

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SAN FRANCISCO TO HONOR THREE FILIPINO AMERICAN LEADERS AT CITY HALL CELEBRATION WEDNESDAY

Jaena Rae Cabrera, James Lim and Sonia T. Delen to receive awards at 22nd annual Filipino American History Month celebration

SAN FRANCISCO — Three Filipino American leaders whose work has advanced education, community service, business and civic representation will be honored **Wednesday, Oct. 21**, during San Francisco's 22nd annual Filipino American History Month celebration at City Hall.

The City and County of San Francisco, Mayor Daniel Lurie and the Filipino American Arts Exposition will recognize **Jaena Rae Cabrera** with the Emerging Leader Award, **James Lim** with the Community Champion Award and **Sonia T. Delen** with the Trailblazer Award. **The public celebration will take place from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the City Hall Rotunda, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place.**

2026 Filipino American History Month award recipients

Jaena Rae Cabrera — Emerging Leader Award
Cabrera is a program manager at the San Francisco Public Library and works with its Filipino American Center, where she develops cultural and educational programs, builds community partnerships and co-directs events including the Filipino American International Book Festival. A past president of the Asian Pacific American Librarians Association and a representative to the American Library Association Council, she was named a 2023 Library Journal Mover & Shaker for her leadership and advocacy.

James Lim — Community Champion Award
Lim is president of Philippine International Aid, which provides scholarships, youth support and assistance to underserved Filipino children in the United States and the

Philippines. He founded Mosaic Hospitality and became San Francisco's first Filipino immigrant hotel general manager. During a three-decade hospitality career, he was the first Asian American recognized as Outstanding General Manager of the Year by the California Hotel & Lodging Association. He has also taught and mentored students at Bay Area colleges and universities for nearly two decades.

Sonia T. Delen — Trailblazer Award
Delen, a retired Bank of America senior vice president, became the highest-ranking Filipina in the company's Global Leasing division. In 2018, she became the first Filipino American and Asian American nonlawyer public member appointed to the State Bar of California Board of Trustees. She co-founded the Filipino Food Movement, helped advance Filipino culinary and cultural initiatives, and led philanthropic efforts supporting health care and education, including $1.825 million in COVID-19 testing kits for the University of the Philippines–Philippine General Hospital.

A celebration of history and heritage
This year's theme, "Beyond the Margins: Leading with Purpose, Power, and Pride," also recognizes the 80th anniversary of U.S.-Philippine diplomatic relations, the 40th anniversary of the People Power Revolution and the 10th anniversary of SOMA Pilipinas, San Francisco's Filipino Cultural Heritage District.

"This year's theme, 'Beyond the Margins: Leading with Purpose, Power, and Pride,' reflects the generations of Filipino Americans who have helped shape San Francisco," said Al Perez, president of the Filipino American Arts Exposition. "As we mark three historic anniversaries, we honor those who came before us and recognize the community leaders who are carrying their work forward. We're proud to bring everyone together at City Hall to celebrate our history, share our stories and pass on our heritage to the next generation."

"For more than a century, Filipino Americans have helped shape the story of San Francisco, from the early days of Manilatown to today's SoMa Pilipinas Cultural Heritage District," said Mayor Daniel Lurie. "That spirit and legacy is alive in the Filipino nurses and healthcare workers who care for our residents, the educators who guide our students, the small businesses and restaurants that bring creativity and flavor into our neighborhoods, and the artists who are bringing Filipino traditions to our walls, stages, and streets. This month, as we celebrate Filipino American history, we honor a community whose resilience and dedication make San Francisco stronger every day."

"We celebrate Filipino American History Month by honoring the generations whose sacrifices, courage, and perseverance have shaped a community rooted in excellence, resilience, and advocacy," said Philippine Consul General Arnel Talisayon. "As we commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the Philippines-United States diplomatic relations, we celebrate the enduring bonds between our two nations and the Filipino Americans who continue to strengthen them through service and community. May we keep their legacy alive, inspire future generations, and go beyond the margins – to rise, to lead, and to make our voices heard with pride and purpose."

NBC Bay Area reporter **Ginger Conejero Saab** and **Franco Finn**, hype man for the San Francisco 49ers and Golden State Warriors, will host. The program will include a mayoral proclamation, remarks from Philippine Consul General Arnel Talisayon, the awards presentation, live performances, the Escolta SF pop-up marketplace, a community reception and the illumination of City Hall in the colors of the Philippine flag.

Event details
What: San Francisco's 22nd annual Filipino American History Month celebration
When: Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2026, 5:30-8:30 p.m.
Where: San Francisco City Hall Rotunda, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco
Admission: Free and open to the public. RSVP: HERE

Performers
DJ Bitesize, Arianne Del, Michelle Martinez, Jackie Chavez, David Maduli, GEO (Gabrielle Elyse Oberes Padre) and Parangal Dance Company.

Event sponsors
Golden State Warriors, Ramar Foods, APA Heritage Foundation, NBC Bay Area, Farmers Insurance, LTD Global, Jollibee, Razon's and Hey Guy Designs.

About the Filipino American Arts Exposition
Founded in 1994, the Filipino American Arts Exposition is a grassroots nonprofit organization that promotes Filipino American art, music, film and dance, celebrates ancestral heritage and contemporary traditions, and fosters greater understanding of Filipino history and culture. Visit www.pistahan.net or follow @pistahanSF on social media.

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