

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **CHICAGO HOSTS THE TGIF CONCERT TO CELEBRATE FAHM WITH JESSICA SANCHEZ, MIKEY BUSTOS AND SAMASAMA PROJECT**

CHICAGO, IL – “October is the Filipino American History Month and a night of Filipino music performed by Filipino and Filipino-American performers is a fitting way to celebrate a month dedicated to learning or relearning the story of Filipinos who chose to adopt this country as their own.” Thanks to Consul General Generoso Calonge for the fitting message.

Lines started to form as early as 6 pm for the highly anticipated TGIF Concert at the Copernicus Theatre in Chicago for American Idol superstar Jessica Sanchez, the diminutive powerhouse of a performer, and for Mikey Bustos, back in Chicago for another comedic romp showcasing his internet antics live onstage. The audience was not disappointed. Louella Maningas-Cabalona, producer and lead vocalist of the Samam Sama Project band, set the mood for the show with dynamic renditions of pop and original songs which was welcomed warmly by the excited throng inside the theatre. Mikey Bustos did not disappoint either. With the big jumbo screen behind him showing snippets of his more popular You Tube reworked hits, Mikey took the stage and gave his comedic best to the delight of his fans. Finally, the young chanteuse and star of the show came on, and a hush came over the crowd as she started with familiar ballads, including a crowd favorite that got her a spot in the finals of American Idol, Whitney Huston's mega hit "I Will Always Love You" which she sang effortlessly and with her own spin. A few more upbeat songs, Jessica also ventured to give an elderly patron a kiss on the cheek, with fans video recording the moment on their smart phones. A duet called the "The Prayer" with Mikey Bustos prior to the finale practically brought the house down, and soon, Sama Sama band joined the duo on stage, along with the young dancers and garnered a well-deserved standing ovation from the audience.

The great thing about this show is the absence of gimmicks, special effects, and unnecessary front acts. This show showcased the best of our young Filipino American talents today, and kudos to producers Jan Paul Ferrer of Morgan Stanley, Baron and Louella Maningas-Cabalona, with the help of the Philippine American Cultural Foundation or PACF, its officers Adeline Fajardo and Ruben Salazar, and its network of volunteers, not only did the Filipino American community get to celebrate Filipino American History Month (FAHM) this October not only with style, but also with a bang! Special mention to the young performers also at the Fiesta Hall annex who performed in honor of FAHM including Schaumburg and Elk Grove Idol winner Miki Pascual, the Silayan Choir, 3JNR Rondalla, UIC FIA Modern, young lady singer Alyssa Solomon, the dynamic J-Crew, Defensor Method Eskrima, Global Pinoy winner Nina Mae Vidal and Hill Ford.

Contributed by Maria Girlie Pascual, G-Mail Columnist for Viatimes

## **TGIF – Mission Accomplished; a list of THANK YOU’S**

We did it! TGIF is arguably the biggest FIL-AM HISTORY MONTH celebration in the MIDWEST! Jessica Sanchez and Mikey Bustos brought the house down!!! Over 800 people were in attendance for the six-hour event at Copernicus Center in Chicago. Consul Ericka Anna Abad, Cook County Judge Jessica Arong O'Brien and Senator Mark Kirk's representative, Mark Dietzen, also graced our humble show!

A lot of the guests took the time out to tell the organizers what they thought about the show. We heard many "excellent performances", "amazing", "it was such a wonderful event" referring to both on the Fiesta Hall and Main Stage.

But beyond the topnotch entertainment, one of the best compliments we heard is that TGIF became a mini reunion for friends and family that have not seen each other for a long time until last Friday. We were told there was more than one instance of people crying happy tears in finding a long lost friend or cousin. That makes us want to cry happy tears too 😊=)

At the end of the day, that TGIF is about coming together to celebrate our people, our heritage as Filipino Americans and I can say "Mission Accomplished"!

