



THE FILIPINO VETERANS RECOGNITION AND EDUCATION PROJECT

Frequently Asked Questions December 2017

1. Q: What is the Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project?

A: The Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project (FilVetRep) is a nonpartisan, community-based, all-volunteer national initiative whose mission is to raise awareness through academic research and public information and obtain national recognition of Filipino, Filipino-American, and American WWII soldiers across the United States and the Philippines for their wartime service to the U.S. and the Philippines from July 1941 to December 1946. The organization was incorporated as a nonstock, nonprofit organization under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and was subsequently granted 501(c)(3) status as a tax-exempt public charity by the Internal Revenue Service.

Led by Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba, FilVetREP has worked with members of Congress, federal agencies, policymakers, national advocates, and grassroots leaders from around the country and is considered by many as a leading voice advocating for Filipino WWII veterans and their families.

2. Q: How does the Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project seek to accomplish its mission?

A: The organization engages in public information, education, academic scholarship, advocacy, community engagement, and fundraising to achieve recognition for Filipino World War II veterans.

On December 14, 2016, President Barack Obama signed the Filipino Veterans of WW II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2015 into law, accomplishing a major legislative goal of FilVetREP. The organization's ongoing activities now focus on four priority tasks:

fundraising to make sure that veterans and/or their surviving family members receive a replica of the Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of their service, as well as to fund a planned educational initiative; **documentation** through the continued creation of a registry of veterans and/or their surviving family members; engagement with the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History with respect to the exhibition of the Congressional Gold Medal within the NMAH and, potentially, other museums; and the development and launch of a digital exhibition leading to the creation of an **educational program**, in collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution, educational and non-profit institutions, and community members to ensure the lasting legacy of these veterans and their impact on our country.



THE FILIPINO VETERANS RECOGNITION AND EDUCATION PROJECT

The Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project is governed by a national organization consisting of: a **Board of Directors** representing the 11 Regional Areas across the United States and which is led by a chairman, a vice chairman, a general counsel, and an executive secretary; an **Executive Committee** headquartered in Washington, D.C. supports the Board of Directors; and **volunteers** working around the country. The organization also works with numerous veterans support and community organizations, as well as many sponsors and donors supporting it.

The Chairman of the Board of the Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project is Major General Antonio M. Taguba, U.S. Army Retired. He is the second Filipino American general in the U.S. Army to achieve this high rank in the United States Armed Forces. Information about FilVetREP, its leadership, and its programs is available on the organization's web site, www.filvetrep.org.

3. Q: What is the Filipino World War II Veterans Congressional Gold Medal (CGM)?

A: The Congressional Gold Medal is an award bestowed by the U.S. Congress. The Congressional Gold Medal and the Presidential Medal of Freedom are the highest civilian awards in the United States. On November 30, 2016, the US Congress passed final legislation granting this award to Filipino Veterans of World War II.

Enacted as Public Law 114-265, the "Filipino Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2015" awards a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to Filipino, Filipino American, and American veterans, in recognition of their service to the United States during World War II.

These veterans now join a short list of other military units that overcame discrimination and other challenges to serve honorably in WWII and that have received the Congressional Gold Medal, including: the Tuskegee Airmen, the Nisei Japanese American veterans, the Borinqueneers, the Women's Air Service Pilots, and more. Past Congressional Gold Medals for these [recipients](#) can be seen on the web site for the U.S. Mint. at mint.gov: <https://www.usmint.gov/learn/coin-and-medal-programs/medals>. A complete listing of all CGM awardees is available at <http://history.house.gov/Institution/Gold-Medal/Gold-Medal-Recipients/>

On October 25, 2017, the Filipino Veterans of WWII Congressional Gold Medal was officially presented in a Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony in the U.S. Capitol. The video of the moving ceremony is available here: <http://bit.ly/2zWjsF3>

4. Q: Does the CGM include monetary or other benefits?

A: No. This award only grants recognition. **It does not include any form of monetary compensation or other benefits.** It is not related to veterans' benefits, compensation, or immigration in any way.



THE FILIPINO VETERANS RECOGNITION AND EDUCATION PROJECT

The only appropriation mandated by this law is for the minting of one (1) Congressional Gold Medal.

5. Q: Who is eligible to receive this award?

A: Filipino and American veterans who served:

- Honorably at any time from **July 26, 1941, to December 31, 1946;**
- In an active-duty status under the command of the U.S. Army Forces in the Far East (USAFPE); and
- Within the Philippine Commonwealth Army, the Philippine Scouts, the Philippine Constabulary, Recognized Guerrilla units, the New Philippine Scouts, the First Filipino Infantry Regiment, the Second Filipino Infantry Battalion (Separate), or the First Reconnaissance Battalion; or
- Commanding or serving in such a unit as a U.S. military officer or enlisted soldier.

