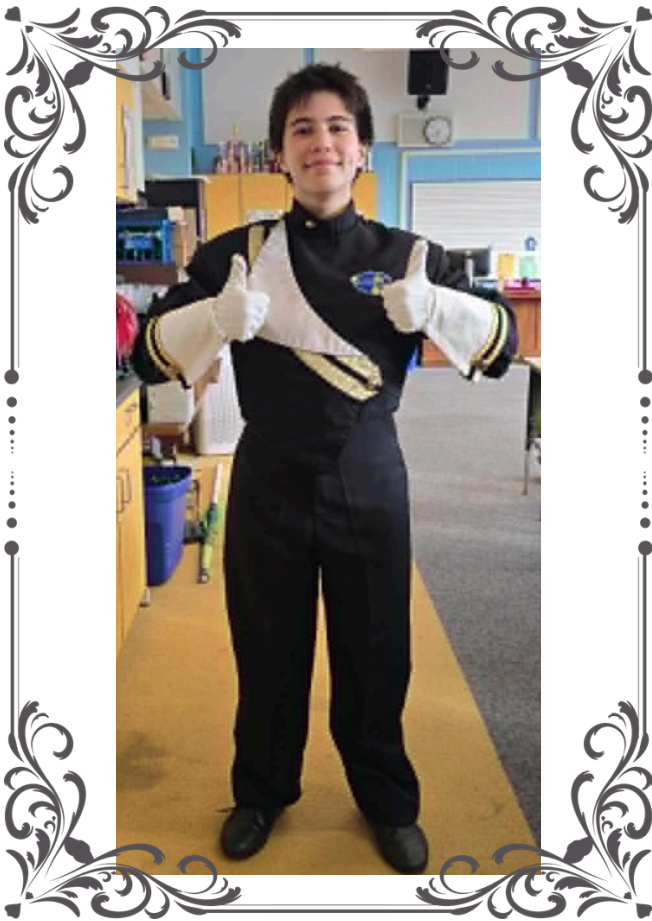




FCDC TODAY

Filipino-American Community &
Development Center of Ocean County Inc.
2014 Bayaning Pilipino Awardee
August 2026

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT - MAXXINE DEOCAMPO



Maxxine DeOcampo is entering her senior year enrolled at The Marine Academy of Technology and Environmental Science, and has a lot to manage. From conducting an entire marching band on the drum major stand to keeping up with her studies at MATES, she still finds time to also try to connect to her Filipino roots here in Ocean County.

Maxxine studies at MATES, where she pursues academic excellence through hard work and long nights of studying for difficult tests and quizzes. The school is known for its difficult courses and busy schedules, but she manages to face it head-on. Active in her school's club scene, she

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participates in the Fishing Club where she helps fundraise and embarks on fishing trips, as well as the Terrapin Conservation Club where she helps conserve the local terrapin population by assembling pamphlets and nest coverings. Although she is entering her final year, there is still much she hopes to learn about both the sciences and becoming a helpful part of her community.



Maxxine & her Dad

School isn't the only place she is active, as the 2026 season marks her sixth year participating in Marching Band. Having played in the front ensemble since her first year, the percussionist has performed pieces on the vibraphone and marimba. However, now, Maxxine stands on the drum major stand conducting and leading



family

Maxxine's
Mom and
sister



the marching band. While keeping time is one thing, she also helps the band learn their music, through patience and knowledge she keeps the band running smoothly by helping the members with their technique and memorization. When she isn't so focused on running the band, she loves the amusement of goofing around with her band mates and having a good time. Maxxine believes music and performance is one of the many gifts that holds people together, and works to uphold that belief by contributing as much as she can to her band.



Since she is only half Filipino from one side of the family and the youngest daughter, she has been very “late to the party”, especially in terms of being able to learn anything about her culture. Maxxine has been able to overcome this with the help of FCDC, participating in the FCDC ensemble as second trumpet, and being one of her team’s leaders in the community’s summer camp, she has had the honor of learning all about the rich and beautiful culture of the Philippines. From trying many different dances across regions, to indulging in the warm foods of the nation, the Filipino Community Development Center of Ocean County has welcomed her with open arms to connect to her culture through a larger family.

Maxxine loves spending time with her friends and family, cherishing the people in her life. She enjoys playing games with her friends, storm-watching, playing the trumpet, and making people laugh. Maxxine plans on applying to Temple University so that she can go on the path to become an Emergency Physician, to bring hope to others.





PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Jasmine Alcid



As summer comes to a close, we look back with gratitude and pride at all that our FCDC children and families have accomplished. The past few months have been filled with learning, friendship, cultural activities, community service, and memorable experiences. Through our summer programs and activities, our children had opportunities to discover new talents, strengthen their confidence, develop leadership skills, and deepen their appreciation for their Filipino heritage. More importantly, they grew not only in knowledge and skills, but also in character, teamwork, responsibility, and respect for one another.

As the new school year begins, we wish all our students a successful and rewarding year ahead. May they return to school refreshed, motivated, and ready to face new challenges and opportunities. At FCDC, we are also excited for the coming fall season and the many activities we have planned for our children and families. A special highlight on our calendar is the 25th FCDC/FAMS Golf Tournament on October 7, a milestone event that brings together friends, supporters, and community members in fellowship while helping support FCDC's programs and initiatives. We are also excited to offer our members a special screening of *Forgotten Island* at the Marquee Theater in Toms River, with special admission of only \$5 per child and \$10 for adults. This is a wonderful opportunity for our families to enjoy a movie together while supporting and celebrating Filipino stories and talent.

We look forward to celebrating these special events and continuing our mission of bringing our community together, preserving our rich Filipino culture and traditions, and providing meaningful opportunities for our youth to learn, serve, lead, and grow. Let us welcome the fall with enthusiasm and look forward to another season of fellowship, service, learning, and community spirit at FCDC!



*"...and all at
once,
summer
collapsed
into fall."*

Oscar Wilde

Watch a movie with us!

FORGOTTEN ISLAND

**DETAILS TO BE
ANNOUNCED
SOON**

APPLICATION

Please complete the following for each golfer you wish to register.

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Tel # _____ Fax # _____

Golfers at \$175.00 each \$ _____

Sponsorships \$ _____

Total Participation \$ _____

☐ Payment Enclosed

Kindly Indicate Sponsorships:

Please make your check payable to:

FCDC

P.O. Box 1418, Toms River, NJ 08754

Zelle: fcdcocean@gmail.com

For more information call:

Dr. Mario Gallardo • 732-350-0404

Dr. Oscar Ortiz • 732-581-3566

Dr. Dino Espineli • 732-341-2211

www.fcdcnj.org

GOLF COMMITTEE

Dino Espineli, MD

Oscar Ortiz, MD

Mario Gallardo, MD

Jose Ramon Suatengco, MD

Chairpersons, Golf Committee



FCDC OFFICERS

Jasmine Alcid – President

Roderick Alberto, ESQ

Jess Alcid, MD

Steven Gallagher

Mario Gallardo, MD

Jaye Jacinto, RN

Christine Lauguico

Sharon Ynaya Lichter, RN

Lisa Martinez, RN

Angela Pamintuan, MD

Maryann Payumo

Jose Ramon Suatengco, MD

Lorna Tejada, RN

Malou Tupaz

Celine Villanueva, MD

Rhett Yap



**Filipino-American
Community &
Development
Center**
of Ocean County Inc.

25 *Years*

**OF GOLF, FRIENDSHIP,
FELLOWSHIP & SERVICE**



OCTOBER 7, 2026
WEDNESDAY

PINE BARRENS GOLF CLUB
540 SOUTH HOPE CHAPEL ROAD
JACKSON, NEW JERSEY

WWW.FDCNJ.ORG

Dear Friends

Each year we look forward to seeing you at this event. We thank you for your support as we continue our commitment to serving the community. With your help we hope to make this event a success.

Sincerely,
Mario Gallardo, M.D.
Chairperson, Golf Committee

Oscar Ortiz, M.D.
Co-Chairperson, Golf Committee

Dino Espineli, M.D.
Co-Chairperson, Golf Committee

Jose Ramon Suatengco, M.D.
Co-Chairperson, Golf Committee

MISSION STATEMENT

FCDC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the Filipino-American community through cultural preservation, education, scholarship, community service and philanthropy. We celebrate our Filipino heritage while creating opportunities to serve, connect and give back to the broader community.

We strive to celebrate culture, to create a "HOME away from HOME" and to preserve our Filipino heritage in Ocean County.

The FCDC logo is represented by the Narra Tree. It is the National Tree of the Philippines. We take and embrace the joyful image to envision what it takes and most importantly, what it means to be a Filipino-American. As we plant our Narra Tree into the common ground of American soil, it is a clear reminder that our heritage has become a strong enrichment for American diversity.

