

31st **FAAGC** ANNUAL GALA

Masskara Festival

The Filipino festival of many smiling faces!



DIVERSITY ♦ RESILIENCY ♦ UNITY



R2i2 Conference Center

Saturday, September 23, 2023

763 Fashion Drive, Columbia

6:00-10:00 PM

2023-2024 FAAGC EXECUTIVE BOARD

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FAAGC 2023 Gala Celebrates Maskara Festival

Program of Events

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 5:30 | Door Open |
| 6:00-8:45 | Food Service by Southern Way Catering |
| 6:25 | Invocation - Pastor Jake Bolotano Philippines National Anthem - Clarissa Wentley U.S. National Anthem - Camille Andres Welcome Remarks from FAAGC Vice President, Elen Callahan |
| 6:40 | Traditional Dance Performance Featuring FAAGC's Dance Troupe Rigodon de Honor |
| 6:50 | Outstanding Contributions to our Community Award Lifetime Member Acknowledgements - Ron & Faye Colley, Dr. Praxedes Sebastian, Dr. Rosen Lawsin, Dr. Erwin & Anne Mangubat, Diana Dingman |
| 7:00 | A Medley of Luzon Folk Songs, Sung by Ms. Camille Andres |
| 7:05 | A message from Ambassador Romualdez Welcome Message from FAAGC President, Reyna Funderburk Guest Speaker: Jane Przybysz , Executive Director of the McKissick Museum at the University of South Carolina |
| 7:25 | A medley of Visayan Folk Songs, Sung by Jadith Carswell , Accompaniment by Vince Laran |
| 7:30 | FAAGC: Through the Years Clarissa Wentley, Nieves McNulty, Debi Norris, Alma Robichaud, and Chiara Cox |
| 7:40 | Raffle Drawing Gong music of Mindanao Performed by Dr. Nieves McNulty |
| 7:45 | Raffle Drawing Traditional Dance Medley Featuring FAAGC's Dance Troupe La Jota, Bilao, Tnikling, Singkil, and Pangalay |
| 8:10 | Raffle Drawing Contemporary Dance Performance Featuring FAAGC's Dance Troupe (Sassy Dancers Fab5) |
| 8:15 | Open Dance |
| 9:00 | Closing Remarks from FAAGC President, Reyna Funderburk |
| 9:05 | Open Dance |
| 10:00 | Doors Close |

President Message

On behalf of the Executive Board Members, I want to express my warm greetings to my FAAGC family for the anniversary of our 31st Annual Gala! Our organization has come a long way because of the selfless contributions of our leaders and members. As a 501 (c) (3) all volunteer organization that is now reaching 31 years established, we are proud and remain in high spirit that we can continue to watch and pave future generations to flourish our great Filipino culture.

I am delighted to announce that the theme for this year's Annual Gala is: MassKara Festival, The Filipino festival of many smiling faces. This theme aims to appreciate and promote the diversity of the Philippine culture – a culture of 7,641 islands and more than 170 dialects spoken throughout the archipelago. It also provides us an opportunity to rediscover our roots and to remind ourselves of our tangible and intangible cultural heritage that has been in existence for generations.

This event is about commemorating our culture through music, arts, and cultural dances. It must be noted that preserving our culture doesn't mean disrespecting other peoples cultures, but rather living in harmony with different cultures and ensuring we are proud of how we are defined by the next generation. Through cultural integration, we learn how to be better people in society and how to live together as brothers and sisters. It is only through appreciating each other's culture that we will live in harmony as a community.

Events like this bring everyone together regardless of ethnicity and culture. That's what the many smiling faces are all about: resiliency, diversity and unity.

To all Sponsors, Donors, Benefactors and guests, tonight Masskara Festival Celebration will not be possible if not because of your generosity and continued support.

I am looking forward to a wonderful evening! Thank you at Mabuhay po tayong lahat (Long Live Everyone)!

Regna Funderburk

Reyna Funderburk
FAAGC President 2022-2024



Guest Speaker



Congratulations to the members of the Filipino-American Association of Greater Columbia for organizing this annual gala event to celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the Philippines and raise funds to support the organization's scholarship, cultural and charitable programs. Like many immigrants before them, Filipinos came to the United States seeking educational and job opportunities. But they did not leave the Philippines behind. They brought with them recipes for chicken adobo and pancit. They continued to wear the barong tagalog--that embroidered long-sleeve man's shirt made of cloth ingeniously crafted from pineapple leaf fibers--on formal occasions. They carried a myriad of instruments fashioned of bamboo. Among themselves, they adapted food, clothing, musical and dance traditions to a new cultural context and forged a sense of community that they now proudly invited us--their South Carolina friends, neighbors, and colleagues--to share. We are all the richer for gatherings such as these!

With my mother's family having immigrated from Northern Ireland to South Carolina prior to the Revolutionary War (1775), I have deep roots in the music and craft traditions of this state. My grandfather's Primitive Baptist Church congregation sang what's called shaped-note music. This was a form of religious music sung without musical accompaniment. And one of my grandfather's sisters--my Aunt Ida--was the quilter in the family. She had a wooden quilting frame on rope pulleys that she lowered down from the ceiling of her living room when she was ready to stitch the three layers of a quilt together. So it comes as no surprise that I eventually found myself researching and performing shape note music and took up making and writing about quilts as a form of women's expressive culture.

Yet while being steeped in the cultural traditions of the southeastern US, I also share with many of you the experience of being a first generation American. My father immigrated to the US on September 1, 1939, the day Germany invaded Poland. Growing up I spent many holidays at my grandparents' home in Glassport, PA where Polish was spoken with English over meals of stuffed cabbage and pierogi. After several Iron City beers, my grandfather would regale us with songs he learned in a Russian prisoner of war camp during WWI. Even now my father will occasionally sing scraps of songs he sang in his youth while playing the accordion in a band that performed for Polish American gatherings. Unfortunately, we didn't speak Polish in our household, and I never learned to play the accordion. But I do still make stuffed cabbage for the holidays using the recipe I jotted down while watching my grandmother cook without a recipe. Like you who have come to this evening's gala, I pay homage the people and cultural traditions that have shaped how I experience being a citizen of South Carolina, but also of the world.

Jane Przybysz, Ph.D.
Executive Director
McKissick Museum
University of South Carolina



THE COLUMBIA FIL-AM DANCE TROUPE



Luzon Dance



RIGODON

Also called Rigodon de Honor is a traditional formal dance brought to the Pacific islands by Spanish settlers in the sixteenth century. This dance highlights prestige and status, performed in ballrooms during grand occasions. In the Philippines, the dance was traditionally held to open exclusive state, national and provincial functions.

Leah & Manny Cuaresma, Dhel & Butch Elamparo, Olga & Peter Liunoras, Gina & Jon Castaneda, Tess & Walt Hill, Teresa & John Ziegler, Diane Digman, Alan Matienzo, Evelyn & Don Liester, Pricila and Mark Ramirez, Myrna & Andrew Whitmire, Marissa & David Massie, Juvie Lowder, Delfin Lomboy

CHOREOGRAPHER: Yani Gould

LA JOTA

Adapted from the original Spanish folk dance, evolved into a formal ballroom dance. This highlights the fusion of cultures that have shaped the Filipino identity over the years, uses bamboo castanets, and celebrates the Filipinos' successful revolt for independence from Spain. This dance is a testament to the rich history of Philippines and the resilience of the Filipinos in adapting and integrating.

Aimee Celdrn, Daphne Lee Sabanagan, Diane Dingman, Grace Constantino, Alan Matienzo, Antonio Ramirez, John Derrick Capistrano, Christian Trangia

CHOREOGRAPHER: Reyna Funderburk



CAMILLE ANDRES

FILIPINO FOLK SONGS:

Atin Cu Pung Sing Sing
Bahay Kubo
Paru Parong Bukid

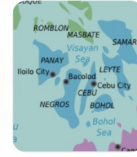
Manang Biday
Leron Leron Sinta

Camille Andres, an international educator, has dedicated five enriching years to teaching in the United States. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education with a specialization in Special Education from Far Eastern University Manila. Hailing from Antipolo City, Camille's roots extend to the diverse provinces of La Union, Isabela, and Abra. Notably, she's graced the stage as a front act during Miss Jessa Zaragoza's captivating concerts in Fayetteville, NC, and North Charleston, SC. Camille Andres embodies the fusion of education and artistry, making a profound impact both in and out of the classroom.

THE COLUMBIA FIL-AM DANCE TROUPE



Visayas Dance



TINIKLING

The National dance of the Philippines. A traditional folk dance which is named after a bird, “tikling,” that is native to the Philippines. The dance imitates the movements of the bird as it tries to escape the trap laid by the farmers. The dance involves at least two people beating, tapping, and sliding bamboo poles on the ground and against each other in coordination with one or more dancers who step over and in between the poles in a dance.

Alexandra Ricks, Julia Antonio, Savannah Carswell,
Bryce Perez, Joaquin Aidan Vejerano, Juan Andre Vejerano, William Massie
CHOREOGRAPHER: Yani Gould, Savannah Carswell, Andre Vejerano

BILAO

Inspired from the movement associated with winnowing the newly harvested rice with the help of wind and the use of bilao, a traditional round and shallow basket tray made of bamboo splits. The grains are separated from husk after the process of threshing and this dance gives a glimpse into part of the rural farm life.

Audrey Wanner, Dhemee Juyamao, Isabella Daquioag, Janaya Cing, Mayah Perez, Sophia de Lara, Shawn Broome

CHOREOGRAPHER: Yani Gould



JADITH CARSWELL

MEDLEY SONGS:

Pobreng Alindahaw, Usahay, and Lagkaw

Jadith who hails from Cebu is the oldest of seven siblings, father was an Iloilo native and mother, a true Cebuana. Jadith went to Cogelio de la Inmaculada Concepcion in Cebu, Ozark Christian College in Missouri and Cincinnati Christian University in Ohio. She met her husband, Robert Carswell while attending CCU and with him they have two daughters, Elizabeth Carswell White and Savannah Carswell, both born in Ohio. The family moved to SC in 2009 and have been enjoying the warmer weather and the close proximity to both ocean and the mountains. Jadith is the forwarding agent for Gospel Fires Mission which serves churches in the islands of Cebu, Negros Oriental and Leyte. She has worked as an assistant librarian, a music teacher and currently a Food Service manager for Lexington 1 School District. She loves to hike, cook, attend concerts and hanging out with friends. She lives by many favorite Bible promises one of which is, “Cast all your cares upon the Lord for He cares for you.” 1 Peter 5:7.

THE COLUMBIA FIL-AM DANCE TROUPE



Mindanao Dance



SINGKIL

Originates from the Maranao people of Lake Lanao in the southern region of Mindanao. This timeless and popular Muslim royal dance feature a prince and a princess and show them weave in and out of crisscrossed bamboo poles clapped in syncopated rhythm. The lady holds a fan and have an entourage that follows her around.

Yani Irag-Gould, Zeny Davila, Marie Broome, Bryce Perez, and Argie Giguera. Maria Cecilia Geoghegan, Richel Jamera Vaules, Antonio Ramirez, and Shawn Broome.

CHOREOGRAPHER: Yani Gould

PANGALAY

Also known as Daling-Daling or Mengalai in Sabah. Pangalay literally means a gift offering and also means "temple of dance" in Sanskrit. Pangalay antedates Christianity and Islam in the Philippines. This traditional Tausig (of the Sulu Archipelago) dance is distinct because it is characterized by hand movements that resemble the movement of ocean waves, enhanced by long, metal fingernails worn by the dancers.

