

Arête



Welcome Message

Happy New Year! It feels as if we are slowly but surely returning to life as we know it. Life with more mobility, but with continued caution and care. While a few of our Olympians have left us this year, most notably our beloved Chairman Paing, we carry on the work of upholding the Olympic ideals, through our lives and the projects we pursue, and caring for our fellow OLYs as best we can.

We pray you are safe, healthy and well, and that new opportunities present themselves in 2022. As you read on, may we invite you to visit, share and update our archive (www.philippineolympians.org), and join us in our projects to make what we do even more meaningful and relevant. God bless you.

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Remembering the Life of Tito Paing

July 8, 1928 - August 26, 2021

1952 Helsinki, Basketball

Sharing with you the eulogy given by our POA President at the wake of Chairman Paing—

To the family of Tito Paing, our deepest condolences. Thank you for allowing me to speak on behalf of the Philippine Olympians Association, an organization I know Tito Paing cared for deeply. Tito Paing was a pillar in the POA.

The POA was formed in 2002, an organization that represents all Filipino Olympians. We were all part of the founding board, with Tito Art Macapagal as our President and Tito Paing, our Chairman. When Tito Art passed away in 2015, Tito Paing asked if I would step up as President. I was scared and unprepared to, but with Tito Paing there I knew we had all the guidance we needed. Tito Paing's confidence and trust gave me the courage to step up.

Tito Paing was always engaged and interested, always up-to-date with the on goings in sport (and the world) sometimes even more than I was. He always had ideas and suggestions of how we might be able to promote the values of sport, how we might be able to support our athletes in our small way, or of who we should write to, or invite to our next gathering. He had great interest and ideas which we will greatly miss.

Tito Paing was generous with his time and his talents and he was a gentleman. Every quarter he would host our lunch board meetings at the Manila Golf. We always enjoyed listening to his stories as you always picked up a nugget from his years of life experience. Tito Freddie Webb, who also sits on our board, reminded me the other day that Tito Paing never had anything unkind to say about anyone. If something negative was being said, Tito Paing would simply listen but not comment, ever the gentleman.

He was a generous man who never sought recognition. More recently a fellow Olympian and silver medalist Leopoldo Serrantes (who actually just died this past week) reached out to us asking for more assistance. We had given Pol a significant amount last year and I wasn't sure we had the means to support him again. We are a self-sustaining organization, dependent on the grants we receive. But Tito Paing was determined to support Pol, and out of his own pocket wrote another generous amount given on behalf of the POA. Tito Paing didn't want to be recognized for this, he just did what he felt was the right, proper and necessary thing todo.



Tito Paing's love for sport was evident in the stories he told and in the interest he had. But his heart for service really became evident to me seeing him religiously attend our sports clinics. For almost 2 years we ran monthly sports clinics for the street children of Childhope. Tito Paing didn't have to be at these events, and I know many times his children would ask him not to go for health reasons, but he always came, he always showed up, he always supported.

Several months ago in December 2019 Tito Paing received the Olympians for Life award from the World Olympians Association. An award given to Olympians for their lifelong contribution to society. This is when I fully realized the tremendous amount of service Tito Paing had done for Rotary for most of his adult life. He served others through Rotary, he served others through the POA. His heart for service was consistent in all he did.

Two Mondays ago, a few days before Tito Paing died, we had an impromptu board meeting for an event we just held last Monday. Tito Paing was there, happy and engaged commenting on this and that, he even mentioned that he left a note for me, and so we were all quite shocked to hear the news so soon after. Shocked but grateful too for the chance to see and be with Tito Paing one more time. Tito Paing loved the POA and served it passionately until the very end. We are blessed by his leadership and will continue the legacy begun.

Reena, Raffy, Raissa and Riana what a remarkable father you have. We grieve with you, but we also thank God for his life, for the many lives he touched and for the example he will always be of a principled gentleman with a golden heart.

Until we meet again Tito Paing, thank you and we love you.





OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

www.olympians.org
@worldolympians
world olympians association

Principality of Monaco,
August 28th, 2021

Dear Akiko,

I was deeply saddened to hear about the passing of Rafael "Tito Paing" Hechanova OLY and wish to express my sincerest condolences on behalf of World Olympians Association.

We recognise and appreciate the numerous contributions that he has made to the advancement of the Olympic Movement in Philippines and the wider Olympic family.

As the Chairman of Philippines Olympians Association, he played an important role in the organisation of the National Olympians Association Workshop during the South East Asian Games in 2019, which greatly benefitted the NOAs in Asia. He was also an active contributor in the development and strategic direction of POA to support Filipino Olympians.

Tito Paing was an advocate for helping others and well-respected within the Asian Olympians community. He will be dearly missed.

