



Ambassador George G. Aducayen, Jr.
Elk Grove, California
DIPLOMAT AND ROLE MODEL
Super Highlighter of Positive Image for Filipinos



After 33 years of distinguished career in the Philippine diplomatic service, Ambassador George G. Aducayen, Jr., retired in 1994 and has since established his residence in the Sacramento area where he lives with his wife, Caring, and their only son, Eddie. “ I am glad that we have finally settled down after years of overseas assignments. Now, we got the chance to reunite our whole family (two daughters, Linda Greenway and Caroline Kang, who are married and live in Great Falls, Virginia and Elk Grove, California respectively) and we now live a more leisurely life,” Mrs. Aducayen said.

And what of the Ambassador’s future plans? “With my etirement, I now have time to smell the roses, so to speak, and do all things that I wanted to do but never had the time. I want to live life to the fullest and enjoy the fruits of my career with the Foreign Service.”

During his long stint in the Philippine Foreign Service, who climbed the ladder of success from a mere staff employee to Chief of Mission, Ambassador Aducayen was assigned to a variety of important posts including Washington, D.C.; Mexico City; Wellington, New Zealand; Jeddah and Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Chicago and Guam.

Ambassador Aducayen’s fruitful career in the Foreign Service started in 1960 when he first worked under the Philippine Embassy in Washington, D.C. However, he really didn’t have the Foreign Service in mind when he was starting his career as a young man. After obtaining a Liberal Arts courses from the University of Manila and a Bachelor of Laws degree from San Sebastian College of Law in Manila in 1954, he originally wanted to become a practicing lawyer which is considered in the Philippines as one of the glamorous professions. But when he was taking graduate studies in Law and Business Administration at the University of San Francisco in California (1955-1959), he suddenly yearned to be reunited with his family (wife Caring and his oldest daughter Linda) back in the Philippines. A friend from the Philippine Consulate General in San Francisco then suggested that he join the diplomatic service so that he could bring over his family.

Once exposed to the work and life-style of the foreign service, Ambassador Aducayen was immediately enamored of the challenge and glamour of the diplomatic service. It was love at first sight and from then on, he was committed to pursuing a career as a diplomat.

Although he started in the service at an entry-level position, Ambassador Aducajen swiftly rose from the ranks by dint of his many talents, his background in law and business administration and sheer hard work. From San Francisco as a student, he first joined the Foreign Service in Washington, D.C., which is considered a plum assignment. While in Washington, he was tapped to handle the difficult, complicated and mentally exacting job of economic attaché. He also served as a special representative of the Central Bank of the Philippines to the United States. His Washington stint came at a time when the Philippines was still one of the most dynamic economies in Asia. Thus, he was kept busy learning and practicing the intricacies of foreign trade and international finance - training that would later serve him well when the Philippines began experiencing economic difficulties and the shift of focus to “economic diplomacy” was already starting.

After a successful stint in Washington, Ambassador Aducajen was assigned to Mexico in 1971 (which was not yet too developed at that time) to pick up lessons to the Philippines that can be learned from then underdeveloped and debt-strapped Mexico. On the other hand, he welcomed the assignment because of Mexico’s rich cultural and religious heritage, which is particularly challenging because he virtually had to start from scratch. But again, he was successful in his undertaking and the office he set up paved the way for the opening of the first Philippine embassy in New Zealand.

The Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila was becoming more aware now of Ambassador Aducajen’s particular diplomatic and organizational talents. It was for this reason that in 1982, he was next assigned as Consul General in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, one of the most important posts in the Foreign Service, because of the large number of Filipino overseas workers located there. While in the post, he distinguished himself by constantly looking after the welfare of Filipino overseas workers. The work was hard and challenging because he and the other Foreign Service officers and staff had to work under a totally different cultural milieu. Nonetheless, he discharged his duties efficiently.

In 1984, upon the completion of his eight-year tour of duty abroad, Ambassador Aducajen was all set for his home assignment. But it was then at that time that the Philippine Embassy in Jeddah had to be shifted to Riyadh, together with all other diplomatic establishments accredited in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Because of his organizational talent and experience in establishing a diplomatic post, his tour of duty was extended by the Secretary of Foreign Affairs for an indefinite period, and was ordered to go to Riyadh to open this vital post because of the number of Filipino workers that were there during those years. No one less than a veteran diplomat could be entrusted to watch after their welfare.

However, Ambassador Aducajen’s stint in Riyadh was interrupted when the Aquino administration assumed office and the diplomatic officers posted abroad had to submit their traditional courtesy resignations to the new President.

For a while, he was based in Manila but his ascent up to the career ladder did not stop as it was while he was in Manila that he was appointed Career Minister and special assistant to the Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs. He also served as the first executive director of the Office of Legislative Affairs. A highlight of his career was when he was detailed as special assistant to the Chairman of the powerful Senate Committee on Ways and Means, representing the Department of Foreign Affairs. This was in 1987, when the Philippines under the infant regime of the Aquino administration, was rebuilding democracy and its economy.

His success in working in overseas areas with large Filipino populations led to Ambassador

Aducayen's assignment in Chicago in 1988 where there was also a big contingent of Filipinos. He was then appointed Career Minister and Consul General. In 1991, the top position for the Philippine Consulate General in Guam was given to him. He was also fascinated with Guam itself, how similar it was to the Philippines, culturally and socially. He was also struck by the potential of increased economic ties between the Philippines and Guam. He also distinguished himself by bringing the Consulate General closer to the Filipino community, making his office directly involved in the various activities of the Filipino organizations in Guam.

The Honorable George G. Aducayen, Jr. was appointed by President Corazon Aquino as Ambassador and Chief of Mission on January 7, 1992 and his promotion was confirmed by the Commission on Appointments on February 5, 1992. He retired after 33 years of illustrious service in the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Philippine Foreign Service. He has received many awards, resolutions, citations, commendations and certificate of merit and appreciation, in recognition of his unselfish dedications to public service and his outstanding service as a Filipino statesman and diplomat. He has attended various international conferences and conventions.

Ambassador Aducayen said, "Like a soldier fresh from a long campaign, a Foreign Service officer returns to his homeland with a strong sense of fulfillment. He brings home with him the gratifying thought that in his own way, he has served his country and people overseas. Unlike a warrior, however, a diplomat does not measure his worth by the number of enemies he killed or the extent of damage he inflicted to others. Rather, the diplomat takes pride in the abundance of friends he amassed and the assistance he rendered to his countrymen abroad. In my modest and humble way, I have contributed something for my country and people."

[Article adopted from the website of Filamimage: 1999 awardees of *Twenty Outstanding Filipinos Abroad* (TOFA)]:
http://www.filamimage.com/1999_TOFA/gaducayen.html