6. Q: Will each eligible veteran receive a Congressional Gold Medal?

A: Only one Congressional Gold Medal will be minted and housed in the Smithsonian and/or a comparable national museum of repute. The Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project, the proponent of the Congressional Gold Medal, is continuing to raise funds to purchase bronze replicas of the Medal for eligible veterans. TO BE CLEAR, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ONLY PAID FOR THE DESIGN AND MINTING OF ONE (1) THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL. ANY OTHER COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL, FOR EXAMPLE, THE PURCHASE OF BRONZE REPLICAS, ARE BEYOND THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT THE FILIPINO VETERANS RECOGNITION AND EDUCATION PROJECT IS ENGAGED IN FUNDRAISING EFFORTS. AND IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT WE NEED YOUR INVALUABLE FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

7. Q: Wait, if the Congressional Gold Medal has already been awarded, is it too late to apply?

A: NO! FilVetREP will continue to add veterans and surviving family members to its veterans registry. Many regional events are being planned to present CGM replica medals to veterans and families- for the most up to date information, follow us on Facebook and Twitter and watch for announcements. Please remember that FilVetREP will only award medal replicas to veterans or their designated family members that are duly approved and entered into the FilVetREP Veterans Registry. For more information about the application process, visit our website: www.filvetrep.org/registry



THE FILIPINO VETERANS RECOGNITION AND EDUCATION PROJECT

8. Q: Are families of deceased veterans eligible to receive a bronze replica of the CGM?

A: Yes, the closest surviving relative of the eligible deceased veteran may receive a bronze replica of the CGM on behalf of the veteran. However, it is the deceased veteran, not the next-of-kin, who is considered the awardee of the CGM under Public Law 114-265.

9. Q: Are veterans expected to pay for a bronze replica of the CGM?

A: The current plan is for FilVetREP to purchase bronze replicas of the Medal for eligible veterans through public and private donations. Every attempt will be made by FilVetREP to ensure that eligible veterans will not have to pay for their bronze Medal replicas.

Please note that as in accordance with the law, bronze replicas of the Filipino Veterans of WWII Congressional Gold Medal are available for [sale](#) to the general public. Bronze replicas for other Congressional Gold Medals are also available as the law allows. Bronze replicas of the CGM are available for purchase via the U.S. Mint's online catalog at <https://catalog.usmint.gov/on/demandware.store/Sites-USM-Site/default/Search-Show?q=filipino>.

Medals presented to veterans and their families by FilVetREP are free of charge and include a special commemorative printing of Public Law 114-265. The initial run of 1,000 medals purchased by FilVetREP were obtained before they were available to the general public on October 25th, when approximately 400 were presented at the FilVetREP National Gala.

10. Q: How do I go about applying for this award?

A: Go to www.filvetrep.org/registry and fill out the CGM application form. It includes instructions, including where to send completed forms.

11. Q: What kind of information is required to qualify for the CGM?

A: The veteran's Military Service Number, Date of Birth, Branch of Service and Unit, Date and Location of Service and current address. DO NOT SEND ANY ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS. This and other relevant information will be used by FilVetREP's "eligibility committee" to determine whether the veteran qualifies under Public Law 114-265.



THE FILIPINO VETERANS RECOGNITION AND EDUCATION PROJECT

Resources to obtain more information and evidence of veterans' service is available on the FilVetREP Registry Application form (www.filvetrep.org/registry) and is included below:

United States

National Archives

- <https://www.archives.gov/veterans>

National Personnel Records Center

- <https://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/about-ompfs.html>
- <https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records>
- <https://www.archives.gov/research/military/ww2/navy-casualties/us-territories.html>

Access to Archival Database

- <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/index.jsp>
- <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/series-list.jsp?cat=GP24>
- <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/series-list.jsp?cat=WR26>

US Veteran Affairs Records

- <https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/facility.asp?ID=5380>

Philippines

Philippines Veterans Affairs Office

Please contact Camp Aguinaldo to their Military Records and obtain an AGO 23

Foreign Countries

Contact your Philippines Embassy

12. Q: What happens if I do not have any documentation for the veteran?

A: Should you not have any documentation, the application form includes resource links, such as the National Archives and the National Personnel Records Center. Please avail of these resources in looking for documentation about Filipino World War II veterans. This process in ordering and requesting records may take some time. **For more information and resources, click here for a toolkit:** <http://bit.ly/2ydrxbq>

13. Q: How will I know if my application is approved?

A: You will be contacted by the FilVetREP Regional Director in your area, who will certify your documentation and/or eligibility. All certified names, including next-of-kin (for deceased veterans) are compiled and maintained by FilVetREP in a National Veterans Registry which it owns.



THE FILIPINO VETERANS RECOGNITION AND EDUCATION PROJECT

14. Q: What about veterans residing in the Philippines?

A: The Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) in Manila is conducting its own outreach to ensure that eligible veterans are included in the National Registry.

15. Q: When will the awards be given out?

A: The Filipino Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal was presented on October 25, 2017 in Emancipation Hall in the U.S. Capitol. FilVetREP presented CGM bronze replicas to 20 veterans and over 400 family members in a National Gala Celebration later that day, based on veterans duly entered in the FilVetREP Registry. Additional Regional presentations have happened since and more are currently being planned.

16. Q: Will community and service organizations be involved in FilVetREP's work?

A: Yes. Local and national community and veterans service organizations, including the National Federation of Filipino American Associations, Filipino American National History Society, and other organized groups will take part in this Project.

17. Q. How can the Filipino American community in the U.S. and Philippines help in making this project a success?

A. The community may publicize the Project, hold events to raise awareness, contribute financially, partake in public education efforts, and urge their elected U.S. Senators and U.S. Representatives in Congress, local officials and community leaders to support our Project.

Moreover, the Filipino American community is encouraged to share this information with other ethnicities and communities and remind people that the story of these veterans is, at its core, an AMERICAN story. The military service these soldiers provided, the role they played in preserving our democracy, and their perseverance in the face of adversity, speak to American core values.

18. Q: Where can we go to find out or contact for more information on this Project?

A. You can log in to the Project website at www.filvetrep.org, find us on Facebook or Twitter, and/or email us at FilVetsRecognition@gmail.com.