There are different kinds of Pangalay dances: Pangalay linggisian, is performed by a solo female dancer imitating the movement of a bird in flight; Pangalay courtship dance is performed by a male and female dancer imitating the graceful courtship dance of birds, and Pangalay ha patung, which involves dancing on elevated bamboo poles, reminiscent of the royal Singkil

CHOREOGRAPH and PERFORMED BY: Camille Guigera



NIEVES McNULTY

Nieves Austria McNulty is a retired Math Professor having taught at the University of the Philippines Los Banos, USC Aiken and Columbia College. Nieves was born in Roxas City to a mother from Iloilo and a father from Pangasinan. She also lived in Lingayen Pangasinan and Quezon City. She obtained her math degrees from UP Diliman and USC. She was married for 41 years to George McNulty, who recently passed away, with two children Allison and Michael. Nieves is a lifetime member of FAAQC and has served as its president (1997-2001) and treasurer (2009-2013). Her husband George had likewise been an active member of FAAQC having served as treasurer and as a member of the dance troupe.

The kulintang is an instrument consisting usually of eight gongs with diameters between 7 and 9 inches and a height of 3 inches that are laid out in a row. It is the main instrument of an ensemble with 3 or 4 other larger gongs that hang vertically, and some drums. These instruments were used during festivities for entertainment and to accompany dance performances. Traditionally, it's the women who played the kulintang while men played the other instrument. Nowadays there are more men playing it.

I've had these gongs for about 25 years now but it was only after Imelda Go built a base for it and persuaded me to learn to play it and to perform at today's gala. I foolishly said 'sure, how hard can it be'. Fortunately in my research about the instrument, I found that there are no standards regarding how or what to play. So tonight I will be playing for you my "Improvisation #0.001"



EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES WASHINGTON, D.C.

MESSAGE

On behalf of the Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines in Washington, D.C., I convey our warmest greetings to the Filipino American Association of Greater Columbia (FAAGC) on the occasion of its 31st Annual Gala on 23 September 2023.

The Embassy recognizes the significant role of your organization in promoting intercultural education and awareness, particularly on Filipino heritage and culture, in Greater Columbia for over thirty years. We commend your dedication to preserving and promoting our cultural heritage to the next generation of Filipino-Americans, as well as the locals in your respective communities.

I am confident that this year's FAAGC Gala will be successful, as it has been in past years. I wish your Masskara-themed festival will serve as a reflection of how joyful, colorful, vibrant, diverse, and distinct our heritage is. May you spread as much jubilation and smiles, as there are Masskaras in your celebration.

Let us forge ahead together, driven by the bayanihan spirit, and united in our pursuit of stability, progress, and prosperity for the Filipino people, as envisioned by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr..

In this shared journey, every Filipino holds a stake in the destiny of our nation, and together, we shall continue to shape a brighter Philippines.

Maraming salamat at mabuhay po kayong lahat!

JOSE MANUEL G. ROMUALDEZ
Ambassador



23 September 2023



Greetings on the occasion of the 2023 MassKara Festival! Throughout the year, the Filipino-American Association of Greater Columbia (FAAGC) devotes much time, care, energy, and expertise to growing and sharing a vibrant tapestry of Filipino cultural traditions. This important work resonates with the South Carolina Arts Commission's Vision of "a South Carolina where the arts are valued and all people benefit from a variety of creative experiences." The FAAGC's robust calendar of cultural programs supports Filipino traditions from within, ensuring that future generations will know and appreciate their cultural roots, while offering the public exciting opportunities to experience Filipino culture firsthand. This year, the SC Arts Commission (SCAC) is pleased to support a 10-month, one-on-one mentorship in Filipino Traditional Folk Dance through our Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Initiative. We are also happy to provide support for Ugat: Reclaiming and Embracing our Ancestral Roots Through Traditional Music through our Folklife & Traditional Arts Project Grant. Ugat offers a series of programs featuring Filipino classical music and textiles in celebration of Filipino-American History Month this October. These programs embody the spirit of the SCAC's Folklife & Traditional Arts program, which seeks to preserve, support, document, and present South Carolina's dynamic cultural traditions. As artistic expressions of our lived identity and values, folk and traditional arts are "equipment for living," to quote writer Kenneth Burke, offering us guidance to live by, a channel for creativity, and means of connection with others within and beyond our cultural communities. As FAAGC Second Vice President Alma Robichaud put it so beautifully, "Culture is part of the DNA of what a human being is."

As we gather to celebrate the MassKara Festival, we are immersed in a host of Filipino cultural expressions: music, dance, architecture, clothing and more. We may also be inspired by the Filipino spirit of Bayanihan, a cultural value that fosters unity, collaboration and mutual support around a common cause. We are grateful for the work of the Filipino-American Association of Greater Columbia to enrich our cultural landscape and support the greater good in our region.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laura R Marcus Green".

Laura Marcus Green, Ph.D. (she/her)
Folklife & Traditional Arts Director

lgreen@arts.sc.gov | 803.734.8764
1026 Sumter Street, Suite 200, Columbia, SC, USA 29201

SouthCarolinaArts.com | SCArtsHub.com

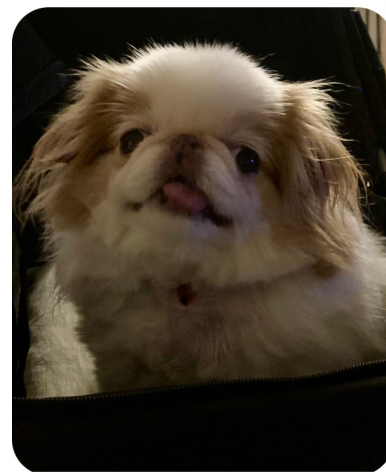




Benefactor



Kermit, Eding,
Buddy, Ginger,
and Chico Jusi
Thomas Nanay
and Tatay Jusi



Best wishes for a wonderful
31st anniversary gala!
Congratulations FAAGC



Benefactor



Alain & Daisy Mae Dimasuay

*Congratulations and Best
Wishes to the members and
Officers of the FAAGC!*



Benefactor



First INTERNATIONALS



We, at First Internationals, are so thankful for Reyna, the officers, and members of FAAGC. We are so grateful to be able to partner with FAAGC to help the Filipino community in Columbia, especially the newly arrived teachers, nurses, and other Filipino immigrants. FAAGC does an incredible job at serving their neighbors, helping the people back in the Philippines, and spreading the beauty of Filipino culture so people can experience it. It is a blessing to work alongside you and an honor to call you friends. FAAGC truly makes Columbia a better city. We look forward to continuing to serve alongside you in the future as we are better together.

Rev. Ryan Dupree
Minister to Internationals, First Baptist Church – Columbia
803.343.8571
www.FBCcola.com





Benefactor

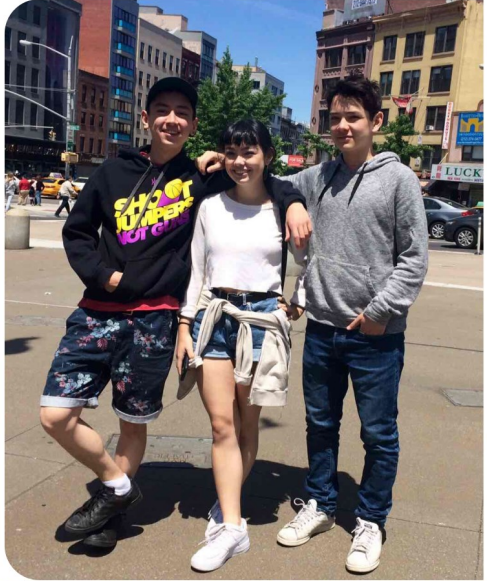


Gene & Elen Callahan

*Congratulations to 31 years of
building community! Looking
forward to your continued
successes.*



Benefactor



Mark & Priscila Ramirez, Rachel, Mark & Sophie and grandchildren: Eamon, Emma, Adam, Leon & Georgia

**Congratulations on FAAGC's
31st Anniversary!**



Benefactor



Blessings from the Norris Family:

*Ed Norris Jr., Debi Norris, Alexis Nicholson,
Amarah Nicholson, Alijah Norris, Adora Norris*

*Congratulations to FAAGC for
another successful year*



Benefactor



Dr. Rosen Lawsin

*Congratulations to the new officers.
More successful years for FAAGC!*

*Celebrate Feast of Sto Nino on
Jan. 13, 2024 at 10:00 am to 5:00 pm at St John Neumann church!
All are invited to attend Mass at 11:00 am!*



Benefactor



**Pete & Olga
Liunoras**



**Ignacio, Jennifer
(Brandon and Braylenn)**



**Isel, Brian
(Finley and Everett)**

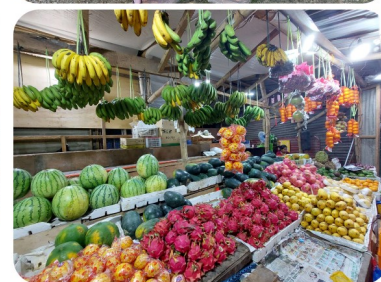
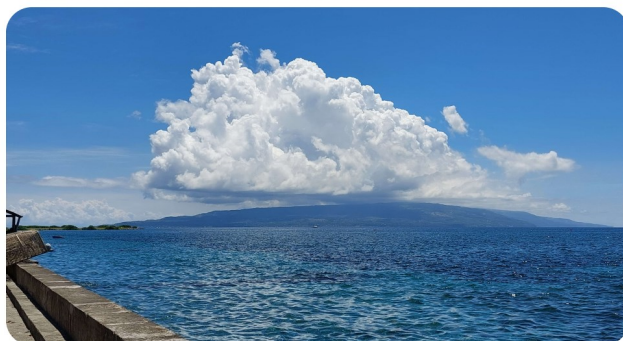


**Irene, Danny
(Tristan, Rylan, and Mila)**

**Congratulations and goodluck to our
new officers 2023 and more success in
the next year or two. Mabuhay!!!**



Benefactor



The Robichaud Family

*Congratulations to FAAGC
for the 31st Annual Gala!*



Benefactor



Terry, Reyna & Casey

***Mabuhay po tayong lahat!
Happy 31st Annual
Gala FAAGC!***



Benefactor



The Whitmire Family - Warren, Myrna and Andrew

***Congratulations and
Best Wishes to FAAGC!***



Benefactor



Don and Evelyn Liester

*Congratulations to the
FAAGC on its 31st
Anniversary!*



Benefactor



2015
Family of the Year
MSgt
Joseph Szoke
169th Maintenance
Squadron



*Carlton & Carmelisa Edwards,
Grandkids & Great Grandbaby*

*Best Wishes to the Members
and Officers of the FAAGC!*



Benefactor



Manny and Leah
Cuaresma

Paul, Jeslie, Henry & Margot
Kessenich
Josh, Jessica, Ethan &
Aaron Todd
and Jessamine Cuaresma



Congratulations Reyna Funderburk
and all FAAGC Executive Board (past
and present) for years of making a
difference! Your impact to the
community is remarkable!!



