



Pinoy Bulletin

FAAV Bi-Annual Publication

From the Upuan

by Chuck Reidy

Welcome to our 2025 FAAV Pasko Na Naman, "It's Christmas Once Again"!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you! I am truly honored to have served as your FAAV Chair for the past two years, and I am even more humbled to be selected to serve another year in 2026.

Tonight, we have an exciting evening planned for you! We begin with our formal director oath-taking ceremony, followed by some fun games and entertainment brought to you by your own FAAV directors. And that's not all! Get ready to dance the night away with our favorite DJ Jon.

I encourage you to connect with friends, both old and new. Turn to someone new at your table or the next table over, introduce yourself, share the warmth of the season, and continue strengthening the bonds of our growing FILAM community.

This newsletter is packed with articles covering the community activities/events we hosted and supported and the US and Philippine scholarships awarded this year by FAAV. Our directors and barkada are truly amazing and generous with their time and talents.

Thank you, FAAV directors, barkada, and the entire FILAM community. Your continued support enables FAAV to do many wonderful things in our community and in the Philippines. Let's make this evening unforgettable!



Standing L to R: June Reyla, Joan Roberts, Hilda Lagamon, Dolly Horlton, Amy Aguinaldo, Felda Saunders, Cori Harms, Eve-lyn Manalo, Tess Mallari, Zenny Way, Bernice Bevard, Vivian Tadeo, Rita Schaljo, Gretel Ness, Bernie Gerhardt

Seated L to R: John Oribello, Francis Guevara, Chuck Reidy, Bob Osilla, Luis Ordon

Editor: Gretel Ness
Editor: June Sustento-Reyla
December 2025 Edition

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- Gretel Ness, Treasurer/Newsletter Editor
- Francis Guevara, Assistant Treasurer
- Theresa Mallari, Secretary
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Kapwa

by Eric Tadeo

(The piece was originally delivered as a keynote address by the author during the Oregon Filipino American Lawyers Association's October dinner gala. It has since been adapted into an article for this newsletter.)

Today, I would like us to dig into some linguistic and cultural matters, and in particular, Filipino culture.



Language and culture are clearly tied together, and we often see this when we find that there are words in one language the does not exist in another. And the other language needs to do some linguistic acrobatics in order to match the meaning of a single word. For example, as you probably know, we in mainland USA have one word for snow, while, no surprise, the Eskimos have dozens. A quick Filipino example - the phrase 'I love you'. How do you say that in Filipino? Yes, 'Mahal Kita'. Three words in English, two in Filipino. It is not 'ako mahal ikaw'. (a quick aside, it is interesting that the word mahal in another context, means expensive. Same context?) The word 'kita' is really not directly translatable to English. 'KITA' is not just you, or not just me. It is a pronoun that merges you and I and describes the relationship all in one little word.

A word like this reflects the importance of relationships to the Filipino. The claim is that the Filipino is one of the most highly relational people in the world. The sense of community is very strong. When we cook - never for one person; always for a big group. At fiesta time, you have a feast and total strangers from the next barrios come and eat; and it's okay, it's norm. Being highly relational, Filipinos have earned the reputation as a most hospitable people. We drop by for visits, unannounced (good or bad?)

Just this morning, as I was fixing breakfast for my wife (how is that for points?), I got a text from a good friend: "Eric, we are here in front of your house." They came in and we had a good visit.

There is the word KAPWA, which is the title of this article. Let's dissect this word a bit. KA is a common prefix, that we add to other words to make a connection, add the community-aspect, relational aspect to the root word:

KA-ibigan - friends

KA-sintahan - lovers

KA-bahay - folks living in the same household

KA-iskuela - class mate

KA-pamilya - family, usually beyond blood relatives

KA-balikat - shoulder-to-shoulder, helping each other

Maybe the closest English equivalent is 'CO' - as in coworker. co-conspirator, collaborator.

Then there is the second syllable, "PWA" is from PUANG, meaning space. KAPWA is our connection with those with whom we share the same space. One society, and I suggest, one Humanity.

