



14 June 2012 - The Philippine Consulate General in Honolulu, led by Philippine Consul General to Hawaii Julius Torres, led the flag-raising ceremony at the Consulate's premises in beautiful

Pali, Honolulu on June 11 to commemorate the 114th anniversary of the proclamation of Philippine Independence.

The ceremony, held in the morning, was attended by the Knights of Rizal, leaders and members of the World War II Filipino-American Veterans and Ladies Auxiliary Hawaii Chapter, the Philippine Scout Veterans Organization of Hawaii, the First Filipino Infantry Regiment, and the United States (U.S.) Army Veterans of Foreign Wars and various Filipino Community organizations in Hawaii.

The main part of program was the raising of the Philippine flag by the Filipino-American veterans and the Knights of Rizal.

The Consulate shared the meaning of the *"Kalayaan 2012: Pananagutan ng Bayan para sa Tuwid na Daan"* by reading the messages of President Benigno S. Aquino III, Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert F. del Rosario and Philippine Ambassador to the U.S. Jose L. Cuisia, Jr.

The ceremony was preceded by a holy mass.

After the brief ceremony, Consul General Torres hosted a Filipino breakfast for more than 150 guests who attended and enjoyed each other's company in the style of a Filipino family get-together.

The Filipino-American veterans conveyed their appreciation to the Consul General for making them an integral part of the celebration of Philippine Independence in Hawaii. The Filipino-American veterans served as flag bearers, raisers and honor guards.

In a separate earlier event, on June 09, the Consulate, in partnership with the Philippine Celebrations Coordinating Committee of Hawaii (PCCCH), hosted the Philippine Independence Day Ball at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Hotel.

Guests of honor for the night were Hawaii Governor Neil Abercrombie, Congresswoman Mazie Hirono and Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle.

Governor Abercrombie responded to the official toast and delivered his remarks.

In his remarks, he enjoined the Filipinos to "take a necessary moment to reflect on what Independence means to those that came before [us], and to those who will come after."

He added that Independence is an "achievement that should be deeply treasured and uphold.

A much-awaited event, the Philippine Independence Day Ball was attended by more than 400 Filipinos and guests for a glittering night of beautiful *ternos* and *barongs* and the sharing of Filipinos' love of country and heritage.

Also part of the ball was the Musical Revue which featured Hawaii-based Filipino artists and the Honolulu Boy Choir.

Philippine Deputy Consul General to Hawaii Paul Raymund Cortes gave a heartfelt rendition of "Mag-Kaisa" as the grand finale song of a very memorable evening for the Filipino Community in Hawaii.

PCCCH, led by its Chairperson Maria A.F. Etrata, is the cultural-outreach arm of the Consulate and has been its partner for the past ten years in organizing and hosting Philippine events in Hawaii. END