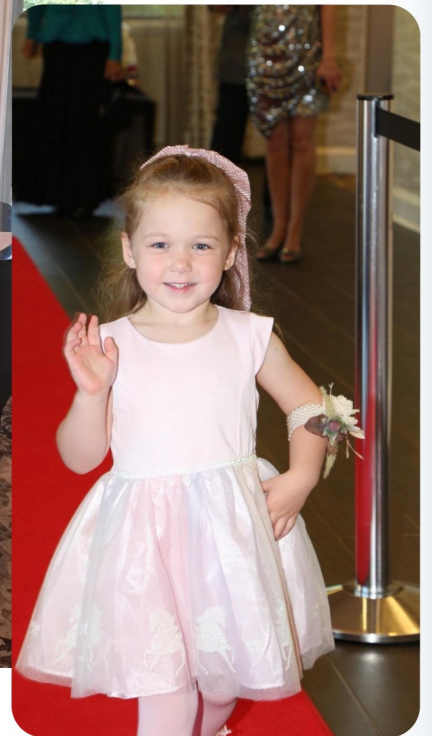
Benefactor



Diane Digman



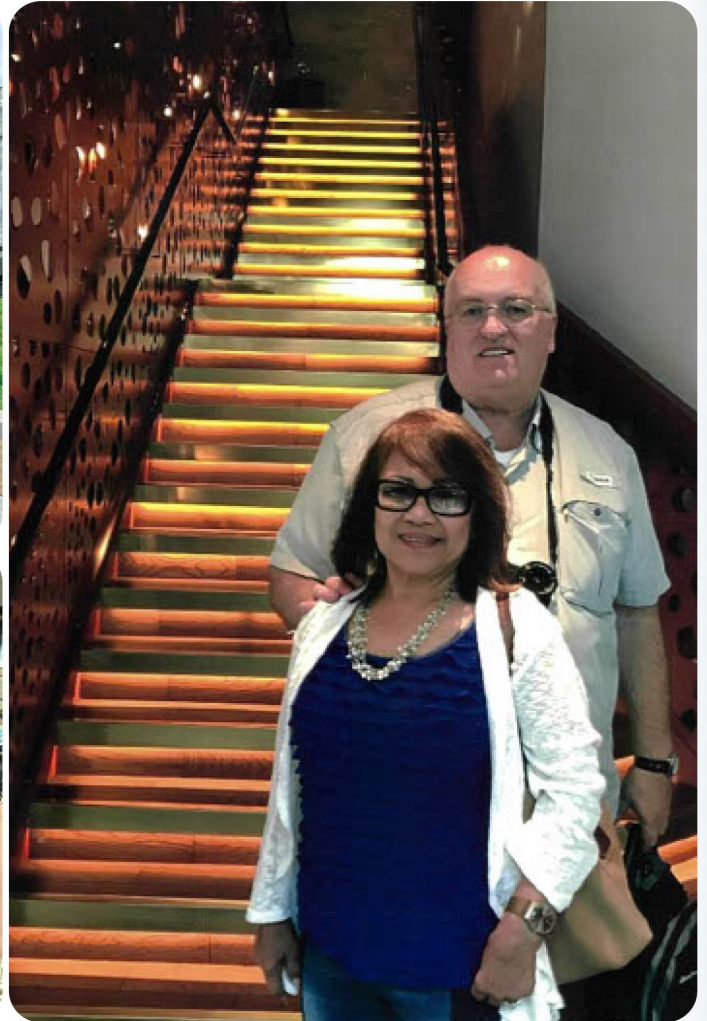
& family



*Happy 31st Anniversary Gala
and Best Wishes to FAAGC!*



Benefactor



Jerry and Florencia Baker

*Congratulations and Best
Wishes to the FAAGC on its
31st Anniversary Gala!*



Benefactor



Neil, Maribel, Lanz, and Lara

*Congratulations to FAAGC!
From the Tijing family*



Benefactor



Dan and Nenita Talisesky and grandkids

*Congratulations FAAGC! Wishing
you many more years of success.*



Benefactor



The Knight family

*Kudos to the Executive Board for all
that you have accomplished!!!
Congratulations FAAGC!*



Benefactor



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*Daphne Lee
Sabangan Aquillo*



Benefactor



Ruben and Chari Bagnal

*Happy 31st Annual Gala to
FAAGC! Wishing You Many More
Years of Success!*



Benefactor



Butch and Del Elamparo



*We are only strong as we
are united, as weak as we
are divided.*



Benefactor



Marvin, Beth Noble and family

*Congratulations to the FAAGC on
31 years of fantastic
achievements! Wishing you
continued success!!*



Benefactor



Mylene and Glen Atonio, Julia, Jolo, and Geoff

***Congratulations on your 31st
Annul Gala!***



Benefactor

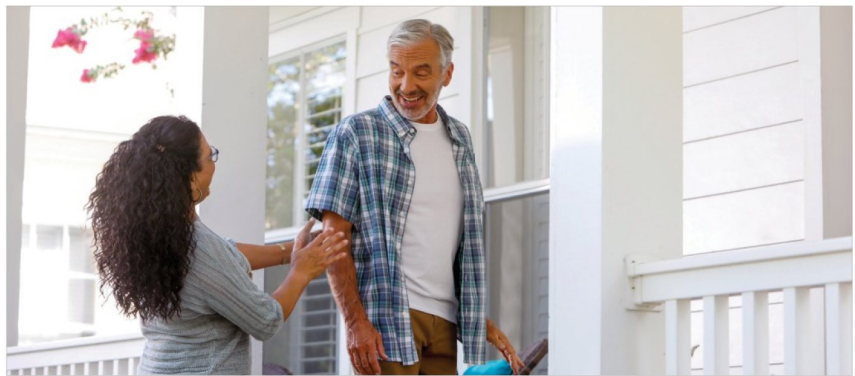
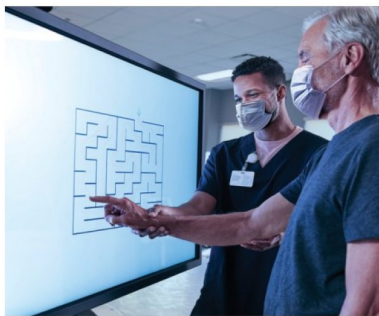
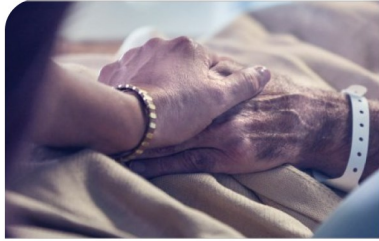


Sanchez Family

Happy 31st anniversary to our beloved FAAGC! KUDOS to all members for their contributions (personal time, money, ideas etc.), most especially to our officers for their dedication and selfless act towards the organization.



Benefactor



We are so thankful for your continued partnership of FAAGC THE TRUSTED CHOICE



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Dr. Eriwin & Anne Mangubat

Lya, Elee & Benny



**Happy 31st Anniversary FAAGC!!!
Congratulations and Best Wishes to
such an Amazing Association!
Cheers to many more continued
successes!!!**



Benefactor



*Cello and Kaye Wentley,
Daniel Wentley,
Reynaldo Wentley*

Denver and Maria Wentley



*Congratulations FAAGC
for another
successful year!*



Benefactor



The Matienzo Family
Matt, Mercedes & Alan
Fort Mill and Columbia, South Carolina

**Congratulations and Best Wishes to
the Filipino-American Association of
Greater Columbia!**



Benefactor



Ranjel and Judy Asis

**Mabuhay and Best Wishes to
Filipino American Association of
Greater Columbia!**



Benefactor



AN INDOOR EVENT | WILL OBSERVE CDC GUIDELINES | CLEAR BAGS ONLY

THE WORLD COMES TOGETHER AT THE 29TH ANNUAL

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Benefactor



Congratulations!!!

FILIPINO AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF GREATER COLUMBIA
ON YOUR **31ST ANNUAL GALA!**

FROM THE PEÑA FAMILY



Benefactor



Nieves Mc Nulty & family

I would like to take the opportunity during this happy occasion to express my heartfelt thanks to FAAGC and everyone who has helped and supported my family in remembering and honoring the lives of my husband George and my sister Zaida. My children Allie and Michael, Zaida's son James, and I are truly blessed to have a wonderful family in FAAGC.

Thank you.



Benefactor



Happy 31st Anniversary to
the Members and Officers
of the FAAGC



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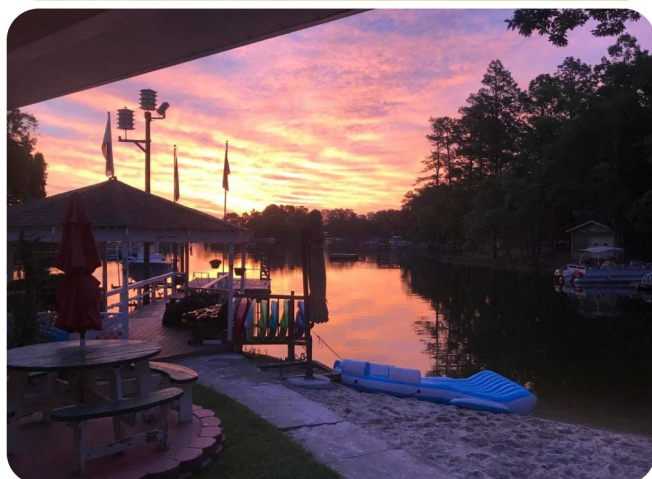


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For booking reservation and inquiries, call Tessie Bannister at tel. (803) 920-5982



Tessie and Richard Bannister

Best Wishes to the FAAGC!



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Nick Sr. and Nemy Beza

*Congratulations FAAGC for
another successful year!*



Sponsor



Greg, Dee, Chaz, Chelx Bundick

*Congratulations to Filipino
America Association of Greater
Columbia! You make a difference.*



Sponsor



Congratulations on 31 years!

At the South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs, we believe the true measure of our state's worth lies in the diverse cultures and people that call it home. No other state can match the beauty, cultural contributions, and historical significance of South Carolina.

That's why we're proud to be a sponsor for the Filipino-American Association of Greater Columbia's 31st Anniversary Celebration.

Your dedication to diversity, resilience, and unity has led you to this achievement. Congratulations, and keep striving to promote intercultural education and understanding.

Delores Dacosta

**Dr. Delores Dacosta
Executive Director
SC Commission for Minority Affairs**





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Eluria by ARTHALAND and ARCH Capital redefines luxury living in Legazpi Village, Makati. With 37 limited edition residences, it offers unmatched elegance and sustainability, like owning a rare piece of art. Our Prestige White-glove Butler Service ensures ultimate comfort and convenience, provided by internationally trained butlers.

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ARTHALAND's latest masterpiece in Biñan, Laguna, elevates living with sustainable features, exceptional quality, and superior design. It aims to become the country's first multi-certified mid-market residential development. Una Apartments offers affordable Studio and 1-Bedroom units with balconies, designed for 20% reduced utility bills and enhanced indoor air quality, prioritizing residents' well-being, comfort, and savings.



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Lucima is setting the standard of premium living through its seamless interweaving of wellness and sustainability. It is envisioned to be the first residential high-rise development that is on track to achieve quadruple certification in the country.



SEVINA PARK

BIÑAN, LAGUNA

Sevina Park will be a mixed-use neighborhood development masterplanned with 60% green and open spaces by global firm, Sasaki Associates. It will offer limited edition designer villas by renowned architectural practice, Leandro V. Locsin Partners.