Space" is of course used here metaphorically, representing the common culture, values, desires of people in one community.

"KAPWA" is a Filipino term that describes a shared identity and a moral obligation to treat one another as equal fellow human beings. It is a recognition of the self and the other, and calls us to act for the common good and to make sacrifices for our community. Kapwa means "someone who is like you in a certain way".



Kapwa (continued from Page 2)**by Eric Tadeo**

“More deeply, Kapwa goes beyond sense of equality and sense of similarity and connections, it actually includes the recognition that we’re all part of a larger whole. We are one. Everyone is connected to everyone else.

My daughter gave me an illustration. The largest organism in the world is called PANDO, which is a group of trees spread over a 100 plus acres in Utah, about close to 50,000 individual trees that live and die individually, that are genetically identical, but are all physically interconnected via a vast collective root system. She texted me this afternoon about this illustration: Filipinos can pop up all round the world, but when we see a Filipino, hear a Filipino talk with that wonderful accent, our common root still tugs as us, and we connect with open arms. I think this is what KAPWA is – we are one. Unlike some western cultures that emphasize individuality, Filipino culture sees the self as inherently connected to others. This doesn’t mean that Filipinos don’t have a sense of individual identity – rather, their sense of self includes their relationships with others. You know of Maslow’s pyramid of self-actualization which reflects western individualism – the self. I submit that the Filipino version is not self-actualization, but social-actualization or community-actualization. This interconnected view of identity has profound implications.

It influences how Filipinos make decisions, how they handle conflicts, and even how they view success. Success, in the Filipino context, isn’t just about personal achievement – it’s about uplifting your family and community along with you. The idea of interconnectedness at the heart of Kapwa aligns well with global movements towards social responsibility and even environmental stewardship. What are the things that affect us all? The emphasis on empathy and shared identity could be a powerful antidote to the extreme polarization we see today. While Kapwa is uniquely Filipino in its expression, I believe that its core principles of interconnectedness, empathy, and mutual support are universal. As the world becomes more interconnected, perhaps we could all benefit from a little more Kapwa in our lives. Note that KAPWA is not just civility or being polite or being nice and cooperative. It is not a strategy. It is not a program in how to win friends and influence people. Kapwa is a way of life.



KAPWA is a philosophy, a worldview inherent in the Filipino culture and in some ways, distinguishes us Filipinos from others. It’s the reason why Filipinos are known for their warmth, hospitality, and resilience in the face of adversity. Filipinos have offered much to the world – much talent in various fields of endeavor, many areas of life. We have given the world many scientists, engineers, architects, doctors and nurses, even champion boxers, recently, champion singers, and tennis players. We have much to offer. But I think we have KAPWA, this profound treasure to share with the world; with humanity-at-large. In a world grappling with issues of deep social/political/ economic division, often combative situations - could Kapwa offer some wisdom? We chatted, and I mentioned this speech. My friend said – you know why Filipinos have KAPWA in its culture? Because, original Filipinos came to the islands by boat, called “balanghays” and situated themselves in the not-too-friendly jungles and mountains of the archipelago. Their survival depended on each other. No ‘lone rangers’. Individualism, solo actions were very unhelpful, even fatal. The early Filipinos were forced to act as one, a social unit, in order to make it.

Today, the local government units in the Philippines is called “Barangay,” named after that boat. I say today, I’d like to see us think in terms of all of us, not just Filipinos, but all humanity, being in the same boat. The fate of one is the fate of everyone. We are all KAPWA. Salamat, sa inyong lahat, mga KAPWA ko. Thank you all.

2026 FAAV U.S. Scholarship Recipients

Filipino American Association of Vancouver proudly announces their 2026 Scholarship Awardees: Michaela Asuncion, Aderris Bantilan, Eladia Erickson, Aly Ordon, and Kirstin Walla.



