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Historical Marker Honors Filipinos Who Served in the U.S. Navy
Event Celebrates AANHPI Heritage Month

Virginia Beach, Va. - The City of Virginia Beach, the Council of United Filipino Organizations of Tidewater and the Filipino American National Historical Society-Hampton Roads Chapter will unveil and dedicate the historical marker honoring Filipinos in the U.S. Navy at the Philippine Cultural Center, 4857 Baxter Road, Virginia Beach, on Saturday, May 28, 2022, at 9:45 a.m. The event will also commemorate Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, held each May.

The U.S. Fleet Forces Band and CUFOT School of Creative and Performing Arts Rondalla Musical Ensemble will play introductory music, and the program concludes at noon. Rear Adm. Alan Reyes, Deputy Commander, U.S. Naval Supply Systems Command, will deliver the keynote address. Confirmed speakers also include: Virginia Beach Mayor Robert “Bobby” M. Dyer; Maj. Gen. Craig C. Crenshaw, U.S. Marine Corps, Ret. and Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs, Commonwealth of Virginia; U.S. Rep. Elaine G. Luria; U.S. Rep. Robert “Bobby” C. Scott; Del. Kelly Convirs-Fowler; and Gabriela Igloria, past-president, Filipino American Student Association, Old Dominion University and daughter of Dr. Luisa A. Igloria, Poet Laureate of Virginia.

According to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, the forthcoming marker, “Filipinos in the U.S. Navy” explains that Filipinos served in the Navy as early as the Civil War but they enlisted in greater numbers when the U.S. took possession of the Philippines after the Spanish-American War. Following World War II, when the Philippines gained independence in 1946, the U.S. Navy initiated recruitment of Filipinos, resulting in about 35,000 Filipinos serving in the Navy during the next four decades. Hampton Roads emerged as one of the nation’s largest Filipino communities in proximity to a naval base.”

The free, public ceremony will be held in the PCC's parking lot. Reservations are not required. Attire is business casual. Parking will be available on Weller Boulevard (perpendicular to Baxter Road across from PCC), and Virginia Spine Care, 4867 Baxter Road. COVID-19 guidelines suggest optional face masks while outdoors. If the ceremony is conducted indoors due to inclement weather, then face masks are mandatory.

After the event, learn more about Virginia Historical Highway Markers at <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/highway-markers>.

About the Council of United Filipino Organizations of Tidewater: CUFOT is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the operation and maintenance of the PCC through cultural performances, community events and classes. For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/pccva>.

About the Filipino American National Historical Society-Hampton Roads: FANHS-HR is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to promote understanding, education, enlightenment, appreciation and enrichment through the identification, gathering, preservation and dissemination of the history and culture of Filipino Americans in the United States. To learn more about Filipino American history, visit <https://fanhs-hr.org>.