

MIKE THOMPSON

5TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

CHAIRMAN

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
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WASHINGTON, DC 20515

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WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-3311  
WEB: <http://mikethompson.house.gov>

August 25, 2021

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro  
Secretary of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D652  
Washington, DC 20350

Dear Secretary Del Toro,

I understand that names for Navy ships have traditionally been chosen and announced by the Secretary of the Navy, under the direction of the President and in accordance with rules prescribed by Congress. You in your role as Navy Secretary can rely on many sources to help you reach your decision.

I respectfully request you give consideration to naming the first US Navy Warship after Fireman Second Class Telesforo De La Cruz Trinidad. Telesforo De La Cruz Trinidad holds the distinction of being the first and only Filipino American in the U.S. Navy to be awarded the Medal of Honor. Per War Department, General Orders Number 142, dated April 1, 1915, Fireman Second Class Trinidad received the highest military medal for extraordinary heroism in the line of his profession at the time of the boiler explosion on board the U.S.S. SAN DIEGO, January 21, 1915. Trinidad brought two crewmembers to safety despite being severely injured, thus embodying the naval ethos that prioritizes "ship and shipmate before self."

Filipino Americans have faithfully served our nation with honor over a century. In 1901, President William McKinley allowed Filipinos to serve in US Navy gunboats for "brown water" operations and as Philippine Scouts in the US Army to fight nationalist insurrectionists. During World War II, up to 400,000 Filipinos served in the U.S. military, and since then, tens of thousands of Americans of Filipino descent have and are faithfully serving in our Armed Forces.

The 2010 Census noted there are 3.4 million Filipino Americans nationwide, and Data USA estimates there are ~32,000 Tagalog (Filipino) speakers in California's 5th Congressional District. Filipino Americans continue to greatly and positively contribute to the American way of life.

If approved, Fireman Second Class Trinidad will be the first Medal of Honor recipient of Filipino descent to have a combatant ship named after him. This distinguished honor will recognize the valor and sacrifice of Trinidad and contributions of Filipino Americans to our nation. This will also exhibit the Navy's commitment to overall diversity and inclusivity stated as in *Task Force One Navy: Our Navy Team - Navigating A Course To True North, Final Report* dated February 3, 2021.

Thank you so much for your consideration and I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

MIKE THOMPSON  
Member of Congress

COMMITTEES:

ARMED SERVICES

SUBCOMMITTEES:

CHAIRMAN

SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION FORCES  
READINESS

EDUCATION AND LABOR

SUBCOMMITTEES:

HIGHER EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE INVESTMENT  
HEALTH, EMPLOYMENT, LABOR, AND PENSIONS



Joe Courtney

Congress of the United States

2nd District, Connecticut

April 20, 2021

WASHINGTON OFFICE  
2149 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
P. 202 226 2076  
F. 202 225-4977

DISTRICT OFFICES:

55 MAIN STREET, SUITE 240  
NORWICH, CT 06360  
P. 860 886-0139  
F. 860 886 2974

77 HAZARD AVENUE, UNIT J  
EUREKA, CT 06032  
P. 860 741-6011  
F. 860 741 6036

Thomas W. Harker  
Secretary of the Navy (Acting)  
1000 Navy Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20350

Dear Secretary Harker,

I write today to draw your attention to a letter I received from a constituent urging the naming of a future U.S. Navy warship after a Sailor of Filipino decent, Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad in honor of his service as a Medal of Honor recipient.

Born on Nov. 25, 1890, in Aklan Province, Panay, Philippine Islands, Trinidad enlisted in the Navy after the United States took possession of the archipelago in the wake of the Spanish-American War, and was assigned to USS San Diego (Armored Cruiser No. 6).


On Jan. 21, 1915, while steaming in the Gulf of California as part of the naval patrol established to protect U.S. interests and citizens in Mexico, an obstructed tube of one of the ship's boilers gave way, creating an eventual chain reaction of other boilers. The first explosion, in the No. 2 boiler, forced Trinidad from the fireroom, but he realized that his crewmate, Fireman 2nd Class R. W. Daly, was still inside.

Risking his own life, Trinidad re-entered the smoke-filled fireroom and carried him out to safety. However, as Trinidad carried Daly through the No. 4 fireroom, an explosion of the No. 3 boiler hit Trinidad, burning him in the face. After seeing Daly to safety and in spite of his own injury, Trinidad then assisted in rescuing another injured crewman from the No. 3 fireroom.

Names for Navy ships traditionally have been chosen and announced by the Secretary of the Navy, under the direction of the President and in accordance with rules prescribed by Congress. To date, there are three active Navy ships named for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders: USS Chung-Hoon (DDG 93), USNS Pililaau (T-AKR 304), and USS Daniel Inouye (DDG 118). Naming a future Navy warship after this hero, Telesforo Trinidad sends a powerful and timely message about our nation and our Navy's diversity.

I have attached the materials provided to me about this effort, and I appreciate your review and consideration. Thank you, as always, for your continued service and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

  
JOE COURTNEY  
Member of Congress

JONI K. ERNST  
IOWA

VICE CHAIRMAN,  
SENATE REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE

WASHINGTON, DC OFFICE  
730 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510  
PHONE: 202-224-3254  
FAX: 202-224-9369

WWW.ERNST.SENATE.GOV

## United States Senate

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ARMED SERVICES  
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION  
AND FORESTRY  
ENVIRONMENT  
AND PUBLIC WORKS  
SMALL BUSINESS  
AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

September 28, 2021

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro  
Secretary of Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D542  
Washington, D.C. 20350

Dear Secretary Del Toro;


On behalf of my Iowan Filipino American constituents, I urge you to support the naming of a Navy Surface Combatant after a Filipino sailor who received the Medal of Honor in 1915 – Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad.