Michaela Asuncion is currently attending Seton Catholic College Preparatory. Michaela has received many awards that include College Board National Recognition, Higher Learning Award, AP Scholar with Distinction and Volleyball Varsity Letter. Michaela hopes to attend the University of Washington and major in Medical Laboratory Sciences.



Aderris Bantilan is a student at Clark College majoring in Business Finance. Aderris will soon receive his Associates degree and will then continue his education at Washington State University-Vancouver Campus. Aderris' future goals besides obtaining a college degree is to own his own business and establish himself in the media industry.



Eladia Erickson is a high school student attending Ridgefield High School. She is active in Theatre, the National Honor Society, Unite Ridgefield, Club Soccer, French Club, Leos Club and iTuna (International Teens Upholding Nature Association.) Eladia plans on majoring in Communications in college.



Aly Ordon is a high school Senior at Seton Catholic College Preparatory. Aly lists her awards as First Team All-League, All-Region Award, Academic State Champ, and All-Tournament Team Award in Volleyball. Aly will be attending Portland State University and majoring in Sports Medicine and Sciences.



Kirstin Walla is in her junior year at Marymount Manhattan College in New York City. Kirstin has been on the Marymount Dean's List three years in a row. Kirstin hopes to graduate in 2027 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. Kirstin also has an interest *"to show people how much the arts truly means, how it changes lives and provides a light side to the occasional bleakness of the world."*

FAAV Philippine Scholars for School Year 2025-2026

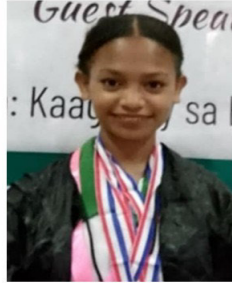
Shepherd of the Tribes Mission in Bataan Province



Nica Cayetano



Peter Soria



Jolina Aquile

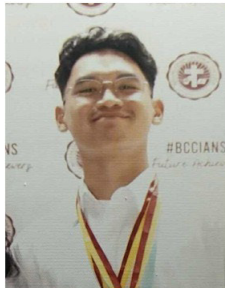


Christ John Paul Abraham

Sisters of the Poor in Rizal Province



Mary Rose Ruiz



Mharc Lebron Jarabejo



Jericho Apran



Marcelino Bello

Catanduanes State University in Catanduanes Province



Remy Teves



Renelyn Saceda

The Filipino-American Association of Vancouver, Washington, along with support from the community and generous sponsors, continues to assist students in the Philippines through the Sisters of the Poor of St Catherine of Siena, located in Binangonan, Rizal, the Shepherd of the Tribes Mission in Balanga City, Bataan, and the Catanduanes State University in Virac, Catanduanes.

FAAV is proud to announce that our Philippine Scholarship Program has a total of ten (10) scholarship awardees for this school year 2025-26. Four (4) of the students are in high school, and six (6) are in college.

SHEPHERD OF THE TRIBES MISSION

Nica Cayetano, from Abucay, Bataan, in Grade 11 at Eastwoods Academy of Science and Technology.

Peter Soria, from Orani, Bataan, is now in Grade 12 at Orani National High School.

Jolina Aquile, from Abucay, Bataan, is now a Freshman at Bataan Peninsula State University.

Christ John Paul Abraham, from Orani, Bataan, also Freshman at Bataan Peninsula State University.

SISTERS OF THE POOR

Mary Rose Ruiz, from Binangonan, Rizal, is Grade 9 at Morong National High School.

Mharc Lebron Jarabejo, from Binangonan, Rizal, is now Grade 12 at Binangonan Catholic Colleges.

Jericho Apran, from Binangonan, Rizal, is now a Freshman at East Systems Colleges of Rizal.

Marcelino Bello, from Cardona, Rizal, is now a Freshman at University of Rizal System.

CATANDUANES STATE UNIVERSITY

Remy Teves, from Bato, Catanduanes, is a Sophomore.

Renelyn Saceda, from Viga, Catanduanes, is a 2nd year Law Student.

Congratulations to our 2025-26 Philippine Scholars!