Congratulations, FAAGC, on your 31st Annual Gala!

www.arthaland.com | NorthAmerica@arthaland.com

ELURIA: DHSUD LS No. 457 | UNA APARTMENTS: DHSUD LS No. 767 | LUCIMA: HLURB LS No. R07-21-061 | SEVINA PARK: HLURB LS No. 034445



**Happy Masskara &
Congratulations on your Gala
Night Success as We Smile
Together Once Again!
From the Officers and Cultural
Dance Troupe of FAC-WNC.
Mabuhay to our friends of FAAGC!**





Sponsor



**Congratulations FAAGC!
Wishing you great
success as you go
forward!!**

**Josh and Jessica Todd
Children: Ethan and Aaron**



Robert and Grace Thompson

**Congratulations FAAGC's for
Celebrating the 2023 Gala!
Thanks!**

2023 Donors

Thank you for your generosity

**GQ Kargo - Balikbayan Box
Bella Valena
Imelda Go
Luz Rabacca Shaw
Cynthia Esposito
Elen Callahan
Edith Alston
Edith Barker
Dr. Erwin & Anne Mangubat**



Sponsor



Aprilyn Garcia & Family



*"Proud, thankful and hopeful since day one."
- VHR Nurses batch 2006.*

*Proud for being part of America's diversity and its
acceptance of people like us who came to the United
States with dreams and best interest at heart.*

*Thankful for the given opportunities and challenges
to improve our life and to enjoy living in a free country.*

*Hopeful for a promising career in the US and a bright
future as an RN.*

*From Vintage Health Resources RN batch 2006
(Jocelyn Tolentino / Aprilyn Garcia Dijan / Tracy
Linga / Jerome Donasco / Rosa Victoria Cruz
Rances / Rosalie Rile / Felma Padilla Tubiera /
Rowena Manzano / Cherry Dangli / Christine Marie
Briones).*

*we send our best wishes and best regards to all the
members of Filipino American Association of Greater
Columbia. (FAAGC).*



Cherry Dangli's Family



Rosalie Rile

& Family



Jocelyn Tolentino's Family

With Love & Thanks



Felma Tubiera & Family



Rowena Manzano's Family



Christine Briones' Family



Rosa Rances & Family



Jerome Donasco's Family



Tracy Linga's Family



Sponsor



*Congratulations to
the new officers !
More successful years
for FAAGC!*

Praxedes S. Sebastian M.D.



Dr. Susan Pasicatan and family

Best Wishes to the FAAGC!



Sponsor



**Best Wishes
to the FAAGC!**

**Lorna De Guzman and
Delia Chestnut**



**Dr. Jake Bolotano
Pastor
(803) 767-2446**

**Prayer meeting: 9:30am - 10:30am
Worship Service: 9:30am - 10:30am**



**Address:
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Sponsor



Fred, Gloria, and Michael Coyle

Our Best Wishes to FAAGC!



Donor



Grace Collins

**Congratulations FAAGC's for
Celebrating the 2023 Gala! Thanks!**



Thanks to FAAGC

for enriching our lives!!!

Daghang salamat Dies mabales
Dacal a salamat Madamo nga salamat
Agyamanac Magsukul tuud kaymu
Damo nga salamat Balbaleg ya salamat
Maraming salamat



Soaring to
Greater Heights

F is for FAAGC

Since 1991





Faye Colley, Anna Temples, Cecilia Geoghegan,
Janet Harris, Yani Gould

Columbia Dance Troupe, Sassy Fab 5 is a group of women who have been part of FAAGC for many years. All dancers have performed modern and cultural dances at FAAGC functions. Two dancers, Yani and Faye, have also choreographed for FAAGC's modern and folk dances in various age groups. The group is currently focused on performing modern dances that are upbeat, joyful, and fun.




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Columbia Fil-Am Scholarship Program Columbia Fil-Am Scholarship Recipients



Jaxen Castaneda

2023 Recipient

Jaxen has been an active volunteer member of FAAGC Cultural Dance Troupe since 2009 to 2023. Currently a freshman at Liberty University focusing in recording, engineering, and production in commercial music. Jon and Gina Castaneda, the proud parents.

A Columbia Fil-Am Youth Scholarship program has been discussed often since the formation of the Association in 1991. Officially Started in 2002 by the FAAGC Executive Board through the initiative of Peter Liunoras (FAAGC President, 2001-2003), the Columbia Fil-Am Scholarship awards are given to Fil-Am college-bound high school graduates whose families are currently paid FAAGC members and who (or their parents) have participated actively in Fil-Am activities. As specified by the executive Board recently, current criteria are involvement in FAAGC (50 percent), academics (30 percent), and interview and essay (20 percent).

Funds for the scholarship program are generated from, among others, donations, raffles during FAAGC gala, Christmas and Valentine's Day events, food sales at basketball tournaments, and from 2004 to 2010, fund-raisers by the Ridge View High School (RVHS) Fil-Am Youth Club under the directions of Peter Liunoras.

Starting in 2021, long-time member and supporter Dr. Francisco Sy has established and endowed the Dr. Francisco S. Sy Scholarship Fund of the FAAGC.

FAAGC presented the first Columbia Fil-Am Scholarship award at the 13th Annual Gala on September 13, 2003. Since then, award certificates (and checks) have been presented to deserving and qualified students every year during the annual gala or at special events. Interestingly, most of the past scholarship recipients had been Columbia Fil-Am Cultural Dance Troupe performers at one time or another.

| | | |
|------|--|--|
| 2021 | Emily Collins | Lara Tijing |
| 2020 | Taryn Clark Casey Funderburk Ashley Rabaca | Brandon Edwards Joy Mangacat Julia Szoke |
| 2019 | Laurence Lafuente | |
| 2018 | Shane Clark Jasmine Flora Andrea Robichaud | Carlton Edwards III Alisha Rabaca Chase Szoke |
| 2017 | Dyonn Dingman | Diego Luis Ignacio |
| 2016 | Kathleen Arevalo Joan Rose Pena | Roy Balacanao, Jr |
| 2015 | Denise Daquilanea Angelica Robichaud | Severina Lowder |
| 2014 | Jonathan Jacobsen | |
| 2013 | Darryl Arevalo Khoi Nguyen Shannin Scott | Justine Flora Michael Sanchez |
| 2012 | Elaiza Apan Nicole Daquilanea | Kirkwood Bautista Douglas Miguel Tupas |
| 2011 | Christine Arroyo Nicole Phillips Joseph Szoke III Andrew Whitmire | Karen Magsino Nicholas Roberts Nicole Victoria |
| 2010 | Paul Adcock Fides Elamparo Sean C.A. Tupas | Nicole Anderson Steven Do |
| 2009 | Jessamine Cuaresma | Jeffrey Noble |
| 2008 | Butch Deo Elamparo Mark Allen Viray | Christian Ysmael Tupas |
| 2007 | Raquel Bagnal | Michelle Pena |
| 2006 | Aileen Leigh Alon Christian Elamparo Fay Manapat | Jasper Lim Marianne Magapan |
| 2005 | Justin Anderson | |
| 2004 | Danielle Glenn Michaela Kenworthy Judith Pena | Amanda Goyeneche Michael McNulty |
| 2003 | Raymund Elamparo | |



Lifetime Sustaining Members Additional From 2020 - 2023

*Accomplishments, Achievements & Moments In Time
As Columbia FIL-AMs Make An Impact In The Community*

At the 20th Anniversary Gala on Sept. 10, 2011, the Columbia Fil-Am Association honored those who had steadfastly supported and continuously sustained FAAQC from its beginning through its first TWENTY (20) years by recognizing them as LIFETIME MEMBERS. Others have or can become Lifetime Members if they have paid or willing to pay the equivalent of 20 years of membership. kAt the 25th Anniversary Gala on Sept. 24, 2016, the Columbia Fil-Am Association honored those who were instrumental in establishing and guiding FAAQC during its early years by recognizing them as HONORARY LIFETIME MEMBERS.

LIFETIME SUSTAINING CHARTER MEMBERS

Continuous Members since 1991

Rita Houston ALCANTARA
Noel & Helen ALON
Edith ALSTON
Lulu ANDERSON
Ruben Matias BAGNAL
James & Edith BARKER
Linda BROWN
Grace COLLINS
Manny & Leah CUARESMA
Tony & Tessie DeCASTRO
Gene & Sally ELLIS
Jim & Tessie KENERSON
Juliet MARTIN
George & Nieves McNULTY
Marvin & Beth NOBLE
Alfonso & Susana PASICATAN
Naty AKANA ROBERTS
David & Cindy TEFFT

LIFETIME SUSTAINING CHARTER

Members for 20 years or more

Charles & Bev GOYENECHE (since 1991)
Lee & Polly PEARSON (since 1992)
Ranjel & Judy Salvador ASIS (since 1992)
Joy CLARK (since 1993)
Jim & Juvie LOWDER (since 1993)
Imelda GO (since 1993)
Jojo & Joette FLORA (since 1993)
Ben & Aida DAQUIOAG (since 1994)
Butch & Dhel ELAMPARO (since 1995)
Peter & Olga LIUNORAS (since 1995)
Charles & Precy WALKER (since 1995)
Terry & Judy BERENDS (since 1996)
Philip & Anna RABACA (since 1997)
Brian & Cecile STRICKLAND (since 1997)
Warren & Myrna WHITMIRE (since 1997)
Alan & Cecilia GEOGHEGAN (since 1999)
Lu & Merlyn BAJAMUNDE (since 2000)
Edsel & Marj PEÑA (since 2000)
Dan & Tess ADCOCK (since 2001)
Ronald & Faye COLLEY (since 2001)
Jon & Gina CASTANEDA (since 2002)
Don & Evelyn LIESTER (since 2003)
Art & Cecille BOMAN (since 2004)
David & Odess BRINKMAN (since 2004)
Alan M. MATIENZO (since 2004)
Richard & Tessie BANNISTER (since 2005)
Carlton & Carmelisa EDWARDS (since 2006)
Terry & Reyna FUNDERBURK (since 2006)
Pete & Cecille JACOBSEN (since 2006)
Carlton, Jr. & Amy EDWARDS (since 2007)
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Neil & Bambi TIJING (since 2007)
Mark & Prescy RAMIREZ (since 2008)
David & Alma ROBICHAUD (since 2009)
Maria SILVER (since 2009)
Walter & Tess HILL (since 2012)
Praxedes S. SEBASTIAN, M.D. (since 2022)
Ronald and Faye COLLEY (since 2013)
Rosen J. LAWSIN, M.D. (since 2019)
Diana T. DINGMAN (since 2016)
Dr. Erwin & Anne MANGUBAT (since 2019)

HONORARY LIFETIME MEMBERS

Eva RIGNEY (FAAGC President, 1991-1992)
Remie MORALES-SARMIENTO+ (FAAGC Treasurer, 1991-1992)
Minerva WHEEDLETON (FAAGC President, 1992-1994)



