

Young FilAms to Host Public Swearing In Ceremony for Dual Citizen Applicants

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New York, New York (September 23 2014)

On Wednesday October 8, Filipino Youth Leadership Program (FYLPro) delegates from Batch 2, Rachelle Ocampo & Edward Santos, will be hosting a mass Swearing In Ceremony at the Philippine Consulate General of New York for all Dual Applicants this past year. As part of their legacy project this initiative aims to create a transparent and practical platform for education and awareness on Dual Citizenship. This platform, Filipino American Dual Citizenship Initiative (FADCI) includes their website www.fadci.com which features an eligibility tool for those who want to check their eligibility to become a Dual Citizen. Rachelle, Edward, and FYLPro delegates from across the country are also pushing for a common application to be shared among all of the Philippine Consulates across the nation to create a more cohesive and efficient application process for all. The specific goal to raise the number of dual applicants by 10% in the upcoming year will show how education and the push for more streamlined protocol will economically help the Philippines by connecting more Fil-Ams to the myriad treasures within the 7,107 islands.

This particular Swearing In Ceremony is a very special occasion for the community because it is a chance to be dual citizens with their family members, similar to an induction ceremony where one will recite the Oath of Allegiance by Consul General Mario De Leon. Anyone who applied to be a dual citizen this past year is required to RSVP to ensure that all have a seat at Kalayaan Hall on October 8. Rachelle Ocampo states "To me, the issue is not about choosing one country over another or having a piece of paper defining who I am, it is about taking our opportunities for granted. That is what Dual Citizenship is for me- an opportunity. After hearing my mom say that there was a possibility that I would not be eligible, I had a certain lost feeling thinking I was not even given the opportunity before I could even apply. I didn't want others to lose this chance to vote, to own land, to travel, and most importantly for me- a chance for me to extend these opportunities to my future children." There are many benefits of being a dual citizen and sharing this opportunity with family and friends is another way to be connected with the Philippines.

New York is just the first of the many cities planned this year to push for young FilAms to apply for dual citizenship or to report their birth. The FYLPro delegates from Chicago are also pushing for this initiative and hosting their own mass swearing in ceremony in late October as a symbolic gesture that we are all swearing in as one Filipino people. Louella Cabalona, FYLPro Batch 1 delegate replied on why she wanted to apply, "Being a first generation immigrant, it is easy for

me to answer the question. It would simply be because I have a lot of vested interest (i own property there, I want to start a business there) as well as personal ties (most of my family is still there, i want my future kids to study there) with my home country.” The website also features stories & testimonials of FilAms from across the country who want to become Dual citizens, of Filams who want to apply but are not eligible, & of Filams who already have their dual citizenship to show the many voices behind this initiative.

Lastly, a Dual Citizenship Survey was put together by the Filipino-American Youth Leaders Program (FYLPRO) participants of the Midwest (In association with the Philippines Consulate of Chicago & the Filipino-American Dual-Citizenship Initiative of FYLPRO New York.) The aim is to gauge interest in dual-citizenship and educate potential applicants across the United States. <http://bit.ly/1oh85tF>

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RSVP by 10/5/14 for October 8 Ceremony: <http://fadciswearing.splashthat.com>

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