Fireman Second Class Trinidad earned the Medal of Honor for his extraordinary heroism in the line of duty during boiler explosions onboard the USS San Diego (ACR-6) while the ship was underway in the Gulf of California on January 21, 1915. He brought two crewmembers to safety in spite of his own physical injuries from the explosion, and was awarded the Medal of Honor in accordance with General Order Number 142 signed by the Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels on April 1, 1915. The Medal of Honor, which was awarded during peacetime, highlights the importance of service and sacrifice for shipmates and country not only during a time of war but during day-to-day operations. After 106 years, Trinidad still holds the distinction of being the first and only Filipino in the U.S. Navy to receive a Medal of Honor.

The naming of a ship after Trinidad is a resolute symbol of Navy leadership, and will timely mark the 75th anniversary of the U.S. establishing diplomatic relations with the Republic of the Philippines and the 70th anniversary of the U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty. Above all, it will honor the generations of Filipinos who have served faithfully and loyally in the U.S. Navy for 120 years since President William McKinley signed an Executive Order to establish the Insular Force in 1901. The USS Telesforo Trinidad will be the first ship to be named after an American national of Filipino descent and will serve as a testament to the long-standing military and political alliance that exists between the Philippines and the United States since 1898.

I urge you to support this historic initiative that will validate the seminal contributions of Filipino Americans in the U.S. Armed Forces and U.S. history. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Joni K. Ernst  
United States Senator

DES MOINES OFFICE  
733 FEDERAL BUILDING  
210 WALNUT STREET  
DES MOINES, IA 50309  
PHONE: 515-284-4574  
FAX: 515-284-4937

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U.S. SENATOR DIANNE FEINSTEIN  
CALIFORNIA



COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY  
- CHAIR, HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE LAW  
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COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
- CHAIR, ENERGY AND WATER SUBCOMMITTEE  
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

## United States Senate

Sept. 21, 2021

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro  
Secretary of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D542  
Washington, D.C. 20350

Dear Secretary Toro:

I am writing to inform you of the many indications of support that have been brought to my attention asking the Navy to consider naming a U.S. Navy ship after Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad, a Filipino Sailor who received the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1915.

Trinidad earned the Medal of Honor for his extraordinary bravery and heroism onboard the USS San Diego while the ship was underway in the Gulf of California on January 21, 1915. Following multiple explosions aboard the cruiser that day, Trinidad rescued two of his fellow crewmembers without consideration for his own safety and despite suffering his own acute injuries.

Tens of thousands of Filipinos have served in the U.S. military. The Bataan Legacy Historical Society, along with other veterans' organizations, believe that the Navy has an opportunity to establish a lasting symbol of diversity and inclusion by recognizing both the brave act of one sailor and a rich legacy of service and sacrifice for the United States.

I appreciate your consideration of the requests from many California and national organizations for a ship naming after Telesforo Trinidad.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dianne Feinstein".

Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510 1104

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY &  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY  
COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS &  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

May 17, 2021

The Honorable Thomas W. Harker  
Acting Secretary  
Department of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20350

*RE: Naming USS TELESFORO TRINIDAD*

Dear Acting Secretary Harker,

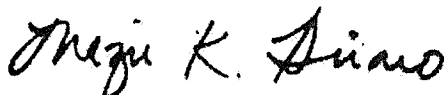
I write to request a warship be named the *USS TELESFORO TRINIDAD*, in honor of the contributions of Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad, the only Filipino-American Sailor awarded the Medal of Honor. Filipinos have a long history of service with the U.S. Navy, going back to 1901. Naming a U.S. Navy warship after Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad would be a first for Filipino-Americans and would join the only other vessel named after an Asian American-Pacific Islander (AAPI) Sailor, Rear Admiral Gordon Pai'ea Chung Hoon.

The Philippines has been one of the strongest allies of the United States in the Pacific. Over the past century, our countries have maintained economic, cultural, and military ties. In 1901, President McKinley allowed the Navy to enlist 500 Filipinos as part of the Insular Force. During World War I and II, thousands of Filipinos served with distinction in the U.S. Navy. After the Philippines gained its independence in 1946, over 35,000 Filipinos were recruited into the U.S. Navy from 1952 to 1992 under an agreement with the Republic of the Philippines. During that same time period, Americans of Filipino descent enlisted by the thousands and continue to serve to this day.

Trinidad enlisted in the U.S. Navy to serve in the Insular Force after the United States took possession of the Philippines after the Spanish-American War. He was awarded the Medal of Honor on January 21, 1915, for his extraordinary heroism in rescuing two shipmates after a boiler explosion on board the *USS San Diego*. Trinidad survived the ordeal and continued serving during WWI and WWII until his retirement in 1945. He is the only Filipino in the U.S. Navy to be awarded the Medal of Honor and naming a naval warship in his honor would recognize not only his valor, but the tens of thousands of Filipinos who have served our great nation for the past 120 years.

I urge you to give this request the fullest possible consideration as you move forward with the ship naming process. I look forward to hearing from you and to a future Naval Warship honoring Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad. My point of contact for this matter is Rebecca Gansca, 202- 819-0127, [Rebecca\\_Gansca@hirono.senate.gov](mailto:Rebecca_Gansca@hirono.senate.gov).