Again, our deepest sympathies on the loss of a fellow Olympian. Please pass on our condolences to his family and friends. If the WOA team can help in any way, please let us know.

Sincerely,

Joël Bouzou OLY
WOA President

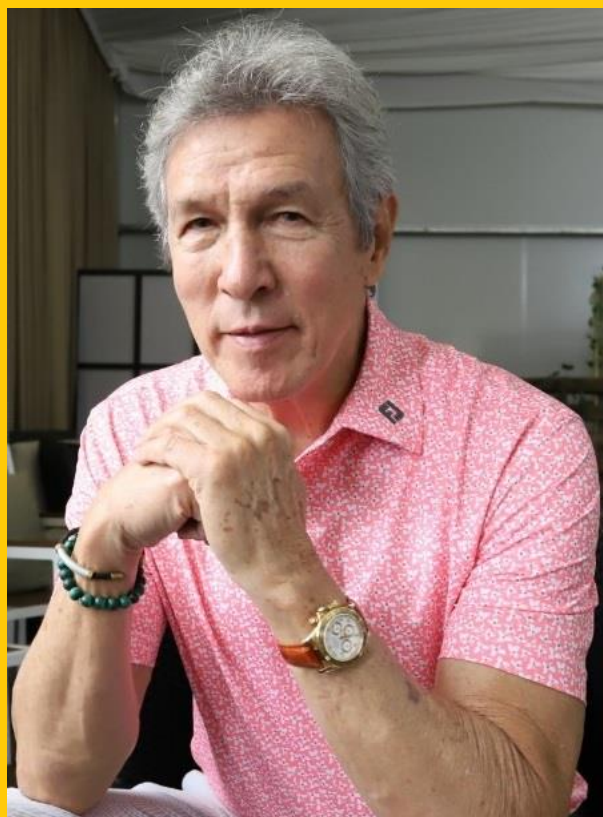
Mrs. Akiko Thomson-Guevara OLY
President
Philippines Olympians Association

International Olympic Committee
Château de Vidy
1007 Lausanne, Switzerland



WELCOMING OUR NEW CHAIRMAN

On December 9, 2021, the last board meeting of the year, the POA board unanimously elected Sen Freddie Webb OLY as our new Chairman. Tito Freddie is no stranger to the POA having served as a board member the last six years. He competed at the 1972 Munich Games in Basketball, the last time the Philippines would send a basketball team. Tito Freddie is a former Senator, Congressman and Basketball coach and is currently involved in television, movies and radio. The POA board is ever grateful for his accepting the role.



