raised here in the US feel they do not have the same certainties as those Filipinos who migrated to the US and are secure in their identity as Filipinos. She sees the importance of attending Philippine Independence Day events and cultural activities so that they can identify and know Philippine history and culture.

Leezel Tanglao is from Carson, California and has been in NY for 9 years. She is a bridge journalist having worked for every type of media company ranging from digital, print, broadcast, start-up, wire service, and innovation. Citing her work as a bridge journalist who has been at the intersection of a lot of spaces, she "looks at identity as very dynamic" and asks "why can't we be both?"

Steven Raga, the first Filipino to become chief of staff at the NY State Assembly, shared that although bridging generational gap has been a challenge for a long time now, his experience in being both Filipino and American has helped him in gaining a wide network which is essential in his line of work. He said that he is American when he is with Americans and Filipino when he is dealing with the Filipino community.

The FAHM event, which was hosted by Vice Consul Tanya Faye Ramiro, was organized by the Philippine Consulate General in New York in cooperation with the National Federation of Filipino-American Associations (NaFFAA). – END



Consul Arman welcomes guests to the film screening and panel discussion celebrating Filipino American History Month at the Philippine Center New York. (Photo by New York PCG)

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Panel members (L-R) Steven Raga, LeezelTanglao, Sonny Busa and Anne del Castillo, together with moderator Prof. ChereeQuizon during a panel discussion on Filipino-Americans Across Generations. (Photo by New York PCG)



Retired US diplomat and army Officer Sonny Busa during the panel discussion. (Photo by Lambert Parong)

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NYC MOME Commissioner Anne del Castillo relates during the panel discussion. (Photo by Lambert Parong)



NY State Assembly Chief of Staff Steven Raga during the panel discussion. (Photo by Lambert Parong)

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FYLPRO 2019 Delegate LeezelTanglao of HuffPost during the panel discussion. (Photo by Lambert Parong)



Seton Hall Anthropology Professor ChereeQuizon during the panel discussion. (Photo by Lambert Parong)

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Some of guests join Consul General Claro Cristobal (top row, 9th), Philippine Consulate Officers and Staff, distinguished panelists, and NaFFAA officers at a photo opportunity at the end of the FAHM event. (Photo by Lambert Parong)

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