Sincerely,



Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 3, 2022

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro  
Secretary of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D542  
Washington, DC 20350

Dear Secretary Del Toro,

On behalf of our Filipino-American constituents in the state of Michigan, we write in support of the Navy naming a future surface combatant after a decorated sailor — Fireman Second Class Telesforo de la Cruz Trinidad.

On January 21, 1915, Fireman Trinidad demonstrated extraordinary heroism when he was driven from a fireroom after a boiler exploded onboard the USS San Diego. Returning to the room, he picked up a fellow fireman who was injured by the blast and brought him out. When a second explosion shook the ship, Trinidad — despite burns on his face — disregarded his own safety to rescue another injured sailor from the room.

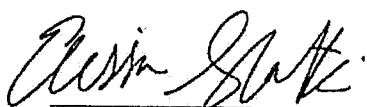
Trinidad's valor was commemorated in his citation for the Medal of Honor, which was awarded to him in accordance with General Order Number 142 signed by the Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels on April 1, 1915. Going above and beyond the call of duty, his actions highlight the importance of service and sacrifice for shipmates and country not only during a time of war but during day-to-day operations. Today, 106 years after his heroic acts, Trinidad remains the first and only Filipino in the U.S. Navy to receive the Medal of Honor.

His descendants have fanned out across the country, including Michigan, launching a robust public awareness campaign to continue the Navy's proud tradition of naming a ship after a Medal of Honor recipient. As our country honors the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations with the Republic of the Philippines and the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty, we believe such a naming would represent a strong message of support to the tens of thousands of Filipinos who have served faithfully and loyally in the U.S. Navy for over a century.

And as our communities come together every October to celebrate Filipino American History Month, we can't think of a better testament to the long-standing alliance that has existed between the Philippines and the United States since 1898.

We urge you to support this historic initiative that will strengthen the close ties of friendship and respect that continue to bind the American and Filipino people together, while validating the seminal contributions of Filipino Americans in the U.S. military and throughout U.S. history. Thank you so much.

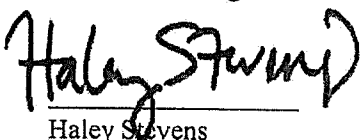
Sincerely,



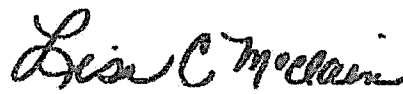
Elissa Slotkin  
Member of Congress



Peter Meijer  
Member of Congress



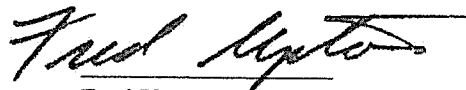
Haley Stevens  
Member of Congress



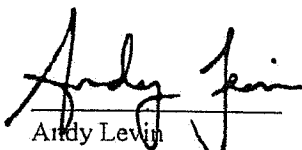
Lisa McClain  
Member of Congress



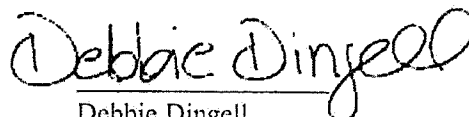
Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



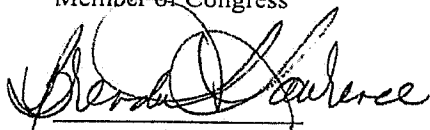
Fred Upton  
Member of Congress



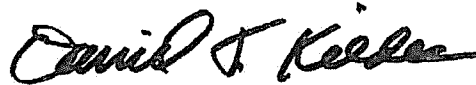
Andy Levin  
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



Brenda Lawrence  
Member of Congress



Daniel T. Kildee  
Member of Congress



**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 26, 2021

The Honorable Thomas W. Harker  
Acting Secretary of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D542  
Washington, D.C. 20350

Dear Acting Secretary Harker,

As Members of Congress, we strongly support naming a Navy Surface Combatant after a Filipino sailor who received the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1915 – Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad.

Trinidad earned the Medal of Honor for his extraordinary heroism in the line of duty during boiler explosions onboard the USS San Diego (ACR-6) while the ship was underway in the Gulf of California on January 21, 1915. Trinidad brought two crewmembers to safety in spite of his own physical injuries from the explosion. He was awarded the Medal of Honor in accordance with General Order Number 142 signed by the Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels on April 1, 1915. The Medal of Honor, which was awarded during peacetime, highlights the importance of service and sacrifice for shipmates and country not only during a time of war but during day-to-day operations. After 106 years, Trinidad still holds the distinction of being the only Asian American and only Filipino American in the U.S. Navy to receive a Medal of Honor.

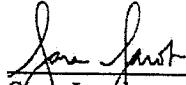
The naming of a ship after Trinidad is a resolute symbol of Navy leadership and commitment to diversity, equality, and inclusion during this time of national racial tensions and unwarranted violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. It also marks the 75th anniversary of the U.S. establishing diplomatic relations with the Republic of the Philippines and the 70th anniversary of the U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty.

Equally important, it will honor the tens of thousands of Filipinos who have served faithfully and loyally in the U.S. Navy since 1901. The USS Telesforo Trinidad will be the first ship to be named after an American national of Filipino descent and will serve as a testament to the long-standing military and political alliance that exists between the Philippines and the United States since 1898.

We look forward to your response and thank you for your service.