MAJOR SPONSORSHIP

☐ \$2,000 25th ANNIVERSARY PLATINUM SPONSOR

- Golf Outing Sponsor
- Four Registered players
- Name prominently displayed throughout the Golf Outing
- Recognition in Golf Program (Back Cover) and Reception

☐ \$1,500.00 Gold Event Sponsor

- Dinner Sponsor
- Three Registered Players
- Name prominently displayed throughout the Golf Outing
- Recognition in Golf Program and Reception

☐ \$1,000.00 Silver Event Sponsor

- Awards Sponsor
- Name prominently displayed throughout the Golf Outing
- Two Registered Players
- Recognition in Golf Program and Reception

☐ \$750.00 Hole Event Sponsor

- Name prominently displayed outside the green throughout the Golf Outing
- Recognition in Golf Program
- One Registered Player

☐ \$300.00 Tee Sponsor

- Name prominently displayed on tee boxes
- Recognition in Golf Program

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS October 7, 2026 | Wednesday 12:30 P.M. ~ Shotgun Start

Please register by September 25, 2026

\$175
Per Golfer

Includes:

- Green Fees
- Cart
- Prizes
- Lunch
- Dinner

PRIZES & SPECIAL EVENTS

CALLAWAY SYSTEM
LONGEST DRIVE
CLOSEST TO THE PIN

BENEFICIARIES TAX ID # 205840649

Proceeds support scholarships, cultural programs and community initiatives"

- Dr. Renato Ynaya Memorial Scholarship
- Foundation and FACES (Filipino American Cultural and Enrichment Studies)

CELEBRATING

25
Years



Filipino-American
Community &
Development
Center
of Ocean County Inc.

OF GOLF, FRIENDSHIP,
FELLOWSHIP & SERVICE



***LETTER FROM THE
EDITOR
by Jamie Mariano***



I hope all families and students are prepared for school! I know some have already started, but if you are willing to agree in prayer, I've listed some prayer points to guide you:

Prayer Points for the New School Year



- **Pray for incoming preschoolers and kindergarteners, and their families, who are experiencing school and extended time apart from each other for the first time.**
- **Pray for college students, both resident students and commuters. Pray for their protection, safety, and wisdom in their decision making. Pray for successful time management, financial stability, and academic achievement.**
- **Pray that no student is harmed by bullying, abuse, or any form of violence. Pray for those who have unfortunately experienced this, or might in the future. Pray for them to get the help they need, to seek comfort and peace from God, and to recover from any physical, emotional, and/or mental trauma.**
- **Pray for all students to do well in their academics and extracurricular activities. Pray that they have the support they might need to maintain grades and acceptable performance.**
- **Pray for students' overall health and wellbeing.**

I hope everyone has a successful school year. I encourage all of you to share any student highlights and achievements with FCDC Today. If there is anything you'd like to include in our newsletter (i.e., a new school sports record, a contest winner, an excellent science fair presentation, a recipient of a full-ride scholarship, a notable study abroad experience), please email JamieFCDCToday@gmail.com. FCDC Today prides itself in sharing community news!

Filipino Fashion Designer

Ava Lazaro had the wonderful opportunity to model for Elsie Clavin. Elsie Clavin is a San Diego-based Filipino fashion designer known for her creative approach to sustainable fashion. Through her “Eco-Couture” designs, she transforms everyday materials such as plastic spoons, Amazon packaging, playing cards, straws and other recycled material into reimagined Filipino fashion. Her creativity brings these materials to life as elegant, upcycled Filipiniana dresses, Barong Tagalog and other traditional attire. Elsie Clavin has proved that sustainability can be both glamorous and undeniably Filipino, celebrating cultural heritage while promoting environmental responsibility.



Ava enjoyed her time modeling Elsie Clavin's designs for Fiesta in America at American Dream Mall. She felt incredibly proud to represent the Philippines and showcase the beautiful outfits selected by Elsie Clavin. Her first outfit was a stunning Filipino-inspired burlap bag of rice. Ava was amazed by how lovely and unique the design turned out, leaving everyone in awe. Her second outfit was another Filipino-inspired ensemble, this time formed from traditional silk materials. Ava was excited, confident and proud as she walked the stage, representing Filipino culture through fashion and celebrating the vision of Elsie Clavin.



small group shot (Elsie Clavin, back row , white outfit with white hat)



ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT

by Ferlie Almonte
Speaker. Author. Life Coach.

**READY OR NOT... YOUR MOMENT MAY BE
CALLING!**

Sometimes what looks like a disaster becomes an opportunity to make an unforgettable difference.

At 10:38 one morning, I received a frantic phone call from the Activities Director of an assisted living community.

Their scheduled steel drum entertainer was a no-show—and this wasn't just an ordinary event. It was one of their biggest summer celebrations, complete with a seafood boil, residents and staff ready to party, and company executives coming to judge each facility's unique summer entertainment entry.