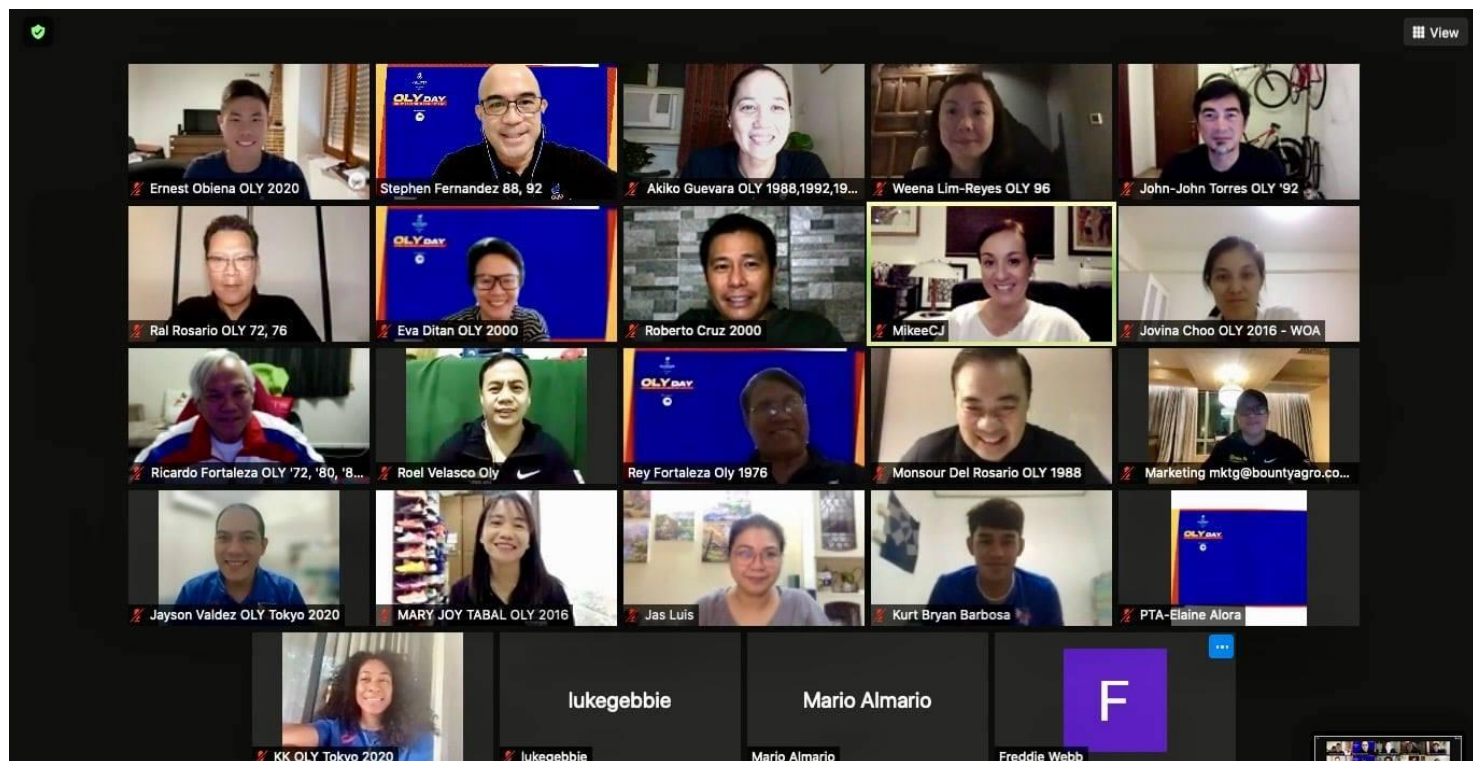
OLY DAY CELEBRATION 2021

On August 30, 2021 we officially welcomed our Tokyo Olympians to the POA. At the virtual event, the Olympians were presented with their OLY certificates and pins, and our POA medal, as they took the Filipino Olympians Oath.

The POA also gave out two ARÉTE awards (individual and corporate) to Olympic gold medalist Hidilyn Diaz OLY and Bounty Agro Ventures, Inc for their tremendous contributions to sport. These are only the 5th and 6th awards given in the history of the POA.

More about the awardees in the succeeding article, it was a wonderful time to welcome, connect and introduce what we do at the POA. POC President Bambol Tolentino, IOC Executive board member Mikee C. Jaworski and WOA Asia representative Jovina Choo OLY were also present at the celebration.





ARÉTE AWARDS

After 12 years since we last awarded the Arête, POA gave the distinguished award to Hidilyn Diaz OLY for her historic feat at the Tokyo Olympics. Almost 100 years since we first participated at the Olympics, Diaz is the first Filipino to win a gold medal at the Games. The corporate award was given to Bounty Agro Ventures, Inc (BAVI), through their President Ronald Mascariñas for their generous support to our Olympic medalists Leopoldo “Pol” Serrantes OLY and Mansueto “Onyok” Velasco OLY providing financial assistance and livelihood to our retired sports heroes.

Pol, a bronze medalist at the 1988 Seoul Olympics, was hospitalized for months when BAVI stepped in to support him financially with P100,000/month and a franchise for “Chooks to go”. A few months later Pol would also leave us. Onyok on the other hand did not receive the entire incentive promised him after his silver medal win at the 1996 Atlanta Games and was also given a franchise. While it is common for Olympians to be rewarded at the peak of their careers, rarely are they supported with a means of livelihood post career. The Arête is our way of saying thank you for BAVI’s magnanimous support.



Arête is translated as virtue, or “being the best you can be” and “reaching your highest potential”. It is excellence and goodness which both awardees exemplify.



The OSLP Journey by Noli Ayo

Around the middle of 2020, I had the opportunity to share to the POA president, Ms. Akiko Thomson-Guevara, the idea of gathering sports leaders and coaches in an organized and intentional Zoom learning experience. At the center of this learning experience will be the stories of our Philippine Olympians.

Imagine a sports culture guided and shaped by Olympic values of Excellence, Respect and Friendship? I did. And I find the imagination hopeful and worth pursuing. With this, the Online Sports Leadership Program (OSLP) was born.

Networking

In every batch of the OSLP, we are mindful to have a diverse group of participants. We want to make sure that the opportunity to network is rich and impactful. In every batch, we want to make sure that Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao are represented. To ensure stronger connections, we decided that one of the strategies is to make it a small group only.

There are just 12 to 16 members per batch. Participants are coaches, sports directors and coordinators of schools, LGUs and organizations. We also have participants who are not directly involved in sports but are in the program because of their interest and passion for sports.

A constant question we ask to our participants before we end our program is “how can you work together even beyond their OSLP batch?”