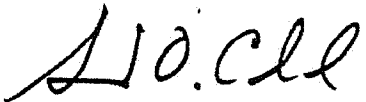
Sincerely,

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515



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Sara Jacobs  
Member of Congress



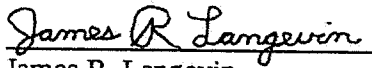
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Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress



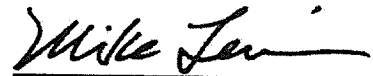
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Ed Case  
Member of Congress



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James R. Langevin  
Member of Congress



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MIKE LEVIN  
Member of Congress




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Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress



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Scott H. Peters  
Member of Congress



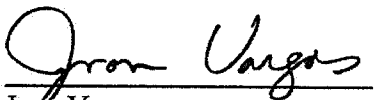
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Bobby L. Rush  
Member of Congress



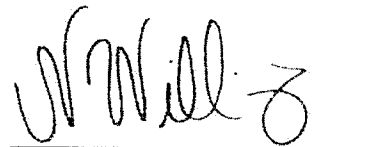
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Thomas R. Suozzi  
Member of Congress



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Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress



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Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
WASHINGTON DC 20350-1000

September 16, 2021

ADM Thomas B. Fargo, USN (Ret)  
900 Fort St Mall, Ste 1410  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Admiral Fargo:

Thank you for your recent letter requesting that a future ship be named after Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad.

Considering the extraordinary heroism and proud legacy of service displayed by Trinidad, a Medal of Honor recipient, paired with the representation befitting the sacrifices of our U.S. Service Members of Filipino descent, this request is especially fitting. Honoring his valiant efforts to save fellow Sailors and Americans of Filipino descent, who have long supported our Navy and Nation, with a new ship name is a worthy recommendation. Thank you for bringing Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad's name to my attention. I can assure you this name will be given every consideration when names are chosen for future ships.

If you need further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Carlos Del Toro



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
WASHINGTON DC 20350-1000

May 7, 2021

The Honorable Ron Nirenberg  
Mayor of San Antonio  
San Antonio, TX 78283

Dear Mayor Nirenberg:

Thank you for your recent letter requesting that a future U.S. Navy Surface Combatant Ship be named after Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad.

Considering the extraordinary heroism and proud legacy of service displayed by Fireman Second Class Trinidad, a Medal of Honor recipient, paired with the representation befitting the sacrifices of our U.S. Service Members of Filipino descent, this request is especially fitting. Honoring Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad and Americans of Filipino descent, who have long supported our Navy and nation, with a new ship name is a worthy recommendation. Thank you for bringing Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad's name to my attention. I can assure you this name will be given every consideration when names are chosen for future ships.

If you need further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Harker", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Thomas W. Harker  
Acting

OFFICE OF THE NAVY  
2021 MAY 17 PM 3:26



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
WASHINGTON DC 20350-1000

July 1, 2021

The Honorable Jerry McNerney  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative McNerney:

Thank you for your recent letter requesting that a future ship be named after Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad.

Considering the extraordinary heroism and proud legacy of service displayed by this Medal of Honor recipient, paired with the representation befitting the sacrifices of our U.S. Service Members of Filipino descent, this request is especially fitting. Honoring his valiant efforts to save fellow Sailors and Americans of Filipino descent, who have long supported our Navy and Nation, with a new ship name is a worthy recommendation. Thank you for bringing Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad's name to my attention. I can assure you this name will be given every consideration when names are chosen for future ships.

If you need further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Harker", is positioned above the typed name.

Thomas W. Harker  
Acting



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Rep. Jennifer Wexton

August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021

The Honorable Thomas W. Harker  
Acting Secretary  
Department of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20350

Déar Acting Secretary Harker,

On behalf of the Members of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), which represents millions of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islander Americans across the country, I write to request a Navy Surface Combatant be named after Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad, the first and only Filipino American sailor who has been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Naming a U.S. Navy ship after Telesforo Trinidad will recognize the long-standing contributions of Filipino Americans to the security and freedom of our nation. At a time when Asian Americans are facing an unprecedented rise in xenophobia and violence, this renaming will send a powerful message to the community about our nation's steadfast commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Fireman Second Class Trinidad is deserving of national recognition for his extraordinary heroism in the line of duty while serving aboard the USS San Diego. On January 21, 1915, while on naval patrol in the Gulf of California, an obstructed tube of one of the ship's boilers gave way, creating a chain reaction of explosions that killed nine men and injured many more. Even though he was severely burned by the explosions, Trinidad prioritized his crewmates' safety. Risking his own life, Trinidad rushed back into smoke-filled rooms and bravely rescued two crewmembers from the fire. For his valor that day, Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels signed General Order Number 142 on April 1, 1915, which awarded Trinidad the Medal of Honor, the highest distinction bestowed by the U.S. government to military service members. After this tragedy, he continued serving during WWI and WWII until his retirement in 1945.

Currently, no U.S. Navy ships are named after a sailor of Filipino descent, even though thousands of Filipinos have faithfully served in the U.S. Navy for the past 120 years, beginning in 1901. Furthermore, more than 250,000 Filipino soldiers responded to President Roosevelt's call-to-arms in the Philippines and elsewhere and fought for the U.S. during World War II. The USS Telesforo Trinidad would be the first ship to be



## CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

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RON NIRENBERG  
MAYOR

August 31, 2021

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro  
Secretary of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D652  
Washington, DC 20350

RE: Petition to Name a U.S. Navy Surface Combatant ship after Medal of Honor recipient, Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad (U.S. Navy)

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Let me first congratulate you on this momentous occasion as the 78<sup>th</sup> Secretary of the Navy!

