



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

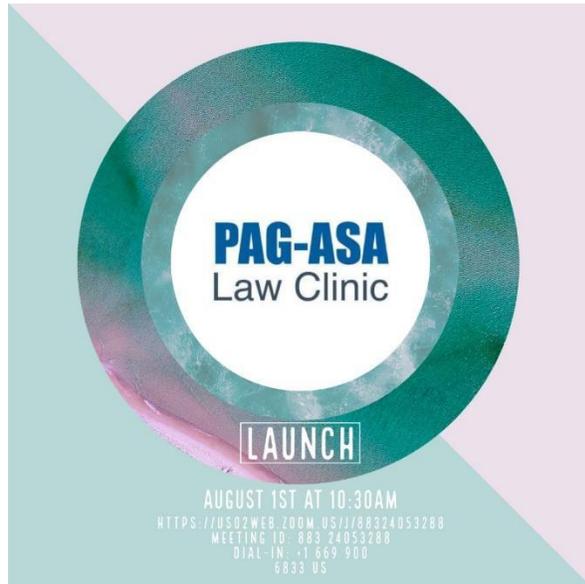
PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA



Press Release
AASC-054-2020

LA PCG Joins Virtual Launch of Pag-Asa Law Clinic in San Diego



Above: Screenshot of the virtual launch of the Pag-Asa Law Clinic held on 01 August 2020 in San Diego.

03 August 2020, Los Angeles – The Philippine Consulate General participated in the virtual launch of **Pag-Asa Law Clinic**, which was held via Zoom on 01 August 2020, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

The law clinic is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in San Diego County organized by Philippine Honorary Consul in San Diego, CA, Atty. Audie J. De Castro, which aims to provide free to low-cost legal services to the members of the Filipino community, specifically undocumented immigrants, victims of domestic violence, and tenants in unfair housing situations.

In his opening remarks, Pag-Asa Law Clinic President, Honorary Consul De Castro gave a brief history of how the idea about the law clinic came about. He mentioned how he discussed this with Consul General Adelio Angelito S. Cruz who encouraged him to pursue the project. He was further inspired to start the clinic by the remarks of Justice Francisco P. Acosta of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) during the latter's visit to the Filipino community in San Diego in 2019. The Honorary Consul also thanked the sponsors and donors who made the clinic possible.

Consul Dyan Kristine B. Miranda-Pastrana who worked with Honorary Consul De Castro on several Assistance to Nationals cases in San Diego commended the latter for starting the clinic as it addresses a much sought after need and service within the community, especially in the midst of the pandemic when many are struggling to make ends meet and do not have the resources to pay for legal fees.

CFO Chairperson, Justice Francisco P. Acosta sent his message, which was read by Honorary Consul De Castro. In his message, Secretary Acosta congratulated the Honorary Consul and the whole multi-generational and dedicated team composed of community leaders, attorneys, students, organizers, and advocates, behind the Pag-Asa Law Clinic. He urged them to be the voice of Filipino-Americans in the U.S. courtroom and continue fighting for the rights of the marginalized and underprivileged.



Aside from Honorary Consul de Castro, the clinic's officers are Jermaine Rocacorba, Vice President and Secretary; Lorena Dominguez, Treasurer; Anne Bautista, Legal Advisor; Diana Laranang, Community Outreach and Programming Director; Alicia Ricafrentece, Marketing and Media Strategies Coordinator and Adviser; Aaron Giron and Ian Seruelo, Attorneys; Brittany Yanni, Carmela Magat, Legal Interns; and Carlos de Castro, Marketing Intern.

The law clinic provides immigration-related legal services, which include eligibility relief under DACA, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), T and U visa application, as well as cases involving unlawful detainer-landlord / tenant disputes and restraining orders.

The clinic aims to expand its services as they develop their network and funding sources.

The team encourages law students or law school graduates to be a part of the law clinic as legal interns. They also have community partners such as the Council of Philippine American Organizations (COPAO), Pilipino Workers Center (PWC), *Samahan* Health Centers, and The Filipino School, among others.

The clinic will share an office with its community partner, COPAO in National City (located in San Diego County). Due to the pandemic, the clinic will be conducting legal services by phone and provide a pre-screening questionnaire for potential clients.

The program was hosted by Ms. Kirin Amiling Macapugay, a community organizer, and professor of Human Services and Social Work at San Diego City College.

More than 70 members of the Filipino-American community in San Diego attended the virtual event. END.