Pasko Na Naman sa Amerika: Remembering our Traditions



The Longest Christmas in the World

In the Philippines, Christmas begins as early as September — the moment the “ber” months arrive! Streets light up, Christmas songs fill the air, and families start preparing for the most beloved celebration of the year. Filipino Christmas is more than a holiday — it’s a season of faith, family, and joy that stretches from September to January.

Simbang Gabi: Faith in the Early Morning

One of the most meaningful Filipino traditions is Simbang Gabi, a nine-day series of dawn or evening masses leading up to Christmas Eve.

After Mass, churchgoers gather for favorite treats like Bibingka (rice cake baked in banana leaves), Puto bumbong (purple sticky rice with coconut and sugar), and Tsokolate (hot chocolate) — a sweet way to start the day in fellowship.

The Parol: Star of Hope

Every Filipino home displays a parol, a star-shaped lantern symbolizing the Star of Bethlehem. Once made of bamboo and paper, today’s parols glow in vibrant colors and lights — a shining reminder of hope, faith, and resilience.

Noche Buena: A Feast of Love

On Christmas Eve, families gather for Noche Buena, a midnight feast celebrating togetherness. The festive table often features Lechon (roast pig), Queso de bola (edam cheese), Hamon (Christmas ham), Pancit and lumpia for prosperity and long life.

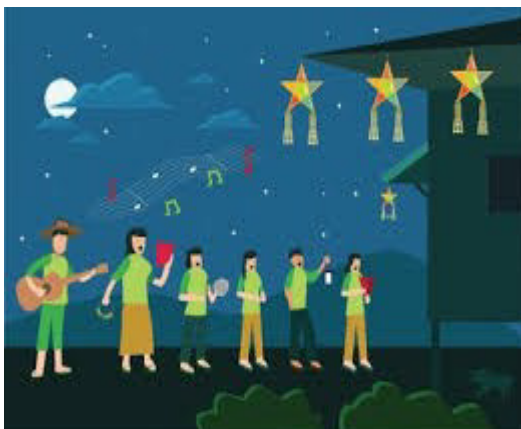
Noche Buena is not just about food — it’s about gratitude, laughter, and love.



Gift-Giving and Reunions

No matter how far apart, Filipinos come home for Christmas. Families exchange gifts through Monito Monita, a playful version of Secret Santa.

For overseas Filipinos, it’s a time to reconnect, celebrate, and give back.



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Caroling and Community Spirit

From children’s street carols to neighborhood choirs, caroling fills communities with joy. Songs like “Ang Pasko ay Sumapit” remind everyone that Christmas is a season of sharing joy and kindness.

The True Spirit of Pasko

More than lights or gifts, Filipino Christmas is about bayanihan — helping others, sharing blessings, and keeping faith alive even in difficult times. Wherever you may be, the directors of the Filipino American Association of Vancouver, Washington wish that the spirit of Pasko fill your heart with warmth, gratitude, and hope.

Maligayang Pasko at Manigong Bagong Taon!

Alam ba Ninyo?

ni Ka June

Ang mga sawikain o idyoma ay mga pahayag sa wikang Filipino o Tagalog na may kahulugang hindi tuwirang ipinahahayag ng mga salitang bumubuo nito. Kilala bilang “sawikain,” ang mga ito ay mahalagang bahagi ng wika at kulturang Pilipino. Ipinapakita ng mga sawikain ang pagkamalikhain, katatawanan, at karunungan ng mga Pilipino, at madalas itong ginagamit sa araw-araw na usapan upang mas makulay na maipahayag ang damdamin o sitwasyon.

Filipino idioms are expressions in the Filipino/Tagalog language that have meanings beyond the literal definitions of the words. Known as “sawikain” in Filipino, idioms play a significant role in the Philippine language and culture.

Ang mga idyoma nagbibigay ng masusing pagtanaw sa mga sistemang pagpapahalaga, ugnayang panlipunan, at mga pananaw moral na nakaugat sa kamalayang Pilipino.