On behalf of the Veterans, active-duty personnel, and Americans of Filipino descent who proudly call San Antonio, "Military City USA," home, I respectfully seek your approval in naming a U.S. Navy Surface Combatant ship after Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad.

To support the efforts, a diverse, U.S.- registered 501c3 non-profit organization named the U.S. Ship Telesforo Trinidad Campaign (USSTTC) has been established. This national grass roots advocacy group is comprised of serving and retired members of the U.S. military, community leaders, members of academia, corporate executives, elected officials, sponsors, and Veterans' families committed to naming a U.S. Navy Surface Combatant ship after Fireman Second Class Trinidad.

Firemen Second Class Trinidad was an American national of Filipino descent who received the Medal of Honor on April 1, 1915 for extraordinary heroism in the line of duty after a series of ship explosions while serving aboard the USS San Diego in the Gulf of California on January 21, 1915. He also suffered physical injuries while saving his shipmates.

No U.S. Navy ship has been named after a member of the U.S. Armed Forces of Filipino descent, even though tens of thousands of Filipinos have served faithfully in the U.S. Navy since the Civil War. President William McKinley signed an Executive Order allowing the Navy to enlist 500 Filipinos as part of the Insular Force in 1901. Approximately 6,000 Filipinos enlisted in the U.S. Navy during WWI and many more joined during the interwar period leading up to WWII. After the Philippines obtained its independence from the United States in 1946, over 35,000 Filipinos were recruited into the U.S. Navy from 1952 to 1992 under a provision of the Republic of the Philippines United States Military Bases Agreement. In addition, thousands of Americans of

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro  
August 31, 2021  
Page 2

Filipino descent enlisted during this same 40-year period and continue to do so today. Fireman Second Class Trinidad remains the first and only American of Asian/Pacific Islander descent and first American national of Filipino descent in the U.S. Navy to receive a Medal of Honor, per General Order #142 signed by the Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels.

To support our efforts, the USSTTC has garnered grass roots support to "mobilize the community" across the national spectrum. To date, the effort has received endorsements from the Organization of the Filipinos in Texas, Philippine American Chamber of Commerce - Central Texas, Philippine Nursing Association of San Antonio, Texas, Philippine American Chamber of Commerce of Texas, Filipino American Veterans Recognition and Education Project, Bataan Legacy Historical Society, Coalition of the Filipino American Chambers of Commerce, and the National Federation of Filipino American Associations.

Equally important, the American GI Forum and Veterans of Foreign Wars passed and adopted USSTTC Resolution this year. American Legion, Fleet Reserve Association and United States Submarine Veterans Inc., are in the process of approving resolutions in support of this effort by August 31, 2021.

This request promotes the legacy of the Asian Pacific American hero Telesforo Trinidad for the October national celebration of the Filipino American History Month to memorialize his heroic contributions to the U.S. Navy and our grateful Nation.

Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad's distinguished service record clearly qualifies him for this tribute. Achieving this watershed event honors Fireman Second Class Trinidad and thousands of Filipinos who have served faithfully in the U.S. Navy. Above all, it shows our Nation's unflinching commitment towards equity, diversity, inclusion, and solemn respect to honor our heroes.

On behalf of the San Antonio community, I wholeheartedly support this request and look forward to your favorable response.

Sincerely,



Ron Nirenberg  
MAYOR





VALLEJO

---

August 3, 2021

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro  
Secretary of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D542  
Washington, DC 20350

**RE: Request to Name a Ship in Honor of Medal of Honor Recipient, Telesforo Trinidad**

Dear Secretary Del Toro,

The City of Vallejo celebrates its diversity and honors the contributions of its Filipino residents and Americans of Filipino descent who have served faithfully in the U.S. Armed Forces since 1901.

As Mayor of the City of Vallejo, California I write to you to respectfully request that you name a U.S. Navy warship, an Arleigh Burke-class Aegis Guided Missile Destroyer (DDG) or Constellation class Guided Missile Frigate (FFG), in honor of Fireman Petty Officer Second Class Telesforo Trinidad, a Medal of Honor recipient, to commemorate his valor, loyalty, selfless sacrifice and courageous service to the United States of America in accordance with U.S. Navy authority under Title 10 of the United States Code, Section 8662.

Trinidad received the Medal of Honor for extraordinary heroism in the line of duty during boiler explosions onboard the USS San Diego (ACR-6) while the ship was underway in the Gulf of California on January 21, 1915. Trinidad brought two crewmembers to safety despite being severely injured, thus embodying the naval professional ethic of "ship and shipmate before self." After 106 years, Trinidad still holds the distinction of being the first and only Asian American (and first and only Filipino) in the U.S. Navy to receive a Medal of Honor, which was awarded on April 1, 1915.

The United States Navy honors our national heroes by naming U.S. Navy ships with names that include Congressional Medal of Honor recipients and the Secretary of the Navy is the authority responsible for the naming of U.S. Navy Ships. No U.S. Navy ship has been named after a Filipino despite over 120 years of faithful and loyal service by thousands of Filipinos. During these precarious times of violence against many Asian Americans, the naming of a ship after Trinidad will recognize the long-standing

Telesforo Trinidad,

contributions of Filipino Americans to the security and freedom of our Nation, the strong alliance existing between the U.S. and the Philippines since 1898, and the U.S. Navy's commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion.

Please use your authority as Secretary of the Navy to name a warship after this distinguished veteran.