The Activities Director was in tears. Where on earth could they find an entertainer who could show up with 20 minutes' notice?

**Then an employee who knew me said something that still makes me smile:
"If there's anyone who can pull this off, Ferlie can. She lives three miles away!"
There was just one little problem.**

I had slept in that morning! I was making breakfast, still looking like a mess, when the call came. I hadn't even brushed my teeth yet, my hair wasn't done, and I certainly wasn't dressed to entertain anybody. But I could hear the desperation in her voice.

**Sometimes life doesn't give us time to prepare for the moment. It simply asks:
Will you show up?**

Somehow, I brushed my teeth, fixed my hair, put on a colorful Caribbean-inspired outfit and lipstick, loaded my sound equipment into the car, and walked into the facility at 10:59 AM.

Twenty-one minutes after the phone rang!

I hadn't warmed up my voice. I didn't look as polished as I normally would for a performance. But none of that mattered. They needed help—and I was there. What could have been a disastrous morning turned into something spectacular. The music started. The residents became engaged. The staff relaxed. Their adorable lobster mascot danced around while I sang, mingled and encouraged everyone to join the fun. Residents smiled, laughed, sang along and enjoyed their delicious seafood-boil treats.

The energy was electrifying!

Except for a few minutes of spotty Wi-Fi, everything came together beautifully. The staff's relief and gratitude were indescribable. They told me the entertainment turned out even better than they had originally planned. Some even called me their "hero" for saving the day.

But I walked away thinking about something much bigger than saving an event. I thought about preparation, purpose and the willingness to serve. We often hear that luck happens when preparation meets opportunity. Years of performing had prepared me to say YES. My music and equipment were ready, and experience gave me the confidence to walk into an unexpected situation and make it work.

But perhaps the bigger lesson was this:
Showing up when someone needs you can matter far more than showing up perfectly. Had I worried about my hair, my outfit, my voice or whether I had enough time to prepare, I might have said no. Instead, I showed up with what I had—and gave what I could.

For our young people especially, there is an important lesson here. The talents and skills you develop today—your education, creativity, confidence, communication skills, discipline and courage—are preparing you for opportunities you cannot yet see.



For our young people especially, there is an important lesson here. The talents and skills you develop today—your education, creativity, confidence, communication skills, discipline and courage—are preparing you for opportunities you cannot yet see.

Practice when no one is watching. Learn even when there is no test. Develop your gifts even when there is no stage waiting for you.

Because someday, someone may need exactly what YOU know how to do.

And when that moment comes, don't let the pursuit of perfection stop you from stepping forward.

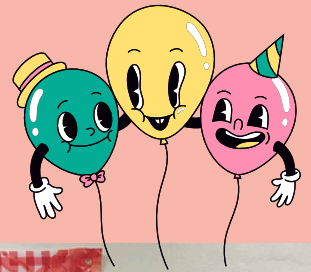
Be prepared enough to begin. Be confident enough to try. Be compassionate enough to help. Be courageous enough to show up.

I believe God gives each of us unique gifts for a reason. We may not always know when or where they will be needed. Our responsibility is to develop them, remain open to opportunity, and use them in service to others.

So keep learning. Keep growing. Keep preparing. Because when life suddenly calls and says, "We need you!" you may discover that you've been preparing for that moment all along. Sometimes what first looks like a disaster may simply be God's unexpected invitation for you to show up, serve and shine.

Be ready. Your moment may be closer than you think.

For more inspiring messages, follow @FerlieAlmonte on social media





Why FCDC Still Matters From Building a Community to Building Its Future By Dr. Jose Ramon Suatengco

There was a time when the Filipino-American community in the Toms River area needed something very basic: a place to belong.

Many of us were immigrants building new lives. We were establishing careers, raising children, buying homes, forming friendships, and learning how to become part of America without losing the culture and values we brought from the Philippines.

People volunteered countless hours. Families organized gatherings. Professionals shared their talents. Community leaders raised funds and created programs. From those collective efforts came organizations such as FCDC and FACES and, more importantly, a Filipino-American community that became established, successful, and respected.

Today, many of those pioneers have retired or are approaching retirement. Their children are adults. Many have achieved the security and success they once worked so hard to attain.

That success, however, should not mark the end of the mission.

It gives us the opportunity to redefine it.

From Building a Community to Investing in People

FCDC once envisioned establishing a physical community center. But communities change, and responsible organizations must change with them.

Perhaps our greatest asset today does not need to be a building.

It can be people.