Idioms offer glimpses into the value systems, social hierarchies, and moral perspectives ingrained in Filipino society.

Filipino Idiom (Sawikain)	Literal Translation	Meaning / English Equivalent
Bukas ang palad	Open hand	Generous or charitable
Matigas ang ulo	Hard-headed	Stubborn; doesn't listen to advice
Makapal ang mukha	Thick-faced	Shameless; not easily embarrassed
Mahaba ang kamay	Long hands	Tends to steal
Mataas ang ihi	High urine	Arrogant; boastful
Nasa ilalim ng saya	Under the skirt	Submissive; controlled by one's wife or mother
Itaga mo sa bato	Carve it on stone	Be certain about it; a promise that won't change
Butas ang bulsa	Hole in the pocket	Having no money; broke
Kapit sa patalim	Holding on to a knife	Doing something desperate out of need
Parang kabute	Like a mushroom	Someone or something that appears suddenly
Balat sibuyas	Onion-skinned	sensitive
Magdilang anghel ka	May your tongue speak like an angel	May your good words come true
Hampas sa hangin	Hit the wind	A useless effort; wasted action
Patay gutom	Dead hungry	Very poor
Naagbibilang ng poste	Counting electrical posts	jobless

After the Storm: How to Help Typhoon-Hit Communities in the Philippines

Every year, the Philippines faces some of the world's strongest typhoons — often more than 20 storms in a single season. This year's storms have left widespread destruction: homes lost, crops destroyed, and thousands of families displaced. Yet even amidst hardship, the Filipino spirit of bayanihan — unity and mutual help — continues to shine. Communities come together to rebuild, share what little they have, and support one another in recovery.

How You Can Help

1. *Donate to Trusted Relief Groups. Your contribution can bring food, shelter, and medical aid to families in need. Some organizations to consider include:*

- *Citizens Disaster Response Center*
- *Consortium for People's Development-Disaster Response*
- *Gawad Kalinga*
- *UNICEF Philippines*
- *Caritas Manila*

Monetary donations often have the biggest impact — they let responders buy supplies locally and deliver help faster.

2. *Send Emergency Supplies. If you're joining a local drive, consider sending:*

- *Rice and canned goods*
- *Bottled water and hygiene kits*
- *Blankets, mats, and clothing*
- *Solar lamps and power banks*



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3. *Volunteer or Partner Locally if you are able to. Many community organizations are rebuilding schools, clinics, and homes. If you are able to travel to the Philippines, or if you have family members who are able to locally, know that all of your skills, time, or even helping hands can make a difference.*

4. *Spread the Word. Share verified relief information on social media or within your community networks. Every post helps mobilize more support.*

Together, We Can Rebuild

Recovery takes time but with collective effort, compassion, and resilience, the Philippines always rises stronger than ever. Let's continue to stand together in solidarity, empathy, and hope! Every act of generosity helps our families and friends still in the Philippines find safety, comfort, and hope after every calamity. Thank you for caring!

Alam ba Ninyo ni Ka June

(continued from Page 7)

Tuklasin ang Iyong Kaalaman sa mga Idyomang Filipino

Directions: Match the Filipino idioms in Column A with their correct meanings in Column B. Write the letter of the correct answer on the blank before each number.

Column A

1. _____ *Bukas ang palad*
 2. _____ *Matigas ang ulo*
 3. _____ *Makapal ang mukha*
 4. _____ *Mahaba ang kamay*
 5. _____ *Mataas ang ihi*
 6. _____ *Nasa ilalim ng saya*
 7. _____ *Itaga mo sa bato*
 8. _____ *Butas ang bulsa*
 9. _____ *Magdilang anghel*
 10. _____ *Hampas sa langit*
 11. _____ *Patay gutom*
 12. _____ *Kutong lupa*
 13. _____ *Naniningalang pugad*
 14. _____ *Takip silim*
 15. _____ *Kwentong barbero*
 16. _____ *Hanggang libing*
 17. _____ *Bahala na*
 18. _____ *Nagmumurang kamatis*
 19. _____ *Sinabon*
 20. _____ *Tubong*
- lugaw

