

Diosdado Banatao keynotes ISYFA Leadership and Mentoring Program launch

by RENE VILLAROMAN
AJP/Press

LOS ANGELES—"It has been shown in other wealthy nations that industrialization is one of the more lasting solutions to poverty," declared Diosdado Banatao, a successful entrepreneur and Managing partner of the Tallwood Venture Capital. "Rightfully for years now, the government (of the Philippines) has recognized a need to be an industrialized country," Banatao said.

Banatao was speaking during the launching of the mentoring and leadership program of the International Society of Young Filipino Accountants (ISYFA) at the Wilshire Grand Hotel here on Saturday, November 15. Banatao, an electrical engineer, is considered one of Silicon Valley's best-known and successful entrepreneurs. Tallwood, is a venture capital firm with more than \$500 million in assets

Banatao, who hails from a small town in Cagayan province in Northern Luzon and who studied electrical engineering at Mapua Institute of Technology, pioneered the PC chip set and graphics acceleration architecture that continue to be the two foundation technologies in every PC computer today. He is also a multi-awarded venture capitalist who has received multiple awards, including the prestigious Master Entrepreneur of the Year Award. He has been on Forbes Magazine's Midas list four years running. As an engineer, Banatao is credited with developing several key semiconductor technologies and is regarded as a Silicon Valley visionary.

"Unfortunately, the Philippines is considered a poor country with a large population, a high rate of unemployment, a large gap between the poor and the rich, educated and uneducated, and has made seemingly little progress in solving these top problems," Banatao laments. "Gift-giving by hundreds of foundations abroad and in the Philippines is simply not sufficient to eradicate symptoms of short term needs," he asserts. "Gift-giving in education is an excellent example of strategic helping," Banatao told accounting students, recent graduates of

accounting schools, and ISYFA members. "For those of you who are able to help, I would encourage you to think strategically in your gift-giving to the Philippines," Banatao exhorted.

Banatao and his wife, Maria, have established the Banatao Family Filipino American Education Fund with the Asian Pacific Fund in 2002 to help California high school students of Filipino heritage pursue careers in science and engineering, fields where Filipinos are underrepresented.

"The two-year-old ISYFA has attracted an amazing group of people to serve, in a voluntary capacity, with one goal—the opportunity to create and deliver the Filipino dream of getting a fair chance to become leaders in this country," said Marylou Garcia, Managing Director of Expense Reduction Analysts and ISYFA Mentor and Corporate Advisor.

ISYFA Founding President Benel Se-Liban, Principal of Vasquez & Company LLP along with other 14 founding officers organized ISYFA with the vision to a) elevate the stature of Filipino professionals in accounting and finance in the global workforce b) assist, train and mentor emerging professionals and c) promote the Filipino ideals. Through the assistance and mentorship of ISYFA Founding Honorary Advisor Gilbert Vasquez, Managing Partner of Vasquez & Company LLP and Founder of ALPFA (Association of Latino Professional in Finance and Accounting) along with ISYFA Founding Advisors: Carmelita O'Neil, Former Director of Participation Accounting with 20th Century Fox Film Corporation and Susan Legaspi, Partner of EOAG, ISYFA grew from its humble beginnings to now an international organization with members, mentors and advisors based in the East Coast, Canada, Midwest, Texas, California, and the Philippines.

ISYFA's initial batch of advisors and mentors represents the best of the best in the field of accounting and finance. In the Philippines, ISYFA Honorary Advisors include Washington Sy-



ISYFA President Benel Se-Liban (from left), Banatao, and Susan Legaspi

Cip, Founder of SGV Group; Mr. Benjamin Punongbayan, Chairman of Punongbayan and Araulio; and Tammy Lipana, Chairman of Isla Lipana & Co. In the United States, ISYFA advisors and mentors represent Partners, CFO and other managerial positions in various industries. To name a few, Erlinda Olarin-Carin, Partner of KPMG LLP(Toronto, Canada), Aurora Rubin, former Senior Partner of Deloitte & Touche LLP(New York), Rene Enriquez, Senior Manager of Ernest & Young LLP(New York), Blair Bautista, Senior Manager of Deloitte & Touche LLP (Hawaii), Cecilia Cayetano, Senior Manager of Ernest & Young LLP(Nashville and Seattle), Gani Laguisma, Partner of OUM & Co., LLP (San Francisco), Stella Marie Santos, Partner of E.C. Ortiz & Co. LLP(Chicago), Nick Dadia, Managing Partner of Dadia Valles Vendiola LLP(New York), Leo Canseco, Managing Partner of Canseco Law Group, LLP(Baltimore), Maria Christina Tan, Partner of Morris, Davis & Chan LLP (Oakland), Michael Gonzales, Audit Manager of Ernst & Young LLP (Los Angeles) Soc Padau, Audit Manager of Grant Thornton LLP (Irvine), Cecile Galvez, Director of Deloitte and Touche LLP(Los Angeles), Nancy Leparto, Audit Manager of PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP(Los Angeles), Becky Lingad, CFO of City of Cerritos, Teresa Santamaria, Associate Superintendent of Compton Unified School District, Van Dichoso, CEO of Dichoso Group of Companies and Ed Anonas, Director of Finance and Operation-Hotel Bel-Air.

ISYFA's commitment to elevate the stature of Filipino professional was the inspiration to launch the two major programs during this event in which Banatao spoke. These are ISYFA Mentors: Inspiring the Next Generation and ISYFA Leaders: Effective Leadership Equals Success.

"Integrity is very important," advised Josie Castro, ISYFA Mentor and Chief Financial Officer of the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) School of Public Health, and one of the seven panelists during the Career Perspective Panel moderated by Joey Quinto of California Journal and Janelle So of "Kababayan LA"—KSCI TV-LA 18. "Once you made a commitment make sure to be able to cater to individual differences."

"You should have a desire to forge ahead and deliver," opines Rey Padilla, ISYFA Advisor and Managing Partner of Padilla and Company LLP(New York). "You should be able to take the punches and go over the barriers, and to accept whatever is given to you, good or bad," Padilla said.

Says Alberto Yeo, ISYFA Advisor and Senior Financial Advisor with Merrill Lynch: "I encourage you to pursue higher education. We need to go through continuing education. You should be able to find your niche. The field is so broad." The other panelists who are also ISYFA Mentors were Jennifer Calbalquinto, CFO of Universal Studios; Josie V. Nicasio, Controller, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Authority; John Pan, CEO, Avatar Technolo-

gy; and Rowena Cipriano-Reyes, CPA, Partner, PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP, Houston, Texas.

ISYFA mentoring and leadership programs were supported by American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and Becker CPA Review. During the event, Ostine Swan, CPA, Senior Manager of AICPA Minority Initiative recognized two ISYFA scholars, Irene Albia of Loyola

Marymount and Heriel Alvarez of CalState Long Beach. Other major sponsors during the event were Vasquez & Company LLP, Ernest & Young LLP, Grant Thornton, PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP, KPMG LLP, BDO Seidman, LLP, McGladrey & Pullen LLP, Manufacturers Bank, Dichoso Group of Companies, Athena Electronic, Inc. and Expense Reduction Analysts. ■

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