Instead of measuring FCDC's future by bricks and mortar, we can measure it by the students we help educate, the young leaders we encourage, the families we assist, the culture we preserve, and the charitable work we make possible.

A \$2,000 scholarship may appear modest compared with the total cost of college. But to a student, it can mean textbooks, tuition, transportation, a computer, professional expenses, or simply fewer hours working so that more time can be devoted to studying.

More importantly, the scholarship carries a message:

Your community believes in you.

Imagine that message being delivered year after year to young Filipino-Americans.

Our generation has something valuable to give.

Many of those who built this community are now in a different stage of life. We may have fewer reasons to organize dances, large social events, or ambitious construction projects.

But we possess something we did not have when we started.

We have experience, professional expertise, financial resources, relationships, and time-tested wisdom.

A physician can mentor a student considering medicine.

An accountant can teach financial literacy.

A business owner can guide a young entrepreneur.

A retired professional can help a student navigate college and a career.

A successful family can sponsor a scholarship.

Someone who simply wants to help can volunteer or contribute.

These resources can make FCDC relevant for another generation.

We can give time, knowledge, mentorship, connections and leadership.

Why Maintaining FCDC Matters

Having an established 501(c)(3) charitable organization provides the community with an important vehicle through which generosity can be organized and sustained.

Instead of every generation starting another organization from the beginning, FCDC can provide continuity.

It can receive charitable contributions, build scholarship resources, develop partnerships, sponsor educational and cultural programs, respond to community needs, and create opportunities for younger Filipino-Americans to participate in philanthropy and leadership.

The organization can also manage its resources responsibly. Funds that are not immediately needed can be kept in prudent, income-producing accounts so that money does not simply sit idle. Interest earned can help finance scholarships and programs, allowing yesterday's fundraising efforts to continue producing benefits tomorrow.

This represents an important transition:

We raised the money once. Good stewardship can allow that money to keep working for the community.

A Culture of Giving Back

FCDC's future should not depend solely upon the people who founded and sustained it.

We should invite the generation that benefited from the community to become its next stewards.

Former scholars can eventually mentor new scholars. Young professionals can join committees and boards. Families can establish memorial scholarships honoring parents and grandparents. Retirees can contribute expertise. Businesses can sponsor programs. Individuals can make tax-deductible charitable gifts consistent with applicable rules.

Even relatively modest contributions become powerful when many people participate.

And financial support is only one form of philanthropy.

The legacy is not the organization itself.

Ultimately, preserving FCDC simply for the sake of preserving an organization should never be the objective.

The objective is preserving its purpose.

The people who built our Filipino-American community worked so that those who followed them would have opportunities they themselves did not always have.

We now have an opportunity to extend that same generosity to another generation.

Our pioneers built the foundation.

Our generation achieved much of what they hoped for.

The next chapter should be about giving others the opportunity to succeed.

If FCDC can help educate a student, develop a future leader, preserve Filipino heritage, assist a family, encourage community service, or inspire someone who succeeds to someday help another person, then FCDC remains not merely relevant—but necessary.

A community center would have given us a building.

A revitalized FCDC can help us build people.

And perhaps that is the more enduring legacy.

St. Joseph's Sunday Supper

By Therese Alberto

This summer I ended my August volunteering at St. Joseph's Sunday Supper. Organized by Tita Lorna Tejada, I worked alongside my fellow FACES Barkada members, Anika, Gia, and Julianna. Helping the usual volunteers at St. Joseph's Social Concerns Ministry, we served around 50 people. The ministry provided a free meal, consisting of salad with fruit as an appetizer, hot dogs with pasta for the entree, and chocolate pudding for dessert, which was thoroughly enjoyed.

This was my second time volunteering there, and I had a great experience once again. It's a very good opportunity to give back to the community. Seeing how thankful the guests were really made it fulfilling. The supper not only provides them with free food, but also a place to meet up and connect with others. I was told that many of them come back every month and sit at the same tables with their same groups. I love seeing how happy they were sharing stories, drawing on their placemats, and laughing together while sharing a good meal.

I'd love to come back next month, but if not, hopefully next summer! Thank you to St. Joseph's Social Concerns Ministry for all the hard work they do for our community and to Tita Lorna for giving my fellow volunteers and me the opportunity to contribute to a good cause!





SHARE YOUR STORY
Email our Editor-in-Chief
Jamie Mariano at
jamiefcdctoday@gmail.com

Grateful
New Members

Gerlyn Peduca & Family



FCDC
P.O. Box 1418
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08754

To join us or renew
your membership,
visit our website at
www.fcdcnj.org
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support!

Find us on Facebook.