Column B

- A. Submissive
- B. Broke
- C. Statement that indirectly hits or offends someone
- D. Shameless
- E. May your good words come true
- F. Sundown
- G. Stubborn
- H. Man who is courting a woman
- I. Arrogant; boastful
- J. Tends to steal
- K. Scolded
- L. Generous or charitable
- M. Desperate for food
- N. Statement that won't change
- O. Of low social standing
- P. "Gossip"
- Q. Very big profit gained from a small investment
- R. Come what may
- S. Acting young for one's age
- T. Until death

2025 Simbang Gabi
Southern Deanery, Archdiocese of Seattle

13 Dec Saturday at 11 am
Commissioning Mass at **St James Cathedral**
804 9th Ave, **Seattle** WA 98104
Celebrant: Archbishop Paul D. Etienne
contact: sgcoordinators@gmail.com

19 Dec Friday at 6 pm
St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church
324 NE Oak St, **Camas**, WA 98607
Celebrant: Rev. Thomas Nathe
contact: theresamallari@yahoo.com

20 Dec Saturday at 4 pm
St Rose de Viterbo Catholic Church
2571 Nichols Blvd, **Longview**, WA 98662
Celebrant: Rev. Brian Thompson
contact: judithpaine@gmail.com

21 Dec Sunday at 9 am
St John the Evangelist Catholic Church
8701 NE 119th St, **Vancouver** WA 98662
Celebrant: Rev. Temo Ramirez
contact: gerhardtbr@gmail.com



FAAV Shows Up for Shoebox Ministry at Felida Bible Church

Every year since 1993, Samaritan's Purse, a nondenominational evangelical Christian organization, has collected shoebox gifts filled with toys, school supplies, and other fun items for children around the world. To date, more than 232 million children in more than 170 countries and territories have received an Operation Christmas Child shoebox. Millions of Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts are collected each year from locations in North America and throughout the world, including Australia, Austria, Finland, Germany, New Zealand, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

Tens of thousands of volunteers from churches around the world, one of which is Felida Bible Church in Vancouver, Washington, partner with Samaritan's Purse to pack these boxes and then present at festive outreach events where children from all the world, including the Philippines, are surprised with these shoebox gifts.




FAAV

Children's Pasko Na Naman

GAMES **PRIZES**

FOOD **FREE ADMISSION**

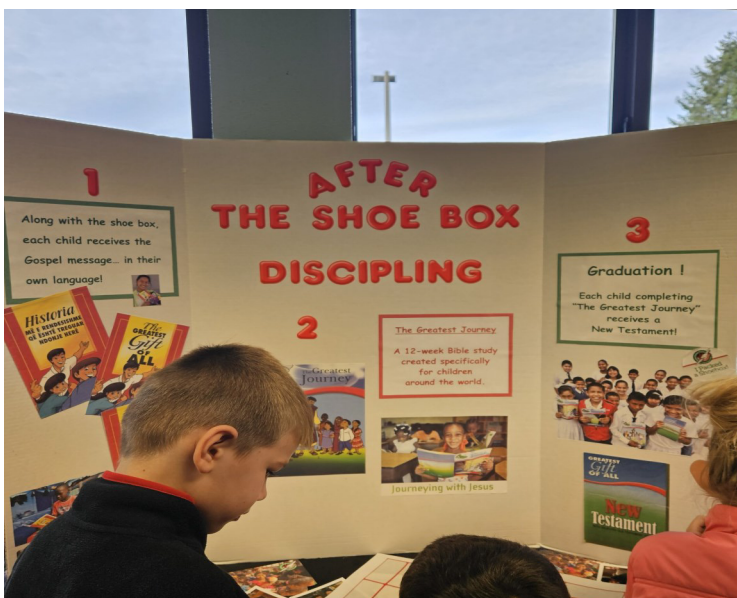
Saturday
December 20, 2025
1 pm - 3 pm

St. Thomas Church
324 NE Oak St Camas,
WA 98607

Contact Us:
filamvancouver.org

Register your kids!







