

## FFWPU USA: Honoring Heroes in the Filipino Ethnic Community

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"Prayer and faith in God allow us to overcome fears brought by uncertain times," said Dr. Mary Joy Garcia-Dia, president of the Philippine Nurses Association in America (PNAA). Dr. Garcia-Dia was among the 40 honorees of the 1st Filipino Heroes Award on May 30, held online by the Filipino Ethnic Community of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) USA.

More than 3,100 people in the U.S. and abroad participated in the inaugural award ceremony, which recognized Filipino individuals who saved lives, ensured safety, and protected and helped their communities in recovering from the global Covid-19 pandemic. The event also celebrated May as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.



Dr. Garcia-Dia and Dr. Rhigel Tan joined a roster of award recipients that included first responders,

medical professionals, essential workers, and various organizations that cared for and supported the victims of the pandemic and their families.

Dr. Tan shared how the Filipino culture and its strong family upbringing has long cultivated a spirit of service and sacrifice for others, and said such family culture should be "upheld with pride."



Hon. Tanya Ramira, the vice consul of the Philippine Consulate General in New York, shared similar sentiments during her special greeting. "Heroes like you make our hearts burst with Pinoy pride," she said to all the honorees. "Your personal stories of heroism serve as the beacon during these dark times, in a world in need of hope and inspiration."



Hon. Ramira noted Filipinos comprised a great number of frontline workers during the pandemic, where New York was the national epicenter for several weeks. She said their service to others has been admirable and deeply inspiring, while Gov. Andrew Cuomo called the frontline workers "true heroes in every sense of the word" in his written congratulatory message. "We applaud them for their dedicated efforts and crucial role in the nation's response to this crisis," he wrote.

Dr. Chung Shik Yong, regional president of FFWPU North America, delivered the keynote address and stressed that heroes are people who manifest God's nature when they are in the face of danger, and that the award recipients are those who chose to combat adversity with ingenuity, courage, and strong faith in

God. He also emphasized the value of the [Blessing](#) as the solution to societal problems.

"Through the Marriage Blessing, we can heal broken families and save marriages all over the world," said Dr. Yong. "It is the key to solving all conflicts in the world." He shared that FFWPU co-founders Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon long taught that ideal families are the cornerstone of peace. In this regard, he said, peace should begin within ourselves and in our families to be able to contribute to building a more peaceful world.



"[Rev. and Dr. Moon] have taught us that when the love in our families is centered on God, it is easier to spread this love to other families around us and thus strengthen our communities, society, nation and world," said Dr. Yong.

Dr. Yong shared that this commitment to peace, cooperation, and support of one another as individuals and families who put God at the center of daily life is at the core of what FFWPU stands for, and that it is important to recognize those who honor such values with their actions.

Congratulatory remarks were also shared by Bishop Joy Theriot, chair of the 1st Filipino Heroes Award, and Rev. Naokimi Ushiroda, national president of FFWPU USA.

You can watch the 1st Filipino Heroes Award in full [here](#).