Thank you so much to all guests who came out! Thank you to all artists who wowed the guests at the FIESTA HALL Pre-show - The Silayan Choir, Miki Pascual, Jcrew, Hill Ford, 3JNR Rondalla, FIA Modern, Nina Mae Vidal, Alyssa Solomon and Defensor Method. Thank you @Oxtail Oxtail Filipino Inspired, RCJM Oriental Store, Kawayan Chicago, Mabuhay Restaurant, UniMart and Hong Ning Restaurant for providing the delicious food to our guests and to our volunteers too.

Thank you to all vendors, to all partner organizations Advocate for Prosperity, Anakbayan Chicago, Fil-Ams of Skokie, International Society of Filipinos in Science and Accounting, NAFCON, Philippine Basketball Association, Philippine Engineers and Scientists Organization and Silayan Association that took part in the event and to all sponsors, GMA Pinoy TV, GMA Life TV, Morgan Stanley, Bank of America, EVA Airways, Creative Imprints Plus, Signature Event Designs, Seafood City, Aeron Lancero of E+O, Reimun Shleimun of Pita Kitchen and Mario Adap of Castle Honda. Thank you for believing in us and collaborating.

Thank you to our hosts, Donna Faye Reyes, Mae Flores and Narciso Lobo, all the backup dancers led by Sara Alcedo, Carlo Cousino, Nichole Michael, Nate Porcalla, Gigi Pyaovich, and David Michael Rivas and our singers, Marie Abegail Rodriguez and Alice Arellano! Thank you to our stage managers Rian Mari Enriquez and Everett Icao, make-up artists Froilan Cabrera and Lorena Nena Perez! Thank you to all media who covered the event, Via Times Newsmagazine - Officialand CPRTV, Megascene, Pinoy Magazine, One Philippines and TRAP CHICAGO.com! Thank you to our photographers R + M Photography, Castillo Studios Intl. by Jay Flores, Darkroom Joe's Photography, Rudy Garcia, Myla Teemer, Edna Pavel, Kayla Delson and Maricar Llamzon and Videographers Anthony Andaleon and James Dela Cruz!

And most importantly, thank you to PACF, Tita Adeline Fajardo, Tito Benru Salazar, Michelle Delson, Iris Kay, Cindy Lopez, Anna Millan, Merle Salazar, Gabi Delson, Telly Yumping, Daniel Boyle, Mark Tan, Phan Le, Ely & Evelyn Natividad, Rudy & Carmen Garcia, the whole board and all the volunteer staff that worked so hard for months to make this a reality!

Lastly, I want to thank all our friends who supported us by watching the show and encouraging their friends to watch too. There's many more but I'd like to especially mention Tita Gloria Millare and Pres. Ilani Valero and The SILAYAN ASSOCIATION, Lisa Soriano, Maria Girlie Pascual and AAGI, Mary Turcuato and FilAms Of Skokie, Pres Rudolfo Campos and the Filipino Musicians of Chicago, Inc. , John and Emily Knicker and Family, Fairmont Care Centre staff (you know who you are), Philippine Senior Golfers of America, Melody Rabor- Dizon and the Dizon and Rabor Families, Tito Gerry Rebello, Trista Michelle, Darlene Sales, Erwin Dela Cruz and Rachel Naval-Cruz. Special Thanks to Eileen Ladrera Camba for being there and finding the right people for whatever we needed.

Many many more folks made TGIF possible. Your names might not be mentioned but your support and generosity is in our hearts and mind.

What a great FAHM kick off weekend! Happy Filipino American History Month, everyone!!

Contributed by Louella Maningas Cabalona, Samasama Project

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It takes a big family to run a show like TGIF. Pictured are just some of the artists on both stages (Photo Credits: Robert Talon). There's a whole crew of reliable staff not in the pic.



American Idol Jessica Sanchez (Photo Credits: Kayla Delson)



Canadian Idol Mikey Bustos (Photo Credits: Myla Teemer)



Louella Maningas Cabalona and the Sama Sama Project (Photo Credits: Myla Teemer)



Meet & Greet Jessica Sanchez, Mikey Bustos, Louella Cabalona (Photo Credits: Michelle Delson)