2022 - 2024 MEMBERS

| NAME | LASTNAME | CITY | ST | NAME | LASTNAME | CITY | ST |
|----------------------------------|-------------|---------------|----|----------------------|------------|---------------|----|
| Hubert & Marylou Mars | ABALO | Columbia | SC | Masaya Joy "Mya" | DE LEON | Columbia | SC |
| Menandro | ABARIDO | | | Roxan Jane | DE TORRES | Columbia | SC |
| Dan & Tess | ADCOCK | West Columbia | SC | Alain | DIMASUAY | Irmo | SC |
| Criselda and Isaac | ALATAN | Hopkins | SC | Nancy | DENSON | Lexington | SC |
| Conrad & Rita | ALCANTARA | | | Diana | DINGMAN | Columbia | SC |
| Aileen | ALON | Miami | FL | Rosemarie | DORMAL | Columbia | SC |
| Alexander Joel "AJ" & Sophie Kim | ALON | Seattle | WA | Carlton & Lisa | EDWARDS | Eastover | SC |
| Noel & Helen | ALON | Columbia | SC | Carlton, Jr. & Amy | EDWARDS | Blythewood | SC |
| Edith | ALSTON | Hopkins | SC | Butch & Dhel | ELAMPARO | Columbia | SC |
| Leroy & Lulu | ANDERSON | Columbia | SC | Sally | ELLIS | Columbia | SC |
| Glen and Mylene | ANTONIO | | | Juan & Jonalyn | ELORDE | Columbia | SC |
| Daphne Sabangan & Napoleon | AQUILLO | Florence | SC | David & Josephine | ETHEREDGE | Cayce | SC |
| Jovert | ARCO | | | Genevieve | FERNANDEZ | | |
| Ranjel & Judy Salvador | ASIS | Lexington | SC | Paul & Hannah | FISHER | Columbia | SC |
| Mars Marinel | ATILANO | Sumter | SC | Jojo & Joette | FLORA | Columbia | SC |
| Vicente & Jean | ATOS | | | Marilyn | FUGRAD | Columbia | SC |
| Debbie | AYAP | Columbia | SC | Terry & Reyna | FUNDERBURK | Irmo | SC |
| Ruben & Chari | BAGNAL | Columbia | SC | Angel | FRANK | Columbia | SC |
| Dr. Lu & Merlyn | BAJAMUNDE | | | Alan & Cecille | GEOGHEGAN | Columbia | SC |
| Jerry & Flo | BAKER | Lexington | SC | David & Daisy | GIBSON | Newberry | SC |
| Roy & Carina | BALACANAO | Columbia | SC | Imelda | GO | Elgin | SC |
| Grace | BALANQUIT | Columbia | SC | John and Gloria | GOFFEY | Irmo | SC |
| Jason | Ballesteros | | | Ed & Yani | GOULD | Lexington | SC |
| Richard & Tessie | BANNISTER | Prosperity | SC | Charles & Bev | GOYENECHÉ | Hartsville | SC |
| James & Edith | BARKER | Saluda | SC | Brian & Nancy | GRAVES | Blythewood | SC |
| Lelet Peralta | BAUTISTA | | | Jimmy & Janet | HARRIS | Gilbert | SC |
| Ailyn | BELGICA | Blythewood | SC | Julian & Ashley | HAMILTON | Prosperity | SC |
| Terry & Judy | BERENDS | Columbia | SC | Richard & Jello | HENDY | Gilbert | SC |
| Nelson & Dorie | BERMAS | Lexington | SC | Zaida | Hertan | Blythewood | SC |
| Nick Jr. & Megan | BEZA | Lexington | SC | Walter & Tess | HILL | Chapin | SC |
| Nick Sr. & Nemy | BEZA | N. Charleston | SC | Chrissy | HOPKINS | Lexington | SC |
| Joe & Janine | BLEVINS | Columbia | SC | Joe & Nina | HORNICK | Columbia | SC |
| Jake & Noreen | BOLOTANO | Columbia | SC | Dennis & Sol | HUMPHRIES | Blythewood | SC |
| Art & Cecille | BOMAN | Columbia | SC | Ralph & Loren | IACONO | Chapin | SC |
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| Linda | BROWN | Columbia | SC | Pete & Cecilia | JACOBSEN | Sumter | SC |
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| Maria Cristina | BURGOS | Columbia | SC | Ken & Emee | JENNINGS | Columbia | SC |
| Buddy & Sai | BURKE | Irmo | SC | Ferlisa & Mike | JOHNSON | Columbia | SC |
| Ronald & Jenilee | BUSH | Columbia | SC | Jack and Dina | JUCABAN | Columbia | SC |
| Sydney | BYRD | Lexington | SC | Jim & Tessie | KENERSON | Summerville | SC |
| Allan & Selina | CAHIGAN | Columbia | SC | Vincent & Alona | LARAN | Columbia | SC |
| Eugene & Elen | CALLAHAN | Columbia | SC | Almie & Jerwin | LAURENTE | Columbia | SC |
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| Robert & Judith | CARSWELL | Lexington | SC | Don & Evelyn | LIESTER | Columbia | SC |
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| Ronald & Jastine | CASTANEDA | Columbia | SC | Thomas & Claire | LOTT | Gilbert | SC |
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| William & Joy | CLARK | Blythewood | SC | Romy & Marilyn | MAULION | Orangeburg | SC |
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| Grace | COLLINS | Lexington | SC | David & Marissa | MASSIE | Columbia | SC |
| Adam & Veronica Joy Soan | COOPER | Columbia | SC | Raul & Maya | MATAWARAN | Columbia | SC |
| Roldan & Elsa | CORPUZ | Columbia | SC | Alan | MATIENZO | Columbia | SC |
| Chiara | COX | Irmo | SC | Doris | MATOS | Columbia | SC |
| Fred & Gloria | COYLE | Elgin | SC | Gloria and John | MC GUFFEY | Irmo | SC |
| Manny & Leah | CUARESMA | Columbia | SC | Sean & Shirley Grace | MCGUINNESS | West Columbia | SC |
| Arsenio & Yari | DAQUIOAG | Blythewood | SC | George & Nieves | MCNULTY | Blythewood | SC |
| Ben & Aida | DAQUIOAG | Columbia | SC | Jocelyn & Jho | MENDOZA | Columbia | SC |
| Ebanreb | DAVID | Columbia | SC | Rachel & Tommy | MERCADO | Columbia | SC |
| Miguel and Zeny | DAVILA | Cayce | SC | RJ & Aileen | MURILLO | Columbia | SC |
| Audi & Raissa | DELA CRUZ | Columbia | SC | Joe & Lora | MURPHY | Lexington | SC |
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| Jonnel & Ava | DE JESUS | Columbia | SC | Marvin & Beth | NOBLE | Columbia | SC |
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2022 - 2024 MEMBERS

| NAME | LASTNAME | CITY | ST | NAME | LASTNAME | CITY | ST |
|---------------------------|----------------|---------------|----|----------------------------|----------|---------------|----|
| Edsel & Emmy Lou | OGAO-OGAO | Columbia | SC | Jobert & Zhila | VEGO | Orangeburg | SC |
| Eddie & Liza | OLSON | Columbia | SC | Eric & Che | VEJERANO | Irmo | SC |
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| Jun & Elvira | PADING | West Columbia | SC | Denver & Maria Clarissa | WENTLEY | Blythewood | SC |
| Nelson Galimba & Melanie | PALOMARES | Columbia | SC | Warren & Myrna | WHITMIRE | Columbia | SC |
| Susana | PASICATAN | Columbia | SC | Deera | WILLIAMS | Columbia | SC |
| Larry & Precy | PASIG | Lexington | SC | Nikki R | WILLIAMS | Columbia | SC |
| Marianne | PATENO | Columbia | SC | Tommy Christopher & Rachel | WILLIAMS | Columbia | SC |
| Polly | PEARSON | Dalzell | SC | Nick & Ann | WORTHY | Lexington | SC |
| Edsel & Marj | PEÑA | Columbia | SC | Emil | ZAMORA | Lexington | SC |
| Florencio Jr & Corazon | PEÑA | Lexington | SC | John & Teresa | ZIEGLER | Blythewood | SC |
| Pacifico & Tricia | PEREA | Aiken | SC | | | | |
| Alberto & Jobell | PEREZ | Prosperity | SC | | | | |
| Jon & Virgie | PEREZ | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| DIGMAN | PHILLIPS | Cayce | SC | | | | |
| Kim & Mae | PORTUGUESE -CO | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Daisy Mae | QUINTANA | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Philip & Anna | RABACA | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Adrian & Isabel | RAINES | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Antonio (Ton Ton) Jr. | RAMIREZ | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Mark & Prescy | RAMIREZ | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Irene and Erwin | RAMOS | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Maria | REMO | | | | | | |
| Ferdinand & Lalaine | RETANA | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Krizia Faye | REGINO | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Raphael Ofendo and Olivia | REYES | | | | | | |
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| Roger & Naty Akana | ROBERTS | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Andrea Talens | ROBICHAUD | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Clover | ROBICHAUD | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| David & Alma | ROBICHAUD | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Melissa & Patrick | ROBINSON | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Sylvia | RUSSEL | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Denver & Rowena | SANCHEZ | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Ruby Anne | SAPITAN | Blythewood | SC | | | | |
| Roderick | SELDA | | | | | | |
| Keith Howard | SEYMOUR | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Praxedes | Sebastian | Columbia | SC | | | | |
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| Maria | SILVER | Columbia | SC | | | | |
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| Terry & Janet | SMITH | Blythewood | SC | | | | |
| Clara | SOLANO | Prosperity | SC | | | | |
| Eric & Haidee | SOSA | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Deon & Jen | SPEAKS | Irmo | SC | | | | |
| Heather and Chadnen | STEPHENSON | Lexington | SC | | | | |
| Beth and Danny | STEVENS | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Patrick & Nellie Grace | STIVERS | Lexington | SC | | | | |
| Brian & Cecile | STRICKLAND | Lexington | SC | | | | |
| Roxann | SUICO | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Joseph & Celyn | SZOKÉ | Hopkins | SC | | | | |
| Ivy | TAGAMO | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Joel & Joy | TALDE | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Dan & Nenita | TALISESKY | Lexington | SC | | | | |
| Adelaida Marie | TANJAG | Chicago | IL | | | | |
| Don & Thelma Abrenica | TATEL | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Dave & Cindy | TEFFT | Las Vegas | NV | | | | |
| Anna | TEMPLES | Chantilly | VA | | | | |
| Robert & Grace | THOMPSON | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Willis & Victoria Falvey | THOMPSON | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Neil & Bambie | TIJING | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Christian Vincent Reyes | TRANÇIA | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Douglas & Helena | TUPAS | Columbia | SC | | | | |
| Ryan & Marj | VANDEKOP | Elgin | SC | | | | |
| Todd & Richel | VAULES | Columbia | SC | | | | |



Bayang magiliw
Perlas ng silanganan
Alab ng puso sa dibdib mo'y buhay
Lupang Hinirang, duyan ka ng magiting
Sa manlulupig, di ka pasisiil
Sa dagat at bundok na simoy
At sa langit mong bughaw
Tagumpay na nagnininging
Ang bituin at araw niyan
Kailan pa ma'y di magdidilim
Lupa ng araw ng luwalhati't pagsinta
Buhay ay langit sa piling mo
Aming ligaya nang pag may mang-aapi
Ang mamatay ng dahil sa iyo

O say can you see by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hailed at the
twilight's last gleaming
Whose broad stripes and bright stars
through the perilous fight
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so
gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs
bursting in air
Gave proof through the night that our flag
was still there
O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home
of the brave



Columbia Fil-Am Executive Boards Through the Years



1991-1992

(Front, L-R) Susana Pasicatan, Eva Rigney, Minnie Wheedleton, Helent Alon. (back, l-r) Cindy Tefft, Jun David, Remie Morales-Sarmiento, Grace Collins



1992-1993

(L-R) Minnie Wheedleton, Helen Alon, Randy Collado, Sally Ellis, Remie Morales-Sarmiento, Tessie DeCastro, Dom Perez, Marvin Noble



1993-1994

(Front, L-R) Beth Noble (representing Marvin), Nel Fernandez, Gloria Yutani. (back, l-r) Dom Perez, Polly Pearson, Judy Salvador, Grace Collins, Sally Ellis, Minnie Wheedleton. (Not in photo: David Thefft)



1994-1995

(Front, L-R) Polly Pearson, Wilfred Jeffcoat, Linda Brown, Tessie Kenerson. (back, l-r) Eugenia Panela, Judy Salvador, Sally Ellis, Helen Alon, Grace Collins, Mark Yutani, Jerome Robinette



1995-1996

(front, l-r) Larry Smith, Wilfred Jeffcoat, Fred Balangue, Mark Yutani. (back, l-r) Judy Salvador, Linda Brown, Leah Cuaresma, Sally Ellis, Helen Alon, State. Warren Giese (guest speaker), Grace Collins, Tessie Kenerson, Polly Pearson



1996-1997

(front, l-r) Fred Balangue, Wilfred Jeffcoat, Peter Liunoras, Ernest Ellis. (back, l-r) Linda Brown, Marie Salvador, Leah Cuaresma, Maria Aiken, DeeDee Stewart, Tessie Kenerson, Helen Alon, Bill Simmons.