FIL-AM VANCOUVER SCHOLARSHIP AWARD!

**The FAAV Scholarship
Application for
Calendar Year 2027 will
open in January 2026**

**Submission deadline is:
October 1st, 2026
At 11:59 PM
Pacific Standard Time**

High School Seniors, vocational and academic students, are you aspiring to be a leader in our Filipino Community?

The Filipino American Association of Vancouver (FAAV) can help you in this journey.

Annually, FAAV offers **up to \$2,000** to deserving students.

The criteria are: you must be a **permanent resident of Clark County; must be of Filipino descent; and must be a high school senior by the time of selection** and award, or must be currently pursuing a vocational certificate, technical, associate or bachelor's degree. Eligible applicants are encouraged to apply more than once.

**Students will be contacted of their award no later than November 15, 2026.
Scholarship awards will be formally awarded at our annual
Pasko Na Naman gala in December 2026.**



www.FilAmVancouver.org

www.filamvancouver.org/scholarship



Know Your Rights If You Are Stopped In Public

All people living in the United States, including undocumented immigrants, have certain U.S. constitutional rights. If you are undocumented and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers stop you on the street or in a public place, remember your options and rights:

You Have the Right to Ask if You are Under Arrest or Free to Leave

Do not panic or run away.

Ask if you are being arrested or detained. If the ICE officer says no, you can ask if you are free to leave.

If they say yes, walk away calmly.

If they say no, stay where you are and do not attempt to leave.

You Have the Right to Remain Silent

You do not have to speak to the immigration officer, answer any questions, or show any documents.

If you are asked where you were born or how you entered the United States, you may refuse to answer or remain silent.

If you choose to remain silent, say "I choose to remain silent."

You may show a **know-your-rights card (English) (Spanish)** to the officer that explains that you will remain silent and wish to speak to a lawyer.

If you do not understand English, state the language you speak.

You are Not Required to Show Immigration Documents

You may refuse to show identity documents that reveal your country of nationality or citizenship.

Never show false documents or provide false information.

Do not say you were born in the United States if you were not, and do not claim to be a U.S. citizen if you are not one.

You May Refuse a Search

You have the right to refuse a search of yourself or your personal belongings unless officers have probable cause or a warrant.

ICE officers cannot search you without your consent unless they have probable cause. However, they can pat down the outside of your clothing if they suspect you have a weapon.

If ICE officers try to search you, you can say, "I do not consent to a search."

If they search you anyway, do not resist physically.

Document what happened - this may help in a future legal case.

You Have the Right to Speak to a Lawyer

If you are detained or taken into custody, you have the right to contact an attorney.

Even if you do not have a lawyer, you may tell the officers that you want to speak to one by saying, "I want to speak to a lawyer."

If you have a lawyer, you have the right to talk to that lawyer. If you have proof of that relationship (such as a signed **Form G-28**), give it to an officer.

If you do not have a lawyer, ask for a list of pro bono (free) or low bono (low cost) lawyers.

If detained by ICE, you have the right to contact your country's consulate or have an officer inform the consulate of your detention. Your consulate may be able to assist you in connecting with a lawyer.

You Do Not Have to Sign Anything

Do not sign any paperwork without speaking with a lawyer first.

If you choose to sign something, make sure you fully understand what it means. Signing documents may waive your rights or lead to deportation.

If you Believe Your Rights Have Been Violated

Write down what happened or ask a witness to do so.

Include specific details like names, badge numbers, and exactly what was said and done.

Report the violation to a lawyer or an immigrant rights organization.

For more information about your rights or to see if you qualify for immigration relief, consult an immigration lawyer.

The contents of this article do not constitute legal advice

To engage in humanitarian, cultural and charitable preserve, promote, and share customs, values, and heritage



civic, educational, activities that would with the community the of the Filipino culture.

**Check us out on the web at
www.filamvancouver.org**