

Twenty Outstanding Filipinos Abroad (TOFA) Honored at Washington, D.C. for 3 Days

WASHINGTON, D.C., Sept. 18 (*PinoyGlobal*) - Twenty prominent Filipino high achievers were feted and inducted in the ***Twenty Outstanding Filipinos Abroad (TOFA)*** in a 3-day 15th annual event which started Thursday, Sept. 11, 2008 with an informal get-together for the 2008 awardees; followed on Friday with a VIP Luncheon at J.W. Marriott Hotel where the awardees briefly each delivered remarks. In the evening, a VIP dinner reception at the Philippine Embassy with Philippine Ambassador to the United States, Willy Gaa, officially welcomed the 2008 TOFA awardees and their guests. The following morning, Saturday, a ***VIP Photo Op*** at various historical monuments in the Nation's Capital, capped by an authentic Dim Sum luncheon for the awardees and their guests. In the evening was the formal prestigious gala ***Banquet and Ball Award Ceremony*** attended by the cream of the crop of the Filipino community from across the nation. After the ball, an authentic Filipino ***noche buena*** (breakfast) feted the 2008 TOFA Awardees and their guests at the Nonoy and Aida Mendoza's VIP suite at the Marriott Hotel. The honorees were Guests of Honor (*gratis*) to all the planned activities.



Twenty Outstanding Filipinos Abroad

Seated from left: Minister Carlos D. Sorreta, Deputy Philippine Ambassador to the U.S., Nena M. Nera, Eusebio C. Koh, Bob Dacanay, Rozita V. Lee, Jun Anthony Quion, Levy Mendoza Paler, Will Grant, Menchee Fulgado, Victor G. Lorica, Nonoy Mendoza of *FILIM & PGON*. Standing from left: Manny Hipol Master of Ceremonies; Gloria Caoile, Mistress of Ceremonies; Debra Aguinaldo Nakama, Edmundo F. Relucio, Francis V. Talangbayan, Dolores "Dolly" Ortal, Dante Raul Q. Teodoro; Mark Asperilla, Zeny Kharroubi, Sonny Ungeo, Elvira Phelps, Peter Yu, Dely Villalon and Aida J. Mendoza of *FILIM & PGON*. (Photo by *PinoyGlobal* Rene Abella)

"The TOFA event is an incomparable experience. I have received awards and have been attending award presentations, but the TOFA function is an experience of a lifetime. Class. Unique, and just plain fantastic. To be included in the ***"Circle of Leaders"*** is a distinct honor ever bestowed to a Filipino achiever," commented Ms. Dolores "Dolly" Ortal of Honolulu, one of the 2008 awardees. "The only goal of the TOFA project is to **highlight positive Filipino image**, and to discourage the practice of the ***"crab mentality"*** attitude, more specially among our Filipino community leaders," explained Nonoy Mendoza, originator of the TOFA project which started in 1990. "I have no hidden agenda, but to highlight positive Filipino image among our achievers in the community." #