Columbia Fil-Am Executive Boards Through the Years



1997-1999

(Front, L-R) Nieves McNulty, Peter Liunoras, Ofelia Milligan, Rowena Arroyo, Eloisa De Castro, Chari Matias-Bagnal, (Back, L-R) Manny Cuaresma, Ernest Ellis, Edith Alston, Marie Salvador, Patrick Baens. (Not in photo: Imelda Go)



1999-2001

(Front, L-R) Grace Collins, Phillipine Consul Henry Bensurto, Jr. (Guest Speaker), Nieves McNulty, Bill Simmons, Edith Alston. (Back, L-R) Tessie Kenerson, Helen Alon, Fred Balangue, Eloisa De Castro, Ruben Bagnal, Jon Glenn. (Not in photo: Joy Clark & Patrick Baens)



2001-2003

(L-R) Ruben Bagnal, Rudy Dizon, George McNulty, Lulu Anderson, Marj Pena, Tessie Kenerson, Peter Liunoras, Tessie De Castro, Polly Pearson, Diana Phillips, Hector Galang, Alan Geoghegan



2003-2005

(Front, L-R) Alan Geoghegan, Grace Collins, Jojo Goyeneche. (Back, L-R) Marj Pena, Rex Santos, Amy Charles, George McNulty, Lily Iglesias, Dan Adcock, Merlyn Bajamunde, Charles Goyeneche, Rudy Dizon.



2005-2007

(L-R) Alan Geoghegan, Cecille Wessinger, Dan Adcock, Odess Brinkman, George McNulty, Bernadette Yavis, Keith Seymour, Precy Walker, Galen Manapat, Edith Alston, Mario Viray, Alan Matienzo



2007-2008

(Front, L-R) Alan Geoghegan, George McNulty, Albert Taylor, Mario Viray. (Back, L-R) Sally Ellis, Odess Brinkman, Myrna Whitmire, Leah Cuaresma, Tessie Kenerson, Cecilia Jacobsen, Precy Walker, Shirley McGuinness

Columbia Fil-Am Executive Boards Through the Years



2008-2009

(Front, L-R) George McNulty, Alan Geoghegan, Mario Viray. (Back, L-R) Bernadette Yavis, Leah Cuaresma, Tessie Kenerson, Myrna Whitmire, Sally Ellis, Shirley McGuinness, Carmelisa Edwards, Cecilia Jacobsen, Odess Brinkman



2008-2011

(Front, L-R) Dan Adcock, Grace Balanquit, Jojo Flora. (Back, L-R) Maribel Tijing, Wyda Viray, Shirley McGuinness, Cecille Jacobsen, Grace Collins, Carmelisa Edwards, Marj Pena, Cecille Geoghegan, Nieves McNulty



2011-2013

(L-R) Bong Rances, Rio Daquilanea, Carlos Arevalo, Peter Liunoras, Grace Collins, Faye Colley, Odess Brinkman, Maribel Tijing, Nieves McNulty, Grace Balanquit, Carmelisa Edwards, Marj Pena



2013-2014

(Front, L-R) Bong Rances, Cecille Jacobsen, Carlos Arevalo. (Back, L-R) Tess Hill, Prescy Ramirez, Miriam Eschenfelder, Sheena Shearer, Alma Robichaud, Edith Alston, Jocelyn Locke, Faye Colley. (Not in photo: Eric Sosa)



2014-2015

(L-R) Cecille Jacobse, Jocelyn Lock, Tess Hill, Prescy Ramirez, Sheen Shearer, Carlos Arevalo, Miriam Eschenfelder, Edith Alston, Alma Robichaud, Fay Colley. (Not in photo: Eric Sosa, Pete Liunoras)



2015-2017

(Front, L-R) Carlos Arevalo, Anna Temples, Tess Hill, Cecille Jacobsen, Miriam Schenfelder, Reyna Funderburk, Doris Matos, Peter Liunoras. (Back, L-R) Glenn De Guzman, Al Cockerel, James Orlick, Alan Matienzo

Columbia Fil-Am Executive Boards Through the Years



2017-2019

(Front, L-R) Maribel Tijing, Reyna Funderburk, Gina Castaneda, Teresa Ziegler, Tess Hill.
(Back, L-R) Judy Berends, Jason Eberhart, Joseph Szoke, Buddy Burke, Alan Matienzo, Joy Clark. (Not in Photo: Emily Cheney)



2019-2021

(L-R) Rick Shoestock, Mya De Leon, Emea Jennings, Jadith Carswell, Angelica "Clover" Robichaud, Evelyn Liester, Gina Castaneda, Grace Collins, Priscila Ramirez, Reyna Funderburk, Nina Hornick, Joseph Szoke



2019-2022

(Top to bottom, L-R) Joseph Szoke, Ulises Chavez, Reyna Funderburk, Jadith Carswell, Evelyn Liester, Chrissy Hopkins, Priscila Ramirez, Angelica "Clover" Robichaud, Gina Castaneda, Mya De Leon. (Not in photo: Grace Collins, Nina Hornick)



2022-2023

(L-R) Marilyn Abalo, Vincent Atos, Daiy mae Quintana, Deborah Norris, Reyna Funderburk, Elen Callahan, Flo Baker, Janet Smith, Nancy Graves, Alma Robichaud, Celyn Szoke, Ranjel Asis



**Together We Make
A Difference**

Chiara Cox
Chiara Cox
FAAGC Music and Arts Ambassador

Acknowledgements

2022-2024 FAAQC Executive Board Gala Planning Committee

EMCEE

Yani Irag-Gould
Elen Callahan

US NATIONAL ANTHEM

Camille Andres

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL ANTHEM

Clarissa Wentley

USHER

Andrea Robichaud
Savannah Carswell
Yana Lei Gould
Adam Cooper
Veronica Joy (Coordinator)

DECORATIONS

Gina Castaneda
Daisy Dimasuay
Alain Dimasuay
Ava De Jesus
Jonell De Jesus

GALA EVENT SUPPORT

Helen Alon
Daphne Sabangan
Clarissa Wentley

SOUVENIR PROGRAM

Grace Balanquit
Reyna Funderburk
Elen Callahan
Noel Alon

RIGODON DE HONOR

Leah and Manny Cuaresma
Dhel and Butch Elamparo
Olga and Peter Liunoras
Gina and Jon Castaneda
Tess and Walt Hill
Teresa and John Ziegler
Diane Dingman
Alan Matienzo
Evelyn and Don Liester
Pricila and Mark Ramirez
Myrna and Andrew Whitmire
Marissa and David Massie
Juvie Lowder
Delfin B. Lomboy

LA JOTA

Aimee Celdran
Daphne Lee Sabangan
Diane Dingman
Grace Constantino
Alan M Matienzo
Antonio Ramirez
John Derrick Capistrano
Christian Trangia

RECEPTION TABLE

Clarissa Wentley
Alan Geoghegan
Mark Ramirez
Ruby Sapitan

INVOCATION

Pastor Jake Bolotano

CULTURAL EVENTS CHAIRPERSON

Alma Robichaud

RAFFLE TICKETS/PRIZES

Ellen Callahan
Daisy Dimasuay
Grace Collins
Mark Ramirez

DANCE TROUPE COORDATORS

Yani Irag-Gould
Helen Alon
Faye Colley
Che Vejerano
Marie Broome
Daphne Sabangan

DANCE TROUPE TECHNICAL & MISCELLANEOUS SUPPORT

Helen Alon
Gina Castaneda
Reyna Funderburk
Grace Constantino
Maria Cecilia Geoghegan
Yani Irag-Gould
Parents and Families of FAAQC
Performers, donors of Snacks for
Dance Practices

FLYERS / TICKETS / BROCHURES

Ruby Sapitan
Elen Callahan
Reyna Funderburk
Daisy Dimasuay

GONG PERCUSSIONIST

Nieves Mc Nulty

TINIKLING

Alexandra Ricks
Julia Antonio
Savannah Carswell
Joaquin Aidan Vejerano
Bryce L Perez
Juan Andre Vejerano
William Massie

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Daisy Dimasuay
Elen Callahan

OUT OF TOWN GUEST GIFTS

Imelda Go
Debi Norris
Dee Bundick
Carmelisa Edwards

PHOTOGRAPHY / VIDEO

Carlton Edwards
Don Liester
Alan Geoghegan
Ranjel Asis
Erwin Ramos

MEDIA SOUND

Ranjel Asis
Alan Geoghegan
Ulisses Sanchez
Elen Callahan

BILAO

Audrey Wanner
Dhemee Juyamao
Isabella Daquioag
Janaya Cing
Mayah L Perez
Sophia de Lara
Shawn Broome

SINGERS / MUSICIANS

Jadith Carswell
Camille Andres
Vince Laran

PANGALAY

Camille Giguera

SINGKIL

Maria Cecilia Geoghegan
Richel Jamera Vaules
Yani Irag-Gould
Marie Broome
Zeny Davila
George Dia

SINGKIL Clickers

Bryce Perez
Argie Giguera
Andre Vejerano
Shawn Broome

SASSY DANCERS FAB5

Faye Colley
Anna Temples
Cecilia Geoghegan
Janet Harris
Yani Gould

To all the set up and clean up crews, thank you!

Association in Action

Summer Picnic / Appreciation Day

June 10, 2023



SCCMA 30th Anniversary Celebration & Scholarship Gala

June 30, 2023



Association in Action

Festival of Lights Christmas Celebration

December 10, 2022



Encompass Health International Day Celebration

May 19, 2023



February 6, 2023



Association in Action

Celebration of Filipino American History Month

October 22, 2023



Potluck Dinner Welcoming New Filipino Teachers

September 4, 2022



Association in Action

Meals from the Heart at Ronald McDonald House

November 5, 2022



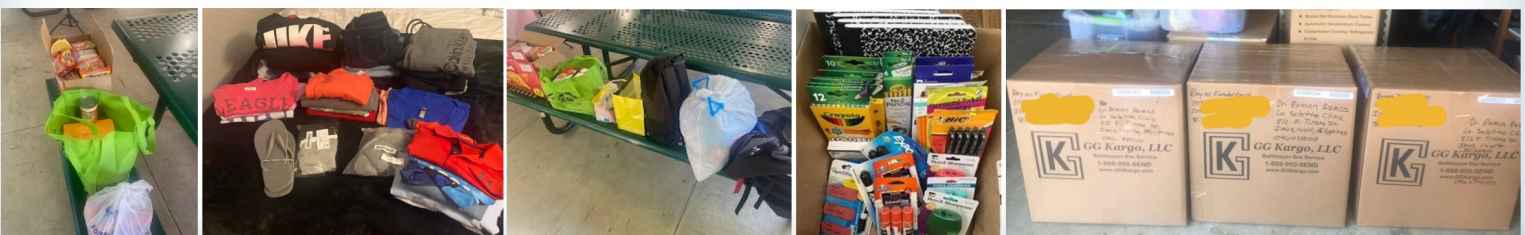
Harvest Hope Food Bank

September 6, 2022



Charitable Giving Balikbayan Spring Box Drive

July 11, 2023



Association in Action

International Festival

May 21 – 22, 2022



Harvest Hope Food Bank

May 8, 2023



Walk for Life and Famously Hot Pink Half Marathon

October 22, 2023



Association in Action

Columbia International Festival

April 1 – 2, 2023



International Fair Pleasant Hill Elementary School

April 27, 2023



Calendar of Event

MARK YOUR CALENDARS



SEPTEMBER 23 MASSKARA GALA

6-10PM, R2I2 CONFERENCE CENTER, 763 FASHION DRIVE, COLUMBIA

CELEBRATE THE MASSKARA FESTIVAL AT FAAGC'S 31ST ANNUAL GALA, OUR LARGEST FUNDRAISER OF THE YEAR **TICKETS AND SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE NOW CONTACT FILAMSC@GMAIL.COM**

OCTOBER - WE ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE AN EXCITING LINEUP OF EVENTS IN CELEBRATION OF **FILIPINO AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH** MOST ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. ALL ARE FREE.

