

VFW Joins Navy Secretary in Ceremony Honoring Hero

The US Navy ship is the first named for a Filipino Medal of Honor recipient

Jan 10, 2023

WASHINGTON — Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief Duane Sarmiento joined Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro for the naming celebration of the USS Telesforo Trinidad, the Arleigh Burke-class Destroyer memorializing Medal of Honor recipient U.S. Navy Fireman Second Class Telesforo de la Cruz Trinidad, on Capitol Hill, today.

“As Navy veteran, a VFW member and proud Filipino-American, I am so honored to be part of this celebration of true heroism,” said Sarmiento. “The VFW passed a resolution in 2021 to support this and made a concerted effort to push for the naming, to include sending a letter to Sec. Del Toro. Today’s ceremony is in great part due to our members determination to meet the challenge of having our voice heard here in our nation’s capital.”

Trinidad was awarded the Medal of Honor on April 1, 1915, for saving the lives of two of his fellow crewmembers three months earlier following a series of boiler room explosions aboard the USS San Diego. Trinidad is the only Filipino in the U.S. Navy to be awarded the Medal of Honor and is one of only two service members ever to receive the award in peacetime.

“We are grateful to the secretary that he would honor not just Telesforo Trinidad, but generations of Filipinos who, for the past 100 years, have faithfully and honorably served in the United States military,” said Sarmiento.

The USS Telesforo Trinidad (DDG 139) is the latest Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer added to the surface fleet. It is the first U.S. Navy ship named in honor of a Filipino Medal of Honor recipient and the second ship named after a Medal of Honor recipient of Asian American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander decent, following the commissioning of the USS Daniel Inouye (DDG 118), on Dec. 8, 2021.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
Office 816.756.3390
Fax 816.968.1157

WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
Office 202.543.2239
Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org
www.vfw.org