



PRESS RELEASE
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PHL CONSULATE GENERAL JOINS BACOLOD CITY'S MASSKARA FESTIVAL IN LONG BEACH



Los Angeles, 07 August 2018 –The Philippine Consulate General (PCG) and the Philippine Department of Tourism (PDOT) in Los Angeles joined the City of Bacolod Officials, led by Vice Mayor El Cid Familiaran, and other Bacolodnons who are already residing in California in celebration of the Masskara Festival held on 28 July 2018 in Recreation Park, Long Beach, CA. Vice Mayor Familiaran was accompanied by Councilors Caesar Distrito, Em Ang, Bartolome Orola, Dindo Ramos, City Administrator Juan N. Orola, Jr. and City's Technical team.

The Festival is organized by the Long Beach Bacolod Association, Inc. (LBBAI) in partnership with Sister Cities of Long Beach, Inc. and the City of Long Beach as part of their cultural and tourism exchanges in order to further strengthen the newly revived Long Beach-Bacolod Sister City relationship. Originally established in 1994, the Bacolod-Long Beach sisterhood became dormant for almost two decades. Upon the initiative of Mr. Jose Gamboa, a Filipino-American based in Northern California, and Mr. Joey Montalve, who heads a Negros-based advocacy group, the sister-city partnership has been revived through LBBAI.

The Masskara Festival, popularly known as the “colorful festival of smiles”, is an annual festival in Bacolod City similar to the Mardi Gras in New Orleans involving colorful costumes and unusual masks. The Festival is also a catalyst for growth and development of Bacolod's tourism, hospitality, culinary, crafts and souvenirs and services sectors.

The whole day event included cultural performances by various community organizations and groups, song numbers by local celebrities, and a mini-business expo, wherein business owners, nonprofit organizations and community associations displayed their products and services. Participants were also treated to free samples of Bacolod's food and delicacies brought by the Philippine Delegation.

On the other hand, PCG and PDOT exhibited promotional materials on Philippine tourist destinations and handicrafts during the event.

The Festival is the culmination of the series of three events held by LBBAI in celebration of the Long Beach-Bacolod Sister City relationship following its rebirth in 2017. In addition to the Masskara Festival, the Association also organized a seminar on International Trade and Finance and screened the film “Stateside”, produced and directed by the Executive Director of LBBAI, Marcial Chavez, both held on 27 July 2018. END.



The Philippine Consulate General Team, lead by Vice Consul Andrea Lazaro (4th from L)



The Philippine Department of Tourism Team, lead by Richmond Jimenez (5th from L)



Bacolod City Official together with Officers and Members of Long Beach Bacolod Association, Inc. performing the “Masskara Dance”



(L) Delicacies and Products from Bacolod and (R) Members of LBBAI posed while waiting for their performance