- **OPENING CEREMONY: FILIPINO AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH**

- OCTOBER 6 @ 6:30PM, RICHLAND LIBRARY MAIN, 1431 ASSEMBLY STREET, COLUMBIA
- JOIN US AS WE KICK OFF A MONTH-LONG CELEBRATION FEATURING TRADITIONAL FILIPINO PERFORMANCES, FOOD, AND THE LAUNCH OF OUR MUSEUM-QUALITY FILIPINO TEXTILE EXHIBIT

- **FILM SCREENING: HARANA - THE SEARCH FOR THE LOST SERENADE**

- OCTOBER 16 @ 7PM, NICKELODEON THEATRE, 1607 MAIN STREET, COLUMBIA
- YOU ASKED FOR IT; WE BROUGHT IT BACK. GLORIOUSLY SHOT IN THE REMOTE PROVINCES OF THE PHILIPPINES, HARANA THE MOVIE IS A MUSICAL LOVE LETTER TO THE COMPLEX FILIPINO CULTURE AND ITS PEOPLE

- **PRESENTATION: WEAVING COMMUNITIES AND CULTURES THROUGH CLOTH**

- OCTOBER 22 @ 3-4PM, RICHLAND LIBRARY MAIN, 1431 ASSEMBLY STREET, COLUMBIA
- **MARIAN PASTOR ROCES**, ONE OF THE WORLD'S EXPERTS ON PHILIPPINE TEXTILES, WILL OFFER A LIVELY DISCUSSION OF OUR CAREFULLY CURATED MUSEUM-QUALITY FILIPINO TEXTILE EXHIBIT. THIS PROGRAM IS SPONSORED BY SC HUMANITIES, A STATE PROGRAM OF NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES THAT PROVIDES FUNDING TO PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS SUPPORTING THE HUMANITIES IN SOUTH CAROLINA

- **MASTERCLASS: FILIPINO CLASSICAL GUITAR BY MICHAEL DADAP AND FLORANTE AGUILAR**

- OCTOBER 27, USC SCHOOL OF MUSIC, COLUMBIA
- USC SCHOOL OF MUSIC STUDENTS WILL DELVE INTO THE HEART OF TRADITIONAL FILIPINO CLASSICAL GUITAR. **USC SCHOOL OF MUSIC STUDENTS ONLY**

- **COMMUNITY WORKSHOP: FILIPINO IDENTITY THROUGH MUSIC**

- OCTOBER 28 @ 3-4PM, RICHLAND LIBRARY MAIN, 1431 ASSEMBLY STREET, COLUMBIA
- FOR ALL AGES, THE WORKSHOP PROMOTES CULTURAL EXCHANGE THROUGH MUSIC, SONG AND DANCE. LED BY WORLD-RENOWNED ARTISTS MICHAEL DADAP AND FLORANTE AGUILAR.

- **CONCERT: FILIPINO CLASSICAL GUITAR FEATURING MICHAEL DADAP AND FLORANTE AGUILAR**

- OCTOBER 29 @ 3-4:30PM, USC RECITAL HALL, COLUMBIA
- THE CAPSTONE EVENT OF OUR MONTH-LONG CELEBRATION. GO ON A MUSICAL JOURNEY WITH MICHAEL DADAP AND FLORANTE AGUILAR AS THEY PRESENT THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE RICH AND EMOTIONAL MELODIES OF TRADITIONAL FILIPINO FOLK SONGS. OUR MUSIC PROGRAM IS SPONSORED BY THE SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR MINORITY AFFAIRS AND THE SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION (SCAC). THE MISSION OF THE SCAC IS TO PROMOTE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO THE ARTS AND SUPPORT THE CULTIVATION OF CREATIVITY IN SOUTH CAROLINA. THE SCAC IS FUNDED BY THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA, BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS, AND OTHER SOURCES

DECEMBER 9 ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

1-5PM, NORTH LAKE COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER, 420 NORTH LAKE DR. , LEXINGTON
A HOLIDAY POTLUCK CELEBRATION. **FREE**

October Filipino History Month

It is said that culture is the soul of a nation but I also know from personal experience that the same can be said for the nation's diaspora. We still long for the comfort of traditions, beliefs, practices, foods, dances, music and art that roots us to the home we all left behind

As the first Music and Art Ambassador of FAAQC, it is important to me that we share this soul of ours with a wider audience because it is through such an exchange of ideas that we can build bridges across cultures and communities. It has therefore been my goal from the beginning to not only promote Filipino culture for FAAQC, but to elevate Filipino cultural pride outside the group by bringing in world class Filipino art and music to share with our family and friends in the city of Columbia we now call home.

This October, a private collection of museum quality contemporary Filipino textiles created with the help of the Philippine Textile Council will be showcased. In conjunction with this exhibit, Marian Pastor Roces, art critic, curator, author, and speaker touted as one of the most original thinkers in South East Asia today, will present on Filipino textiles. FAAQC will be doing another screening of the Harana movie and we are bringing in the star of the show himself to be part of our celebrations. Florante Aguilar and his teacher Michael Dadap make up the DUO. Both world renowned classical Filipino musicians and composers on their own, they come together to show the virtuosity of the classical Filipino guitar. They will conduct a masterclass at USC School of Music, a workshop on Filipino identity through music, and perform a classical Filipino guitar concert. All these October events are free to the public.

I plan to continue my work of promoting Filipino culture and elevating Filipino identity through free music and art events in South Carolina. These plans are not only integral to my work as an ambassador, but to the calling of my soul.

Maraming salamat po at Mabuhay!

Chiara Cox

Chiara Cox

FAAQC Music and Arts Ambassador





First Thursday on Main

FEATURES FIL-AM PERFORMERS

Chiara Cox

Filipino American Association of Greater Columbia Dancers

The Harana Band

October 5, 6:30-7:15pm

Boyd Plaza, Main Street, Columbia, SC





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access freely.®



Weaving Communities and Cultures Through Cloth

October 6 - November 21, 2003

Opening Reception on October 6,

6:30 - 8:30 pm

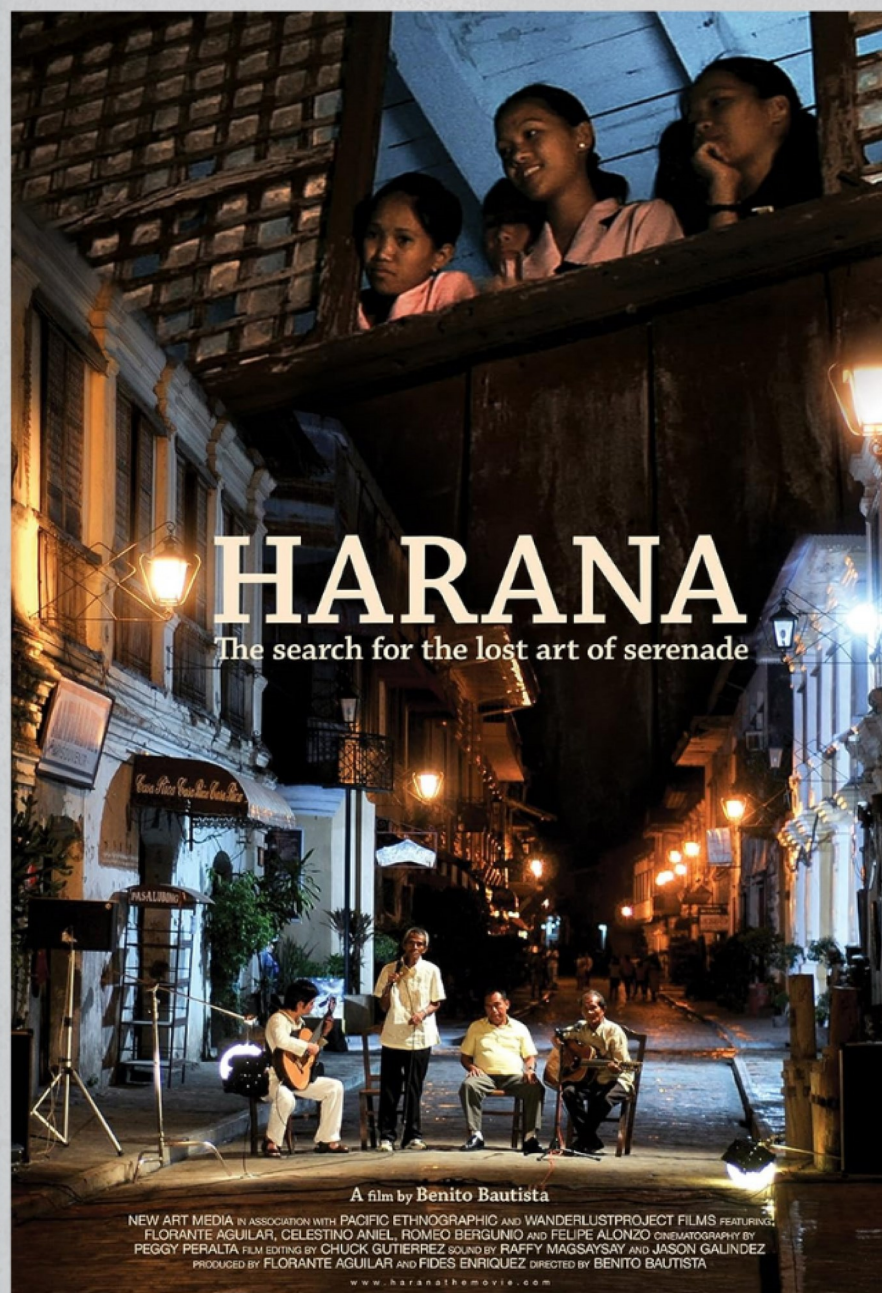
Richland Library Main



This exhibit is made possible with the support of HABI Philippine Textile Council, and is sponsored in part by the Filipino American Association of Greater Columbia, Arthaland, and South Carolina Humanities, a state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities; inspiring, engaging and enriching South Carolinians with programs on literature, history, culture and heritage.



The Event is free and open to the public.



THE  NICK

OCTOBER 16 | 7:00 P.M.

CELEBRATE FILIPINO
AMERICAN HISTORY
MONTH WITH A
SPECIAL SCREENING
OF *HARANA*

FREE TO ATTEND
RESERVE A SEAT AT
NICKELODEON.ORG

SPONSORED BY





RICHLAND LIBRARY

access freely.®



**Philippine Textiles: A Complex Mapping
by world renowned Filipina art curator, art critic,
author and speaker Marian Pastor Roces**

October 22, 2003

3:00 - 4:00 pm

Richland Library Main

*This presentation is sponsored in part by the Filipino American Association
of Greater Columbia, Arthaland, and South Carolina Humanities,
a state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities;
inspiring, engaging and enriching South Carolinians
with programs on literature, history, culture and heritage.*

The Event is free and open to the public.





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An Interactive Community Workshop
on Filipino Identity Through Music
by world renowned Filipino Classical Guitarists
Michael Dadap and Florante Aguilar

October 28, 2003

3:00pm

Richland Library Main

*This project is funded in part by
the Filipino-American Association of Greater Columbia, Arthaland,
South Carolina Commission for Minority Affairs, and
South Carolina Arts Commission which receives support
from the National Endowment for the Arts.*

The Event is free and open to the public.





Luise E. Peake
MUSIC & CULTURE
COLLOQUIUM SERIES
FALL 2023



**A Concert of Filipino Music showing the
virtuosity of two guitars by world renowned
Filipino musicians, Michael Dadap and Florante
Aguilar.**

Sunday, Oct 29

3:00 p.m.