Sincerely,



Robert McConnell  
Mayor, City of Vallejo

CC: Nestor Aliga  
City Manager's Office



## PROCLAMATION SUPPORTING THE USS TELESFORO TRINIDAD CAMPAIGN

**WHEREAS**, the City of Vallejo is one of the most diverse cities in the United States, and according to the Census.gov July 2019 estimates, 23.8% of Vallejo's population is "Asian alone," and other demographic sources also estimate that Filipinos comprise the vast majority of the Asian figure; and

**WHEREAS**, in celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month and in keeping with this year's theme of "Advancing Leaders through Purpose-Driven Service," the USS Telesforo Trinidad Campaign (USSTC) honors thousands of Filipinos and Americans of Filipino descent who have served faithfully in the U.S. Armed Forces since 1901, and the USSTC is working on having the first U.S. Navy ship ever to be named after Telesforo Trinidad, a Filipino sailor who received the Medal of Honor 106 years ago; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States Navy honors our national heroes by naming U.S. Navy ships with names that include Congressional Medal of Honor recipients and that the Secretary of the Navy is the authority responsible for the naming of U.S. Navy Ships; and

**WHEREAS**, Trinidad received the Medal of Honor for extraordinary heroism in the line of duty during boiler explosions onboard the USS San Diego (ACR-6) while the ship was underway in the Gulf of California on January 21, 1915, and Trinidad brought two crewmembers to safety despite being severely injured, thus embodying the naval professional ethic of "ship and shipmate before self," and after 106 years, Trinidad still holds the distinction of being the first and only Asian American (and first and only Filipino) in the U.S. Navy to receive a Medal of Honor which was awarded on April 1, 1915; and

**WHEREAS**, No U.S. Navy ship has been named after a Filipino despite over 120 years of faithful and loyal service by thousands of Filipinos; and during these precarious times of violence against many Asian Americans, the naming of a ship after Trinidad will recognize the long-standing contributions of Filipino Americans to the security and freedom of our Nation, the strong alliance existing between the U.S. and the Philippines since 1898, and the U.S. Navy's commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that I, Robert McConnell, Mayor of the City of Vallejo, and the City Council do hereby request the Secretary of the Navy to name a U.S. Navy warship - an Arleigh Burke-class Aegis Guided Missile Destroyer (DDG) or Constellation class Guided Missile Frigate (FFG) - in honor of Fireman Petty Officer Second Class Telesforo Trinidad, a Medal of Honor recipient, for his valor, loyalty, selfless sacrifice and courageous service to the United States of America in accordance with U.S. Navy authority under Title 10 of the United States Code, Section 8662.

Dated: June 22, 2021

  
ROBERT H. MCCONNELL, MAYOR



Vice Mayor Rozzana Verder-Aliga, EdD, District 1  
Council Member Cristina Amola, District 6  
Council Member Hakeem Brown, At-Large  
Council Member Pippin Dew, At-Large  
Council Member Mina Diaz, District 3  
Council Member Katy Miessner, At-Large



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

TODD GLORIA

MAYOR

May 21, 2021

The Honorable Thomas W. Harker  
Acting Secretary of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D652  
Washington, DC 20350

**Re: Petition to Name a U.S. Navy Surface Combatant after Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad, Medal of Honor Recipient, 1915**

Dear Acting Secretary Harker:

I write to you in support of naming a U.S. Navy Warship after enlisted sailor and Filipino American hero, Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad. The USS Telesforo Trinidad Campaign (USSTTC), a non-profit corporation has led a widespread petition for the naming of a U.S. Navy Warship after Fireman Second Class Trinidad. The USSTTC's efforts, in collaboration with San Diego community leaders, corporate executives, and veterans and their families, have bettered our City's awareness on the service history Filipino Americans.

In conjunction with Filipino Americans' long-term historical contributions to ensuring our national and local safety, Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad is the first and only Filipino American in the U.S. Navy awarded the Medal of Honor. While in the line of duty, Fireman Second Class Trinidad demonstrated extraordinary heroism during boiler explosions onboard the USS San Diego (ACR-6) while the ship was underway in the Gulf of California on January 21, 1915. Fireman Second Class Trinidad bravely rescued two crewmembers despite his own physical injuries from the explosion. Due to his heroic actions Navy Secretary Josephus Daniels awarded Fireman Second Class Trinidad the Medal of Honor on April 1, 1915.

The City of San Diego is a proud Navy town, being home to 60% of the ships in the fleet of the U.S. Navy. As the City's first Mayor of Filipino descent, we want to ensure the heroic actions of this Filipino American are recognized. Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad embodied the best of the United States Navy and the City of San Diego. I advocate that his heroism and memory be recognized by naming a ship in his honor.

Sincerely,

  
TODD GLORIA  
Mayor



## Yes to a Filipino Named US Naval Warship

July 10, 2021

House/Senate Armed Services Committee  
of Sea power and Force Projections Subcommittees  
Washington D.C, USA

**Subject:** LETTER OF SUPPORT to US Ship Telesforo Trinidad Campaign (USSTTC)

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the Coalition of Filipino American Chambers of Commerce (COFACC), a 501c6 national organization consisting of twenty-four (24) Filipino American Chambers of Commerce in the USA, plants a flag in support of a US Navy warship being named after a US Sailor of Filipino descent. COFACC has, in its roster, a total of 6,000+ Chamber members who are united with a common belief in Vision, Mission, and Core Values and supports the US Ship Telesforo Trinidad Campaign (USSTTC) 501c3 non-profit organization.

Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad is the only United States sailor of Filipino descent to ever be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Petty Officer Trinidad was bestowed the prestigious Medal of Honor for his heroics in saving the lives of his two fellow crew members despite suffering injuries during boiler explosions aboard the USS San Diego (ACR-6) which occurred in January 1915. Trinidad enlisted in 1910 and also served during both world wars. His grandson Rene Trinidad said that he stowed away on a lifeboat from his island of Panay to the main island just to enlist.

There were only three ships named after Asian American Pacific Islanders so far in the history of the United States Navy. A US battleship being named after our very own Telesforo Trinidad would be a great honor and legacy to leave behind the future generation of Filipino heroes. Telesforo Trinidad would not only be the first for a Filipino American, but would also honor thousands of Filipinos who have served in the United States Navy. It would be priceless to see this campaign and mission become a reality. Thank you for giving us this opportunity to support Telesforo Trinidad.

Sincerely,

*Neil Estrada*  
Neil Estrada  
COFACC VP Public Relations

*Gerry Palon*  
Gerry Palon  
COFACC President

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF  
THE AMERICAN LEGION  
October 6-7, 2021  
Indianapolis, Indiana**

**Resolution No. 9: USS Telesforo Trinidad  
Origin: Resolution No. 9 (CA) 2021 National Convention  
Submitted by: Internal Affairs Commission**

WHEREAS, The American Legion is an organization of war veterans who have dedicated themselves to the service of their community, state and nation; and

WHEREAS, It is a privilege and duty to honor comrades, and those who sacrificed, in order that we may all enjoy, develop and perpetuate in peace, the fruits of victory which had been won by war; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion has always supported recognizing the service and sacrifice of heroes and Medal of Honor recipients; and

WHEREAS, The United States Navy names U.S. Navy ships that include Medal of Honor recipients and that the secretary of the Navy is the authority responsible for the naming of U.S. Navy Ships; and

WHEREAS, Fireman Second Class Petty Officer Telesforo de la Cruz Trinidad was awarded the United States Medal of Honor for his extraordinary heroism above and beyond the call of duty in saving the lives of his fellow shipmates aboard USS San Diego (ACR-6) in the Gulf of California on January 21, 1915; and

WHEREAS, Second Class Petty Officer Trinidad is the only U.S. Navy sailor of Asian American descent and the first Filipino American to receive the United States Medal of Honor for heroism from service in the United States Navy; and

WHEREAS, To date, there is no ship in the U.S. Navy that is named after a member of the U.S. Armed Forces of Filipino American descent; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on October 6-7, 2021, That The American Legion honor the life, actions, sacrifice and memory of a brave man, Fireman Second Class Telesforo de la Cruz Trinidad, who gallantly served the United States in both World War I and World War II; and, be it finally**

**RESOLVED, That the American Legion request that the secretary of the Navy name the next guided missile destroyer the USS Telesforo Trinidad in honor of this World War I and World War II Medal of Honor recipient.**

FRITZ MIHELICIC

Commander-in-Chief



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS  
OF THE UNITED STATES

October 1, 2021

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro  
Secretary of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D542  
Washington, D.C. 20350

Dear Secretary Del Toro:

On behalf of the men and women of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and its Auxiliary, I respectfully urge you, by the authority granted to your office, to name a newly commissioned surface combatant ship the USS Telesforo Trinidad. The VFW strongly believes this will honor Fireman Second Class Telesforo de la Cruz Trinidad's extraordinary heroism while serving in the United States Navy.

The United States Navy honors our nation by naming ships after our national heroes to manifest high regard for our rich history and valued traditions. The high honor of naming United States Navy ships is the prerogative of the Secretary of the Navy, and there is no ship in the United States Naval fleet with a name that recognizes the Asian Pacific Islanders legacy and their unique alliance forged in war and peace. Fireman Second Class Telesforo de la Cruz Trinidad is the first and thus far only United States sailor of Asian descent to receive the Medal of Honor.

I urge you to support the naming of the USS Telesforo Trinidad, which would validate the exemplary service of Mr. Telesforo and serve as a testament to the generations of Filipinos who have served faithfully and loyally in the United States Navy for over 100 years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fritz Mihelcic', written over a horizontal line.

Matthew M. Mihelcic  
Commander-in-Chief  
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.

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American GI Forum of the United States  
A Veterans Family Organization Since 1948 Chartered by Congress 1998

635 W. Corona Ave, Suite 114 • Pueblo, CO 81004

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro  
Secretary of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D652  
Washington, DC 20350

February 15, 2022

**Re: Naming of US Navy Warship after Sailor Telesforo Trinidad, Medal of Honor Recipient, 1915**

Dear Secretary Del Toro,

On behalf of the American GI Forum (AGIF), a Congressionally chartered Hispanic veterans and civil rights organization, we respectfully seek your support to name the first US Navy Warship after a sailor of Filipino descent, Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad. AGIF currently operates chapters throughout the United States, with a focus on veteran's issues, education, and civil rights and passed Resolution Number 2021-2 on Apr 24, 2021, in support of this endeavor.

Trinidad holds the distinction of being the first and only Asian American (and first Filipino) in the U.S. Navy to receive a Medal of Honor, in accordance with General Order Number 142 signed by Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels on April 1, 1915.

We are working in concert with the USS Telesforo Trinidad Campaign (USSTTC), the organization spearheading this campaign. USSTTC is a U.S. registered non-profit (501c3) and a national grassroots advocacy group comprised of serving and retired members of the U.S. Armed Forces, community leaders, academics, corporate executives, civic leaders and veterans' families across the United States. The VFW of the U.S. has recently approved a resolution supporting this initiative.

