



PRESS RELEASE

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VETERANS BREAKFAST FORUM HELD AT THE CONSULATE



Left Photo: Consul General Mary Jo Bernardo Aragon delivering the message of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo at the Flag Ceremony for Filipino veterans following the passage of the Economic Stimulus Package granting them recognition and benefits for their services in the Second World War II.

Right Photo: Mr. Alberto Alpasan, Jr. of the California Department of Veterans Affairs explains the veterans benefits claims mechanics to Filipino World War II Veterans at the breakfast forum held at the Philippine Consulate while Consul General Mary Jo Bernardo Aragon listens.

Los Angeles, 27 February 2009 – The Philippine Consulate General held a flag ceremony and breakfast forum on 23 February 2009 for Filipino veterans to celebrate the passage of the stimulus package including the recognition and benefits for Filipino World War II veterans.

The event was attended by more than twenty Filipino veterans and their supporters, including the Filipino-American Service Group Inc. or FASGI led by Executive Director Susan E. Dilkes.

The Consulate invited Mr. Alberto M. Alpasan, Jr., Lead Veteran's Claims Analysts of the California Department of Veterans Affairs, to discuss how the veterans could go about applying for their benefits claims.

During the forum, the Consulate and Mr. Alpasan called on the veterans to start filing their claims either with the Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office in the United States Embassy in Manila or the Los Angeles District Office of the Department of

Veterans Affairs, before the deadline ends on 16 February 2010. FASGI vowed to assist them in filing their claims.

Mr. Alpasan said that the application would have to be done in person by living veterans using VA Form 21-4138; however, he also said that the Department of Veterans Affairs will conduct outreach services for those who are no longer able to appear personally at its office for medical reasons. Only the widows of those veterans who were able to apply for the claim after 17 February 2009 before passing away, may continue following up the benefit claims for them.

For more information and assistance on the benefit claims, the veterans may contact the following:

- Mr. Alberto Alpasan, Jr., Lead Veteran's Claims Analysts, Los Angeles District Office, California Department of Veterans Affairs, Suite 5203, 11000 Wilshire Blvd., Tel. No. (213) 620-2755; and
- Ms. Susan E. Dilkes, Executive Director, Filipino-American Service Group, Inc., 135 North park View St., Los Angeles, California 90026.

Claimants may also request the assistance of the Philippine Consulate General in Los Angeles at Tel. No. (213) 637-3010.