School of Music Recital Hall

Co-Sponsored by the Filipino-American Association
of Greater Columbia, Arthaland, The Walker
Institute, the South Carolina Commission for
Minority Affairs, and the USC Guitar Studio

This project is funded in part by the South
Carolina Arts Commission which receives support
from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Events are free and open to the public.

Special Thanks
Gene & Elen Callahan
Patrick & Melissa Robinson



The Many Faces of the Philippines



Ready to roam riding the tricycle.



Finding solace in Coron's Twin Lagoon.



Visiting a talipapa (wet market)

The Philippines was the best summer trip in a while for me. Although, the flight was long and boring. I could tell when we got there because of the many islands as you entered the Philippine airspace. We went to so many cool places and learned about our heritage.

We saw the beautiful part of the Philippines. It's very different from the U.S. There are a lot of cars, but because of the traffic, many people use motorcycles. The public transportation is a lot different; they use jeepneys and tricycles. A tricycle is a motorcycle attached to a little cart. It's good for transporting people and goods. A jeepney is a vehicle with a long cushion seat on both sides. We saw the beautiful part of the Philippines. It's very different from the U.S. There are a lot of cars, but because of the traffic, many people use motorcycles. The public transportation is a lot different; they use jeepneys and tricycles. A tricycle is a motorcycle attached to a little cart. It's good for transporting people and goods. A jeepney is a vehicle with a long cushion seat on both sides.

Beautiful Beaches. *The beaches and islands are breathtaking. The water is as blue as the sky, and the islands abound with tropical plants. The coral reefs in the Philippines are also the most colorful. The sand at some beaches is almost as white as sugar. When the water is still, you can see straight through. There is an excellent variety of different colors and sizes of fish. I also got to swim with a sea turtle (pawikan). You can swim in 10-ft deep water, but when you look behind, the depth seems endless.*

The best vacation spot was Coron, Palawan. It is a small island group with lots of beautiful spots. The locals are friendly, and many street sellers sell jewelry. Some people will give you a private tour on their boat for a reasonable price. You can buy food in the market, and they can cook it for you on the boat.

As true with other places, not all in the Philippines is beautiful. I saw little kids selling things on the streets wearing tattered clothes, which made me sad.

The Mountains. *There are also lots of mountains in the area. They are amusing to climb, and the view is amazing. Also, these mountains collect lots of water when it rains. So, there are springs with fresh and very cold water. It feels rejuvenating when you're in it.*

Unique Philippines. *The Philippines has so many types of food. They have many dishes like pansit bato, buko pie, and many fish-related dishes. We went to the local market my tatay went to daily when he was my age. The markets have so many fruits and foods I have never heard of. There are dogs everywhere. There are many local places (karenderia) to eat too.*

Also, regular activities are different, like showering. They have a bucket of water (balde) and a cup (tabo) you pour water from. You can't adjust the temperature of the water either. While in the Philippines, I noticed you could be in a city with tall buildings and huge malls. But driving 15 minutes away, you can see rice fields everywhere.

The Many Faces of the Philippines

Spending time with family and relatives. Those guys on the other kayak are



Visiting the birthplace of Jose Rizal, the national hero of the Philippines, in Calamba, Laguna.

Family. *The best thing about the Philippines is that I reconnected with family members I hadn't seen in years. At first, I thought my family was small, but now that I visited the Philippines, I know I have the best, biggest, and most loving family ever.*

At the end of the trip, I learned a lot about the Philippines' history and why we are so persistent, smart, and strong. It made me proud of who I am. - Joaquin Vejerano (Youth cultural performer since 2017, 8th grader).

The Philippines is a beautiful country with a rich cultural heritage, breathtaking tourist sites, and delicious food. This past summer, I had the opportunity to explore my roots and rediscover the beauty of my parent's country. I reconnected with families I hadn't seen in over a decade. I also practiced my Tagalog a bit, even though it's still.

Growing up in the U.S., I thought I had a small family consisting of only my nanay, tatay, and Joaquin. Little did I know that waiting for me in the Philippines was a huge group of loving people. It had been so long since I had last seen them. It was amazing to hug and reconnect with them. We visited family friends and visited Jose Rizal's home, too. I got to talk to my numerous titas and titos, who couldn't believe how much I had grown since my last visit. I spent time with my cousins. But most of all, I got to spend time with my Lola Nanay, one of the most amazing women I had ever met. She was one of the strongest women who single-handedly raised my number one role model.

The Philippines has many different faces hidden from others. From one perspective, the Philippines is a beautiful vacation spot with many world-class white sand beaches and resorts.

Experiencing the Philippines from my perspective as a "tourist" was amazing. We hopped from island to island. I got to dive around coral reefs in Coron, Palawan. I swam with tropical fish; I even got to swim beside a massive sea turtle that appeared out of the blue.

From my perspective as a Filipino, the Philippines isn't pure beauty and bliss. I realized the differences between the Philippines and the U.S. The most striking is the big disparity between people. You could be walking around town, suddenly passing a woman wearing designer clothes and drinking an iced coffee. A moment later, I passed a group of kids sitting outside a restaurant eating on cardboard. Seeing these kids broke my heart.

When staying with my nanay's family in Los Baños, I learned how traveling could be uncomfortable because many drivers hardly follow traffic rules, resulting in disorganized traffic. What should have been a 10-minute drive took almost 30 minutes. This frustrated me. I realized that living in the Philippines is challenging in some aspects.

Despite the lack of the usual comfort that one experiences in the U.S., visiting the Philippines was my most amazing experience so far. It was like rediscovering a hidden part of me. It allowed me to reconnect with family, explore the country, and experience what it offered. If I could do it all again, I would do so in a heartbeat. After all, no matter where you were born and regardless of age, we need to rediscover our roots and understand our origin.

- Andre Vejerano (Youth cultural performer since 2017, 10th grade)

Remembering Our Departed FAAGC Leaders

ELIGIO (Jun) DAVID, JR. -- was one of the pioneer members of the Association and became one of the first Executive Board members in 1991-92. His family members were all active members of the organization until they moved out of state. Jun passed away in the Philippines in 2014 .

Dr. REMY MORALES SARMIENTO -- Another pioneer member and FAAGC Treasurer from 1991-92 and part of 1993, she was one of three Honorary Lifetime Membership Awardees of FAAGC during its 25th Anniversary. Remy was instrumental in the founding of FAAGC. Initial meetings every first Sunday of the month were held at her Spring Valley residence in Columbia prior to the actual formal first election of officers in June 15, 1991. Her residence was at one point called the "birthplace of FAAGC." Dr. Sarmiento was a psychiatrist at the SC State Hospital and a director of one of the nursing homes in the Columbia Area. She and her family and sisters were all very active members of FAAGC until they moved to Texas 3 years later. Even after moving to Texas, she continued to send her financial support to FAAGC until she passed away on October 15, 2020. If Remy had remained in Columbia, I bet we would have our own building already as she was one of those who was very supportive of the idea.

Dr. TESSIE DE CASTRO -- Executive Board Member in 1992-93, First Vice-President 2001-2003 and a Lifetime Sustaining Charter Member since 1991. She was a psychiatrist at the SC State Hospital. She also continued financial supporter until she moved to Plano, Texas to be with her children. She passed away in November 8, 2020.

DOMINADOR PEREZ -- Executive Board Member for two consecutive terms in 1992-93 and 1993-94. He and his wife, Zenen Perez who was a pediatrician at Fort Jackson, were both very active members until they moved to Richmond, Virginia few years later. Dom passed away in Dec.26, 2019.

ERNEST (Gene) ELLIS -- served as First Vice President in 1996-97 and Executive Board Member in 1997-99. Gene was an incredible First VP during my 3rd term. I don't remember anything we disagreed on as far as what to do with the organization. Both Lifetime Sustaining Charter Members since 1991, he and wife Sally were both very active members, with Sally herself serving as our secretary in 1992-93 and First VP in 1996-1997. At one point we had a brief conversation when he said to me "I don't know how you do this all, Helen, when you have two young school children, a full-time job (I was a nurse) and a house to take care of. You still can do all of these." I said "I'm lucky, Gene, because I have a husband who supported me all the way." Gene retired from the military and insurance business. He passed away on November 20, 2016.

ROGER LAWSIN -- Executive Board Member 1999-2000. He was an off-and-on member of FAAGC. His family hosted a welcome get-together at their Wildewood residence for then Philippine Ambassador to the US Willie Gaa when he was our first Philippine dignitary to attend the FAAGC gala in 1999. His wife, Dr. Rosen has been a member since 2020, now a Lifetime member and has been supportive of FAAGC activities since then. Roger was a lawyer in the Philippines before moving to the US and retired from real estate business in Columbia. He passed away on April 16, 2019.

Remembering Our Departed FAAGC Leaders

WILLIAM (Bill) T. SIMMONS -- Joined FAAGC in early 1994, AND WAS elected Executive Board Member in 1996-97 and 2nd VP in 1999-2001. Bill was very active member even before he married his Filipina wife. He became one of our official photographers during his term. Bill retired from the US Air Force and a lifetime Tuskegee Airmen Association member. His wife Gemma was at one point joined the cultural dance troupe. He and his wife Gemma were active members until he became sick. He passed away on June 13, 2019.

GALEN MANAPAT -- Served as Executive Board Member in 2005-2007. Although his father was a Filipino, he was born in New York. He served in the US Navy for 3 years, studied at the now CIU and worked at USC as the HVAC Director. He noted that "although I'm not a Filipino, I joined the Fil-Am because I appreciated that the Filipino culture differs from Americans." He wanted to make some friends "to get the pulse of the group so I can make suggestions to make FAAGC more vibrant and active." He passed away on Oct. 23, 2020 .

APOLONIA (Polly) PEARSON -- A Lifetime Sustaining Member since 1992, she served as Treasurer in 1993-94, Executive Board Member in 1994-95 and Assistant Treasurer in 2001-2003. She was probably one of the most active FAAGC members (if not the most) who was not a Columbia resident. Although she lived in the Sumter area, she managed to be very active, attended almost every activities we had. Whether social, fundraising, or community service, Polly was always there. She managed to attend both monthly membership and EB meetings and was instrumental in bringing in most of Sumter residents' attendance and involvement with FAAGC activities. Her daughter LeeAnn also became a member of the Cultural Dance Troupe in 1996. Polly continued to be active and supportive of FAAGC activities until she passed away on March 9, 2021.

Dr. GEORGE MCNULTY --- He and his family were one of the 18 Sustaining Lifetime Charter Members of FAAGC since 1991. George was the longest serving Treasurer from 2001-2007, and served as 2nd Vice President in 2007-2009. As a treasurer, he held that position with great trust and accountancy. As a member there was nothing you could not depend on him -- from grilling the burgers during picnics, setting up and cleaning up during Christmas parties and Columbia International Festivals, to being emcee during cultural dance performances, a Kalayaan Show cast member, and even part of the entertainment team during Christmas parties. He joined the FAAGC Young-at-Heart Dance troupe in later years. He also became the faculty adviser to the Filipino-American Student Association (FASA) at University of South Carolina in 2004 -2005. Because of all these involvement, he received the International Community Ambassador Award from the Columbia International Festival Committee in 2006. In addition to his outstanding professional academic achievements (math professor at USC), I can say he was the most active non-Filipino that ever became a member and officer of FAAGC. His wife Nieves also served two terms as FAAGC President from 1997-2001 and 2 terms as Treasurer from 2009-2013. Their two children both became members of the Cultural Dance Troupe. George passed away last June 13, 2023.

OTHER DEPARTED LIFE SUSTAINING MEMBERS ARE...

Alfonso Pasicatan

Rita Houston Alcantara

Tony de Castro

Lee Pearson

Helen Alon
Helen Alon

FAAGC President 1994-1997





Thank you for coming!

Enjoy the night!

30th ANNUAL GALA RE-VISITED