The U.S. and the Philippines have maintained uninterrupted economic, cultural and military ties since 1901, when President William McKinley signed an Executive order allowing the recruitment of 500 Filipinos in the US Navy as part of the Insular Force. Tens of thousands of Filipinos enlisted in the U.S. Navy between WWI and WWII. After the Philippines obtained its independence from the United States in 1946, over 35,000 Filipinos were recruited into the U.S. Navy from 1952 to 1992 under a provision of the Republic of the Philippines-United States Military Bases Agreement. In addition, thousands of Americans of Filipino descent enlisted during this same 40-year period and continue to do so until today.

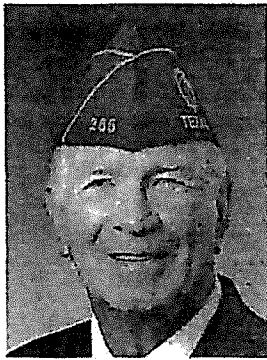
The naming of a United States Navy ship after Trinidad will recognize the shared history and values of two allies, forged in war and peace. Moreover, it will resonate strongly not only to several generations of Filipino Americans who have served in the U.S. Navy since 1901 but also to more than four million Filipino Americans who are looking for validation of the seminal contributions of Filipinos to U.S. history.

We look forward to your favorable response.

Very respectfully,

**Luis Vazquez-Contes**  
National Commander





## America's true superheroes

On March 25, our nation will observe Medal of Honor Day. The day will also mark the 159th anniversary of the first presentation of the United States' highest military award for valor, to six members of Andrews' Raiders for

their daring mission to steal a train in an attempt to destroy railroad track and bridges between Chattanooga and Atlanta.

The stories behind the 3,530 medals awarded from the Civil War through the global war on terrorism are inspiring and extraordinary. One of the more unique citations belongs to Telesforo de la Cruz Trinidad, who was born in the Philippines and enlisted in the U.S. Navy as part of the Insular Force in 1910. Before serving in World Wars I and II, Trinidad received the Medal of Honor for his actions while serving as a fireman second class aboard USS *San Diego* on Jan. 21, 1915. Driven out of fireroom No. 2 when a boiler exploded, he went back to rescue an injured sailor. With no thought for his own safety, and his face severely burned, he entered another exploding fireroom to assist a second injured crewman.

Trinidad's story confirms what most veterans already know: military service is inherently dangerous, even outside combat. Last fall, the Legion's National Executive Committee passed a resolution calling on the secretary of the Navy to name the next guided missile destroyer for the first and only Asian-American (and first Filipino) in the Navy to be awarded the Medal of Honor.

My hometown of Gainesville, Texas, is the nation's only Medal of Honor Host City. Since 2001, we have welcomed 56 living Medal of Honor recipients. Entering the city, you'll see a gorgeous monument atop which a bronze eagle clasps the blue ribbon of a Medal of Honor, symbolizing the strength and sacrifice demonstrated by all who have received the award - among them Telesforo de la Cruz Trinidad. They are reluctant to be called heroes, but few other words come close to describing their deeds, character and example to us.

Comic-book fans can debate the merits of the Marvel and DC universes. Me? I'll stick with the accounts of America's real-life superheroes, found online at the Congressional Medal of Honor Society's site, [cmohs.org](http://cmohs.org).

*Paul E. Dillard*

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Veterans Strengthening America

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P.O. Box 1147 Vallejo, CA 94590-0638

March 6, 2022

The Honorable Carlos Del Toro  
Secretary of the Navy  
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D652  
Washington, DC 20350

Subject: Request to Name a US Navy Warship after Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad, Medal of Honor Recipient

Dear Secretary Del Toro,

On behalf of the Filipino-American retirees of the Armed Forces of the United States of America, we respectfully seek your approval to name the first US Navy Warship after a sailor of Filipino descent, Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad.

Trinidad holds the distinction of being the first and only Asian American in the U.S. Navy to receive a Medal of Honor with General Order Number 142 signed by Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels on April 1, 1915.

We are working with the USS Telesforo Trinidad Campaign, [www.USSTTC.org](http://www.USSTTC.org), the organization spearheading this campaign. USSTTC is a U.S. registered non-profit (501c3) and a national grassroots advocacy group comprised of serving and retired members of the U.S. Armed Forces, community leaders, academics, corporate executives, civic leaders and veterans' families across the United States.

The U.S. and the Philippines have maintained uninterrupted economic, cultural and military ties since 1901, when President William McKinley signed an Executive order allowing the recruitment of 500 Filipinos in the US Navy as part of the Insular Force, and tens of thousands of Filipinos enlisted in the U.S. Navy between WWI and WWII. After the Philippines obtained its independence from the United States in 1946, over 35,000 Filipinos were recruited into the U.S. Navy from 1952 to 1992 under a provision of the Republic of the Philippines-United States Military Bases Agreement. In addition, thousands of Americans of Filipino descent have enlisted until today.

The naming of a United States Navy ship after Trinidad will recognize the shared history and values of two allies, forged in war and peace. Moreover, it will resonate strongly with several generations of Filipino Americans who have served in the U.S. Navy since 1901 and the more than four million Filipino Americans who are looking for validation of the seminal contributions of Filipinos to U.S. history.

We look forward to your favorable response.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helen Nuñez".

Helen Nuñez  
President, Filipino-American Retired United States Armed Forces Association