We want to create stronger linkages of passionate sports stakeholders in the country. We want to help shape a network that truly works in helping enrich and grow the culture of Philippine sports.

Storytelling

The OSLP runs for 15 hours. More than half of it, a total of 4 sessions via Zoom, is spent meeting invited Olympians from different generations who share their stories about their journey in sports. The guide for the sharing of our Olympians were the same - 1) How did you start your journey in Philippine sports? Who were the people who influenced you to pursue your dreams in sports? 2) What were the challenges and obstacles you encountered? How did you manage to overcome them? and 3) What is your advice to our OSLP participants so that they can be better sports leaders and influencers in their schools and communities?

The stories of our Olympians are the ties that bind our participants together. Listening to these narratives in sports allows our participants to embrace more and appreciate these talented men and women who have reached the pinnacle of sports experience. More importantly, we want to embed to our participants the Olympic values and encourage them to integrate it to what they do in their schools and communities.

Systems Thinking

What can we learn from what we do? How can we apply the lesson of one to what the other is doing in his or her field? These are questions that we ask our participants throughout the 3 sessions we call E-Nights (**Engagement Night.**)



E-Night is an integral part of the OSLP experience. Participants are mixed in groups of 3 or 4 and are asked to meet for an hour in one of the evenings in the week between our Saturday sessions. The goal is for them to learn from each other too.

We hope to guide our participants in a systems thinking experience. Systems thinking is about seeing what works in one area and applying it to what you do. We guide our OSLP participants to learn from each other through their own stories and experiences in sports.



Online Sports Leadership Program
Batch 5

A partnership between the Philippine Olympians Association and Ateneo de Davao University

November 20 - December 11 | Saturdays, 3:00PM-5:00PM

LIVE via  zoom

Open to all sports leaders and coordinators of schools, LGUs and sports associations

SPEAKERS

- MARY JOY TABALOLY**
 - First Filipino Marathon Olympian - RIO Olympics 2016
 - Six Time National MLD Marathon Queen
 - Philippine National Record Holder - Marathon & Half Marathon
 - SEASAME 5000's SILVER Medalist
 - National MLD Marathon Record Holder
- Ricardo Fortaleza**
 - Gold Medalist, 5th Asian Games, 1972
 - Silver Medalist, Asian Amateur Boxing Championship 1973
 - Philippine Olympic Games, March 1973
 - Philippine Wrestling Team
 - Coach for Japan & China
 - Coach National Team, 1988 to 1998
 - Coach for Manila Sea Games, 1999
 - Coach for Olympic Games, Barcelona 1992
- Jasmine Paler Alkhaldi**
 - 2013 & 2016 Olympian
 - 20x SEA Games Medalist
 - Philippine Record Holder (Judo Freestyle, Butterfly and Backstroke)
 - Mountain Pacific Sports Federation athlete of the Year (2015)
- John John Torres**
 - Represented the Philippines in International Sailing Competitions
 - SEA Games Manila '91 Gold Medalist
 - Olympics Barcelona '92 Delegation
 - SEA Games Singapore '93 Silver Medalist

To register, contact Coach Noli Ayo or email him at ersayo@addu.edu.ph

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National Summit

Last December 16, 2021 we had our first meeting to discuss the OSLP National Summit to be held in Palawan State University in Puerto Princesa City. It is set for November of 2022. Present in the Zoom call were representatives of the key organizations that will play a big role in making this gathering successful - Mr. Vince Esguerra (OSLP batch 2 and Sports Director of Palawan State University), Coach Noli Ayo (University Athletics Director of Ateneo de Davao), Ms. Eureka Quinto (OSLP batch 4 and Operations Director of Adrenaline Solutions) and Ms. Akiko Thomson-Guevara (President of the Philippine Olympians Association).

The face-to-face summit will invite all those who participated in the virtual OSLP to a 3 day gathering where we will once again emphasize the objectives of the OSLP - create a strong network of sports stakeholders, appreciate and share from each others stories and enrich our systems thinking mindset and learn to apply it in what we do in our schools and communities.

About the Contributor

Coach Noli Ayo is the Founder and Convener of the Mindanao Peace Games. He is currently based in Davao City and works as University Athletics Director for Ateneo de Davao. Aside from helping start the OSLP during the pandemic, Coach Noli was appointed as Consultant of the newly formed Bangsamoro Sports Commission (August 2020) and was also the project director of the bestselling book, Winning Still (June 2021). He recently co-founded Adrenaline Solutions, a Canada-based company that provides support, partnership and mentorship to individuals, teams and sports organizations. He was recognized as one of the Pandemic Sports Heroes by New Balance Philippines for his outstanding contributions to sports during these difficult times brought by the COVID pandemic.